

THE NATURE OF THE STUDENT–INSTITUTION RELATIONSHIP  
AND BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS OF PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:  
AN EXPLORATION OF THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN  
RELATIONAL QUALITY OUTCOMES, ALCOHOL USE, AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

by

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(Under the Direction of Diane L. Cooper)

ABSTRACT

The nature of students' relationships with their educational institutions, manifested through institutional communication and attitude (e.g., protocol, policy, publications), and student interactions with faculty, administrators, and staff, are believed to contribute to the overall educational experience, influence student conduct, and affect ethical decision-making skills (Kuh, Lyons, Miller, & Trow, 1994). This quantitative study (a) Explored the correlation between student perceptions of the relational quality of the student–institution relationship (SIR) and their behavioral commitment to personal and social responsibility (PSR); (b) Examined the extent that selected relational quality outcomes (RQOs) explained students' self-reported academic honesty and alcohol use/misuse; and (c) Identified which linear combination of RQOs—trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality—and general mattering best predict college students' actual levels of PSR behaviors. A historical review and theoretical framework of the SIR and PSR education guided the study's design.

A stratified random sample of 199 useable responses was collected from among students at a medium-sized masters comprehensive college which is a member of the Core Commitments Leadership Consortium of the Association of the American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U). These students were asked to share their perceptions of the relational quality of their SIR and to self-report instances of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse.

The findings indicated that the broader organization–public relationship (OPR) structure and RQOs, when combined with General Mattering, provided a valid framework for examining, cultivating, and managing the relational impact of the SIR on college student behavioral outcomes, specifically PSR behaviors. This study also provided evidence for General Mattering as a collegiate RQO. Lastly, it produced evidence that RQOs predict PSR behaviors. Within that framework the SIR had a core nature that included General Mattering as a collegiate RQO. This study appears to be the first evidence that RQOs could predict actual behaviors with an ethical dimension. The core nature of the SIR shared many similarities with the school connectedness construct. The influence of the SIR, school connectedness and, in particular, RQOs on student PSR behaviors and other institutionally desirable behavioral outcomes call for further study.

INDEX WORDS: Student–institution relationship; Personal and social responsibility; Mattering; School connectedness; Academic dishonesty; Alcohol use; Organization-public relationship; Relational quality outcomes

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## DEDICATION

To the students and colleagues on the campuses where I have worked and studied. You helped me find, pursue, and embrace my passion. It is my hope that, in some way, I returned the favor. Here is to student–institution relationships that do the same for others.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is a reciprocal relationship between student curricular and co-curricular experiences, on the one hand, and the learning process, on the other (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Terenzini, Pascarella, & Blimling, 1996; Whitt & Miller, 1999). The creation and maintenance of an academic environment conducive to learning, therefore, is central to achieving the mission and strategic goals of institutions of higher education and divisions of student affairs (American College Personnel Association [ACPA], 1994; Bloland, Stamakos, & Rogers, 1996; National Association of Student Personnel Administrators [NASPA] & ACPA, 2004). Personally and socially responsible students are products of positive learning environments and, in turn, enhance these environments for other students.

As the twentieth century closed, national higher education reports noted crime rates, student disorder, and general incivility on campus (Boyer, 1987; Carnegie Foundation, 1990; Wingspread Group, 1993). These reports suggested that colleges were neglecting to foster and protect educational communities, thus failing to maximize student intellectual and personal growth and engagement. At the same time, prominent studies reported widespread cheating among college students (Weschler, 1996; Weschler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994) and alcohol abuse (McCabe & Trevino, 1993, 1997). These persistent conditions and behaviors threatened the educational environment for all students, increased the societal dissatisfaction with the behavioral and learning outcomes of college, and inspired a recommitment to educating students to be ethically responsible in their actions (ACPA, 1996;

Association of American Colleges and Universities [AAC&U], n.d.b., 2004a, 2004b; Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999; Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004, 2005).

Throughout the history of U.S. higher education, the pursuit of a disciplined citizenry and the inevitable presence of student misconduct have played roles in shaping the curriculum and administrative structure of colleges (Horowitz, 1987; Rudolph, 1962). Student Affairs' first functional duty—and, it could be argued, its primary contribution to the institution's educational mission—has been the management of student life and misconduct (Creamer, Winston, & Miller, 2001). Traditionally, shaping student behaviors served the dual purpose of improving the student's character and intellect while, at the same time, controlling conduct that was disruptive to the educational environment. A commitment to moral (or character) development continues to be a fundamental value found in nearly one-third of U.S. institutions' mission statements (Meacham & Gaff, 2006). The American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) designated “educating students for personal and social responsibility” as an “essential learning outcome of attending college” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 3). Citing the prevalence of alcohol abuse and academic dishonesty as primary motivators, the AAC&U launched the Core Commitments initiative (AAC&U, n.d.b., 2004b; Hersch & Schneider, 2005). The AAC&U identified: (a) striving for excellence, (b) developing competence in moral and ethical reasoning, and (c) cultivating personal and academic integrity as three of the program's five dimensions (AAC&U, 2005, p. 2). The AAC&U's decision to include these dimensions acknowledges an expectation that student learning and behavior are intertwined.

The organizational relationships colleges forge with their students, experienced through programs, policies, expectations, and human or institutional interactions (Kuh, Lyons, Miller, & Trow, 1995), can both facilitate student moral development and exert control over student



behavior (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Geiger, 2000), and they have been shown to do so. *In loco parentis* (in place/lieu of the parent), the original legally recognized student–institution relationship and historically dominant approach taken by U.S. colleges, has historically achieved both goals: moral education and conduct oversight (Rudolph, 1962).

Embracing a postmodern approach to character education as the century progressed, colleges lost the pedagogical commitment to shape student values at the same time the courts placed limits on an institution’s ability to control student actions (Colby et al., 2003; Dennis & Kauffman, 1966). Institutions of higher education increasingly abdicated responsibility for influencing student behaviors and values. The relationship between the college and the student was changed into one of separation and independence.

The ongoing legalization of the relationship may have reinforced this tendency toward separation (Dennis & Kauffman, 1966). In the post-*in loco parentis* era, higher education scholars dedicated themselves to identifying the relationship that was legally expected (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Kaplin & Lee, 2006). These scholars approached the student–institution relationship more often as a legal parameter instead of a potentially pivotal factor in the student’s educational experience. The proliferation of case law and evolving legal expectations caused confusion and raised administrators’ and academicians’ anxiety levels on campus (Cooper & Lancaster, 1998). Administrators in institutions of higher education became less committed to finding relationally-effective conditions for education in personal and social responsibility (hereinafter, PSR education) than in divining legal expectations, ultimately experiencing little success at either.

The 50-year debate over what constituted the legally required student–institution relationship spawned philosophical discussion about the desired and educationally appropriate nature of that relationship (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Dennis & Kauffman, 1966; Kuh et al., 1994;

Pavela, 1996, 2006, 2008). The separation of the college and academics from the everyday lives of students was cited as a factor in the degradation of the academic community and student learning (Carnegie Foundation, 1990; Dennis & Kauffman, 1966; Rudolph, 1966; Wingspread Group, 1993). The higher education community encouraged and facilitated an institution-specific dialogue about the preferred nature of the student–institution relationship (Kuh et al., 1994). This dialogue did not develop an empirical understanding of the structure or impact of the relationship on student learning, much less student behavior related to PSR. However, subsequent research suggests that the nature of the relationship contributed to student behaviors that can either support or undermine the educational environment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Whitley, & Kite, 1998; Willimon, 1993, 1997; Wingspread Group, 2004).

A review of moral development theory and educational philosophy supports this hypothesis, suggesting that relationships and relational qualities influence ethical development, decision-making, and behavior (Bandura, 1989; Baxter Magolda, 1992, 2001; Foubert 2000; Foubert & Newberry, 2006; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Kuhmerker, 1991; Narveaz, 2006; Noddings, 1984, 1995, 2002; Perry, 1999; Whitley & Kite, 1998). Moral and cognitive development theorists believe that moral and cognitive learning occurs in relation to and with others. These theorists view the interaction as either the setting for or mechanism of learning. Examples of this include Kohlberg’s (1981, 1984) just community and social role-taking, Perry’s (1999) relationship with authority, Baxter–Magolda’s (2001) mutual partnership toward self authorship, Gilligan’s (1982) and Nodding’s (1984, 1995, 2002) approaches to the ethic of care, and the focus on relational quality in Narveaz’s (2006) Integrated Ethical Education (IEE) model.

Research has also supported moral development theorists' relational propositions. Connected relationships have been found to contribute significantly to student behaviors consistent with those desired in an educational community, including self-reported improvements in physical and emotional health (Frey, Beesley, & Miller, 2006; Liang, Tracy, Taylor, Williams, Jordan, & Miller, 2002); decreased vandalism, violence, and alcohol consumption (Wingspread Group, 2004); and increased academic honesty (Whitley & Kite, 1998) and academic engagement, performance, and persistence (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1994; Terenzini et al., 1996; Wingspread Group, 2004). Higher education has long recognized the importance of quality dyadic relationships and social systems, such as those between students and faculty, peers, or mentors and those related to student learning, moral development, and ethical action (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Moos, 1979; Stearns, 2001; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1994; Terenzini et al., 1996). However, consideration of the relationship between the student and the college as a whole, much less its influence on PSR, has been sparse.

Student development scholars have suggested that the relationship between the student and the institution is really a matter of the interaction of the person and environment (i.e.,  $SIR = f([P \times E])$ ) (Banning, 1978; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Miller, Bender, Schuh, & Associates, 2005; Walsh, 1978). This approach has applied Lewin's (1936) interactionist behavioral process model (i.e.,  $B = f(P \times E)$ ), which proposed that behavior is a function of the person times the environment. These interactionists have also posited that the SIR can facilitate students' ethical development and action (Banning, 1997; Boyd & Cooper, 2008). Boyer (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) conceptualized the student-institution relationship as a community possessing relational qualities (i.e., purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative) which, in turn, would

reduce unwanted student conduct. This resonates with the interactionists' belief that the relationship influences student behaviors (Lewin, 1936, Strange & Banning, 2005). PSR institutional action, whether designed to encourage academic integrity, responsible use of alcohol, or other related behaviors, has typically focused on the individual or on the campus climate. Minimal consideration has been given to how relational components and quality, as a whole, interact with the individual to produce specific behavior. Interaction theorists attempted to understand how individuals respond to environmental factors, contributing to student success and fit—including retention and persistence to graduation (Tinto, 1993), involvement in college (Astin, 1984, 1996, 1999), and mattering to others (Schlossberg, 1989)—while minimally addressing the larger relational aspect of student–institution interaction.

Person-centered campus initiatives have responded to student behaviors by providing services, ethics education, expectations, and accountability (Colby et al., 2003). Institutions have attempted to shape the environment that foster personally and socially responsibility education and behavior through communicating institutional messages and ethos, influencing the environmental press, and physically manipulating the environment (Gallant & Drinnan, 2006; Kuh, 2005; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism [NIAA], 2002; Strange & Banning, 2001; Toomey & Wagenaar, 2002; Weitzman, Nelson, Lee, & Weschler, 2004). Where the relationship construct is considered a factor in institutional or research initiatives, such as in the primary and secondary (K–12) school connectedness and bonding literature, the measured relationship has often been one-on-one (i.e., mentor, family, faculty–student interaction, or peer groups). The characteristics of that relationship have been conceptualized more often than not as an environmental variable (i.e., climate, culture, school connectedness) (Libbey, 2004; Moos, 1976, 1979; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002). In most cases, collegiate institutions,

practitioners, and researchers have addressed these ethical, behavioral, and educational challenges with little-to-no attention being given to the interaction between the student and the institution, and without recognition of the interaction, when observed, as a relationship.

An understanding of organizations as entities capable of engaging in relationships that influence participant action is beginning to evolve throughout the literature from Relational Cultural Theory in counseling (Frey, Beesley, & Miller, 2006; Liang et al., 2002) to Organization–Public Relationships in communications (Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 2000; Ledingham, 2003; Ledingham & Brunning, 1998) to Perceived Organizational Support in business and employee relations (Eisenberg, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Levinson, 1965). Perceived Organizational Support Theory’s (Eisenberger et al., 1986) supposition that employees, as subordinate members within an organization, individually develop “global beliefs” (p.501) about and behavioral reactions to the organization’s affective response to its employees captured college students’ personification of the SIR. Public relations scholars’ explication of the organization–public relationship, much of which was developed using college student samples, has defined and provided a foundational framework for examining the student–institution relationship, albeit from a communications and commerce-driven perspective. Hallahan’s (2004) proposal that organization–public relationships were actually relationships between the organization and a community composed of fluctuating publics has reinforced this application to college.

The organization–public relationship, a unit of measure (Ferguson as cited in Grunig & Huang, 2000) independent of the relational participants (i.e., the organization [the college] and the strategic public [students]) (Broom et al., 2000), “can be analyzed in terms of relationship quality, maintenance strategies, relationship type, and actors in the relationship” (Ledingham,

2003, p. 195). The relationship between an organization and its strategic public has been hypothesized as having relational antecedents, maintenance strategies, and both goal (i.e., behavioral) and quality outcomes (Grunig & Huang, 2000). Theoretically relational quality outcomes (RQOs) can be managed to achieve an organization's intended economic, social, cultural or political goals (Ledingham & Brunning, 1998). A growing body of research has provided evidence that RQOs contributed to, or explained, participants' actions and intended behaviors (Bortree, 2007; Bruning & Ralston, 2000; Huang, 1997). However, an examination of the value of RQOs to college student PSR behavioral outcomes (such as academic integrity and alcohol use in college) is almost nonexistent.

Influential RQOs have been shown to vary by cultural setting, type of organization–public relationship, intended goals of the relationship, and public members' individual characteristics (Huang, 1997, 2001a, 2001b; Jo, 2003). The public relations literature examining the college setting has tended to support the applicability of the organization–public relationship model of relationship management in educating for PSR and encouraging college students' behavioral outcomes (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Bruning & Ralston, 2001; Brunner, 2000, 2005; Ki & Hon, 2007a). Though limited to the relational impact on persistence to graduation (a possible indicator of *student excellence*) and openness to institutional diversity messages (an indicator of *taking the perspective of others*), both these foci of the student-related OPR research have examined PSR dimensions. Given the uniqueness of higher education institutions as organization–public relationship settings, it is beneficial to continue exploring the influence of relational quality outcomes (RQOs) on PSR behaviors in the collegiate setting. This study expanded the exploration of collegiate RQO's influence on PSR behaviors, examining Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse.

## Statement of the Problem

Self-reported alcohol abuse and academic dishonesty by students, behaviors negatively related to a student's level of personal and social responsibility, pose significant challenges for educators attempting to create and maintain an effective learning environment for students (AAC&U, n.d.b.; Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004, 2005). Students' personal and social responsibility (PSR) is both an intended outcome of education (AAC&U, 2005, 2007) and the type of student behavior needed to maintain an optimal learning environment for students. Although the moral development literature has expanded dramatically over the past half century, little is understood about what organizational actions colleges can take to effectively educate students for PSR (Swaner, 2004, 2005). Education, research, and intervention strategies in colleges have focused primarily on the person (e.g., identity and psychosocial development) or on the environment (e.g., culture, climate, and social relationships), independent of one another. Little attention has been given to the outcomes or manifestations of the interaction between the person and the environment (e.g., involvement, mattering, persistence, and school connectedness). This interaction between individual students and the college environment is the collective student-institution relationship (Banning, 1978; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Miller et al., 2005; Walsh, 1978).

The quality and the quantity of relationships are both factors in student learning and behavior, and the impact of relationship on student learning and behavior needs to be better understood. The centrality of the person in relation to others has been a common theme found in educational philosophy, moral development theory, and behavioral science (Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Noddings, 1984, 1995, 2002; Whitley & Kite, 1998). Education literature has recognized the contributory role dyadic relationships (such as student-faculty interactions,

mentoring, and peer groups) can play in the educational process (Bandura, 1989; Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Moos, 1976, 1979; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Educators and moral development researchers have tended to believe that mutuality, caring, empathy, and a sense of belonging or support are key qualities relationships that produce personal and social responsibility (Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Carnegie Foundation, 1990; Gilligan, 1982; Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Narveaz, 2006; Noddings, 1984; Swaner, 2004, 2005). Relational research on topics such as school connectedness and relational health has reflected these qualities, extending the idea of ‘relationship’ to include the relationship between the student and the school *as a whole* (Frey, Beesley, & Miller, 2006; Liang et al., 2002; Libbey, 2004); this research has also verified the positive impact relationships can have on student behaviors and their learning environments (e.g., reduced alcohol consumption and vandalism, increased persistence and performance). Schools’ organizational relationships with their students are not unlike the interpersonal relationships people have with one another. Little is known about the effects of the overall student–institution relationship quality on college student personal and social responsibility (PSR) behavior. If colleges are to educate students for PSR using the student–institution relationship, educators and administrators need direction in developing strategic goals to harness the potential relational power of the student–institution relationship to enhance PSR among students.

### Measuring the Student–Institution Relationship

Outcomes theoretically consistent with extant scholarship on cognitive and moral development, interaction, and organization–public relationship have captured the nature of a PSR-enhancing student–institution relationship. Caring relationships, characterized as including



mutuality and empathy, have been believed to contribute to students' moral development and action (Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Gilligan, 1982; Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004; Nodding, 1984, 1995, 2002; Whitley & Kite, 1998). Research on school connectedness and bonding has indicated that student commitment to, and positive perceptions of, a school and its faculty are associated with improved student behaviors, including reduced consumption of alcohol and drugs, and improved academic performance (McNeely et al., 2002; Wingspread Group, 2004).

Huang's (2001a, 2001b; Grunig & Huang, 2000) proposed organization–public relationship quality outcomes—including trust, control mutuality, relational commitment, and relationship satisfaction—have integrated and expanded on the interaction theories used in higher education literature. These RQOs have effectively reframed Boyer's (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) vision of purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, and celebrative colleges. Each construct has conceptually combined, in varying degrees, relational qualities proposed by interaction theories on student development. Those theories have included the balance of challenge and support (Sanford, 1967), Astin's (1984, 1996, 1999) Involvement Theory and its concept of quality or commitment, and the relational needs for mutuality hinted at by Schlossberg's (1989) Mattering Theory. However, *mattering*, a sense of belonging and/or support in interactions (Elliot, Kao, & Grant, 2004; Rosenberg & McCullough, 1981; Schlossberg, 1989; Tovar, Simon, & Zaragoza, 2008), more fully represents the caring and celebratory aspects of Boyer's (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) community and the affective qualities believed to be needed for moral development. Therefore, the general mattering construct could represent an additional relational quality relevant in collegiate and student relationships. Interaction theorists, educational philosophers, and researchers in moral

development, school connectedness and organization–public relationship have all described properties of relationship, not separate phenomena. This similarity has suggested a framework of relational qualities applicable to the exploration of the influence of the student–institution relationship on PSR education.

### Purpose of the Study

Students' relationships with their educational institutions are believed to contribute to the overall educational experience, influence student behaviors, and enhance ethical decision-making skills. SIRs were manifested through institutional communication and attitude (e.g., protocol, policy, and publications) and student interactions with faculty, administrators, and staff. Although literature on educational philosophy (Carenege, 1990; Nodding, 1984, 1995, 2002), moral development theory (Swaner, 2004, 2005), and other related research (Danaher, Brown, & Slate, 2008; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Whitley & Kite, 1998) has indicated that the nature of students' relationships can either encourage or diminish PSR behavior, little empirical research has verified this notion as it pertains to college students' interpersonal and institutional relationships. Much of the literature about moral development and responsible behavior in college focuses on the role of the individual student, group, or institutional characteristics in student learning and behavior (Dalton, 1998; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Presley, Meilman, & Leichliter, 2002; Weschler, Dowdall, Maenner, Glendhill-Hoyt, & Lee, 1998) rather than interpersonal or institutional relationships. Most often, when educational researchers have considered a relationship, it has typically been treated as an environmental variable. Relationships have primarily been approached as an interaction between individuals, or individuals within subcultures, impacting student behavior singularly. This conceptualization of a relational paradigm, exerting multidirectional influence, has extended to the community and to

institutions precisely as organizational personalities (Kuh & Whitt, 1988; Libbey, 2004; McNeely et al., 2002; Moos, 1976, 1979; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1994).

The unidirectional environmental approach to relationship in higher education research began to change as organization relationship emerged as a construct in fields as diverse as the organization–public relationship (in public relations) (Grunig & Huang, 2000) and the Relational Health Indices’ community scale (in relational counseling) (Liang et al., 2002). Some student affairs research is also beginning to describe the student–institution relationship in terms broader than that of a legal relationship (Williams, 1986; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Miller et al., 2005). The relational climate of the college—an environmental variable—contributes to, but is only one element in, the totality of the student–institution relationship and its nature. The relational quality outcomes—trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering—are representations of the nature of the comprehensive relationship between a student and the institution consistent with traditional student affairs theory (Astin, 1984, 1996, 1999; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Schlossberg, 1989; Williams, 1986). These qualities may explain how student perceptions of the relational climate emerge. As educators, practitioners would benefit from a better understanding of the nature of the collegiate student–institution relationship and identifying how to shape these relationships to enhance student PSR behavior.

This quantitative study (a) explored whether college student perceptions of the relational quality (i.e., nature) of the student–institution relationship are associated with PSR behavior (i.e.,  $PSRB = f [SIR\ RQOs]$ ); and (b) examined the impact of selected relational quality outcomes (i.e., trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering) believed to influence students’ behavior, as it is related to personal and social

responsibility. This study focused on the SIR nature and what elements of that nature predicted PSR behaviors, as opposed to constructs that predicted PSR behaviors. Research exploring the limited to the organization–public relationship and intended PSR behavioral outcomes should add to the current theoretical understanding of the student–institution relationship as an organization–public relationship, and should further throw light on the campus interaction process for influencing behavior.

### Research Assumptions

*Assumption 1.* Students are engaged in interpersonal relationships with the college itself which may or may not be influenced by the collective student body – institution relationship, in addition to interpersonal relationships with individuals and groups of individuals;

*Assumption 2.* Institutional PSR commitment to and facilitation of personal and social responsibility does not solely predict a student’s PSR behaviors.

### Research Questions

*RQ1.* What are the independent correlations between college students’ perceptions of the hypothesized student–institution relational quality outcomes (RQOs), on the one hand, and personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors, on the other?

*RQ2.* To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs together explain college students’ actual levels of academic integrity, an example of PSR behavior?

*RQ 3.* Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students’ actual levels of academic integrity, a PSR behavior?

*RQ 4.* To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs explain college students’ actual levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior?

*RQ 5.* Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students’ actual levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior?

#### Limitations

This has been is an exploratory correlation study and, as such, there were several limitations that should be taken into consideration before generalizing this study’s findings. These limitations included the collection of self-reported data about potentially sensitive or illegal behaviors, the methodological design of this correlation and regression study, and the influence of potentially confounding variables not selected for examination.

First, this study required participants to self-report academically dishonest actions and alcohol use/misuse. Participants might have been uncomfortable sharing personal information that could negatively impact them if disclosed, or they may have chosen answers that place them in the most positive light.

Second, the results of this correlation and regression study have been limited for methodological reasons. The selection of this methodological design did not permit the researcher to determine if RQOs served as intervening variables for others, nor did this methodology establish whether the findings are consistent with a causal hypothesis. This study only established that there were associations, not causal linkages, between the selected RQOs and demonstrated personal and social responsibility (PSR).

Finally, this study explored the overall nature of the student–institution relationship. It did not consider other dimensions of the organization–public relationship, such as the influence of participant or institutional demographics; the impact of the quantity, intensity, and type of dyadic relationships within the student–institution relationship; or the role of the institutional agent engaged in these interactions. Attention to these elements of the student–institution

relationship, as an extension of this research, would contribute to a better understanding of the relationship's multiple dimensions.

### Operational Definitions

The following definitions provide a common understanding of terms used throughout this study.

*College.* For purposes of this study, the term “college” represented colleges and universities.

*College student.* “College students” included undergraduate students from the first term of enrollment at the college to those completing their 8<sup>th</sup> consecutive non-summer term at the college.

*Institution.* Kuh et al. (1994), in *Reasonable Expectations: Renewing the Educational Compact between Institutions and Students*, defined the institution as “the organization as well as all those who play an educational role (faculty, administrators, support staff, and others)” (p. 2).

*Relationship.* Webster's College Dictionary (1995) defined a relationship as “a connection, association, or involvement” (p. 1136). For the purposes of this study “relationship” has been defined as the relationship *construct* and has indicated the state of being in a relationship.

*Organization–public relationship (OPR).* For the purposes of this study, an OPR was defined as the interaction between an organization and one of the organization's strategic publics, each interdependent and impacting the other. A “public” could have been either a group of individuals or another organization (Ki, 2006)

*Student–institution relationship (SIR).* For the purposes of this study, the SIR was defined as the person, environment, and the interaction of the two (i.e.,  $SIR = (P, E, [P \times E])$ ). Kuh et al.

(1994), in *Reasonable Expectations: Renewing the Educational Compact between Institutions and Students*, proposed student expectations as the person-specific factors affecting relationships. They also identified “teaching and learning, curriculum, institutional integrity, quality of institutional life, and educational services” (p. 2) as the environmental settings or institutional dimensions of the relationship. “The interaction between colleges and students can be characterized as a relationship” with unique descriptive characteristics (Miller et al., 2005, p. 244). The SIR, an example of an organization–public relationship, was viewed through the totality of experiences and interactions students have with faculty, administrators, staff, and the institution, through programs, policies, and expectations (Boyd & Cooper, 2008).

*Nature of the student–institution relationship.* Merriam–Webster’s Online Dictionary (2008) defined “nature” as “the inherent character or basic constitution of a person or thing; the essence, disposition, or temperament.” For the purposes of this study, nature was one dimension of the multi-dimensional organization–public relationship, and relational quality outcomes were characteristics describing that nature.

*Relationship quality outcomes (RQOs).* Using Ki (2006), for the purposes of this study RQOs were defined as “factors that determine or characterize successful relationships between an organization and its strategic publics” (p. 15). College RQOs captured and measured the strengths, features, properties, and characteristics that comprise the nature of the organization–public relationship (i.e.,  $RQO \text{ or nature of the SIR} = f[SIR]$ ) between a college and its students (i.e., the affective outcomes resulting from the nature of all interactions combined). In the case of an SIR, RQOs reflected the combination of the relational quality perceptions students experience across all the interactions with the institution (i.e.,  $RQO = f\{f[P \times E]\}$ ). For the purposes of this

study, RQOs represent the student's affective response to or the outcome of the nature of the SIR.

*Trust.* Trust represents a relational participant's "confidence in and willingness to open up to the other party" (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3), dependent on the student's belief that his or her college is "fair and just [integrity] . . . [and] will do what it says it will do" (p. 3) (i.e., dependability), and is able to deliver on its promises (i.e., competence). For the purposes of this study, Trust is an RQO and serves as a predictor variable.

*Relational Commitment.* Hon and Grunig (1999) defined Relational Commitment as "the extent to which each party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote" (p. 3). Both relational participants want to continue in the relationship and maintain an emotional attachment to one another. For the purposes of this study, Relational Commitment is an RQO and serves as a predictor variable.

*Relational Satisfaction.* Relational Satisfaction is "the extent to which each party feels favorably toward the other because of positive expectations" (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3). Satisfaction is also the student's evaluation of whether the participants get more out of being in the relationship than the relationship takes from them (Hon & Grunig, 1999). For the purposes of this study, Relational Satisfaction is an RQO and serves as a predictor variable.

*Control Mutuality.* Hon and Grunig (1999) defined control mutuality as "the degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another" (p. 3). Mutuality rests on shared responsibility, vision, and goals for the academic enterprise, balanced by a commitment to and respect for individual pursuits (Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002). For the purposes of this study, Control Mutuality is an RQO and serves as a predictor variable.



*General Mattering.* Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) conceptualized general mattering as a general sense of being important to, having the attention of, and being needed by society or the community. For the purposes of this study, General Mattering explores students' feelings of mattering to the college as a whole (Marcus, 1991a; 1991b). In this study, General Mattering is a collegiate RQO and serves as a predictor variable.

*Behavioral outcomes.* Behavioral outcomes referred to the behavioral actions of individuals and a public as a whole. Organizations may establish desired behavioral outcomes for publics that attain organizational goals. Examples of this in college populations include persistence and retention, as well as openness to hearing and integrating institutional messages, including cultural competency, reasonable levels of alcohol consumption, and academic honesty.

*Personal and social responsibility (PSR).* PSR, as explicated by the AAC&U (2004a, 2004b, 2007, 2008), is a singular outcome of moral competency (Swaner, 2004, 2005). For the purposes of this study, personal and social responsibility was considered to be synonymous with being morally developed or morally mature.

*PSR behaviors.* PSR behaviors included behaviors that reflected a person's level of personal and social responsibility, or behaviors that influenced the environment's or community's collective level of personal and social responsibility. For the purposes of this study, "PSR behaviors" and "PSR behavioral indicators" were considered to be synonymous, and they include alcohol use/misuse and academic integrity in the college or university.

### Significance of the Study

This study asked what, if anything, about the nature of the student–institution relationship was associated with the development and exercise of PSR in college. It uncovered a new understanding of an often untapped educational tool. The results of this study identified a

relational model that could enhance an institution's contribution to a student's personally and socially responsible behavior. This line of school-connected research (i.e., the influence exerted by the students' perceptions of the organization–public relationship on the student's alcohol use and misuse) does not appear to have been explored in a postsecondary setting, nor has the OPR's impact on academic integrity in students been considered at any academic level. This new understanding of the association between the relational quality and behavioral outcome goals may empower college administrators to use relationship management strategies to educate effectively for PSR.

Giving consideration to the value of the student–institution relationship quality as a learning tool for PSR education has extended the organization–public relationship literature to include educational organizations. It has also explored whether learning outcomes based on dimensions of PSR were organizational goal outcomes influenced by organization–public relationships. This research has expanded the knowledge about the range of organization–public relationship types, as well as the differing applicability and relevance of RQOs with respect to organization–public relationship type.

Lastly, the pervasiveness of the belief that the affective qualities of student relationships influence student learning and behavior has suggested that it could be “a rational myth of higher education” waiting to be tested (Pascarella, 2006, p. 513). Empirically testing whether general mattering, control mutuality, and relational satisfaction contributed to PSR behaviors responded to Pascarella's (2006, p. 513) challenge to “bring systematic inquiry to bear” on “reasonable myth[s] of higher education” that were not currently supported by empirical data.

Research exploring the organization–public relationship and intended PSR behavioral outcomes is expected to add to the current theoretical understanding of the student–institution

relationship as an organization–public relationship, and to the campus interaction process for influencing behavior. This understanding would, in turn, expand a school’s ability to manage institutional relationships to improve the academic climate and the individual student’s educational outcome. Educators charged with creating learning-focused institutions, encouraging behavioral change, and fostering student success would benefit from continued exploration of the student–institution relationship and its contribution to learning and action.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Colleges are committed to educating students for cognitive and behavioral components of personal and social responsibility (PSR) (Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2005). The nature of student relationships is an effective tool that can be (and has been) used to educate students for moral reasoning and action. But we have seen that the potential of student interactions to influence moral behavior has not been empirically tested in student–institution relationships (SIR). Interactions between organizations and individuals mimic interpersonal elements of didactic relationships. The bulk of literature written about the SIR has addressed the legal—and not the interpersonal—aspects of this connection. The present study sought to develop a better understanding about the nature of the SIR (i.e., quality), how it may or may not impact college students’ behavior, and how to shape these associations to enhance student PSR behaviors. With this in mind the first chapter of the present study outlined theoretically-based and empirically supported components, processes, and nature of the SIR most likely to enhance PSR.

Relying on a multidisciplinary conceptual framework to structure this exploration, the first chapter opened with an outline of the theoretical foundations of the present study and the hypothesized contribution that “relationship” makes to the learning experience. Next, a review of the historical and legal bases for the current SIR in U.S. colleges operationalized and validated the constructs proposed in this framework. The historical review ended at the modern educational era, with its renewed commitment to the “essential learning outcome” of “educating for personal and social responsibility” (PSR) (AAC&U, 2007, p. 3). A consideration of PSR as it related to students and PSR behaviors—specifically students’ academic honesty and their alcohol

consumption—established the need for the study. This consideration explored how “relationship” with others, and specifically relationship with the college, has been and can be used as an educational construct to affect PSR behaviors in students. It also asked what about the relationship influences those behaviors. This anticipated contribution of the relationship lead the researcher to look at the interactions between organizations and groups of individuals, and to articulate the components, process, and nature of these interactions as SIR. The chapter then closed with an understanding of the rudiments of how SIRs have been (and can be) structured in collegiate settings, and discovering the impact of these structures, as well as their nature on PSR, permitting this investigation to identify preferred collegiate relational qualities which should enhance student PSR.

#### Theoretical Foundations of Learning PSR through “Relation”

##### *A Conceptual Framework*

The theoretical foundation supporting college student research and practice spans a variety of academic disciplines, including organizational and human development, counseling, management, and learning. Responding to the theme of relationship as described across moral and cognitive development theories (Bandura, 1989; Baxter Magolda, 2001; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Kuhmerker, 1991; Noddings, 1984, 1995, 2002; Perry, 1999; Wittmer, 2005), the multidisciplinary conceptual framework adopted by this present study integrates a person–environment interactionist approach (Astin, 1999; Moos, 1976, 1979; Moos & Insel, 1974; Murray, 1938; Pace & Stern, 1958; Schlossberg, 1989; Strange & Banning, 2001) to students’ individual ethical decision-making within an organization–public relationship perspective (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Grunig & Huang, 2000; Ledingham, 2003).

Additionally, decisions and assumptions underlying the exploration, design, and discussion of this study were grounded in and consistent with: (a) The relational aspects of Dewey's (1938) and Noddings' (1984, 1995, 2002) progressive educational theories; (b) Relational Cultural Theory's counseling concepts of self-in-relation and connectedness (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004); and (c) The contextualistic traditions (i.e., emphasizing the interaction of the mutually influencing person and environment) of developmental psychology (Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1995).

*Theoretical Influence of "Relationship" on Development and Behavior*

The role of "relationship" in the development of PSR—a central, though seldom directly addressed theme in the literature—inspired this study's exploration of student–institution relationships. Cognitive Moral Development theory suggested that relationships impact ethical development, decision-making, and behavior (Bandura, 1989; Baxter–Magolda, 2001; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Kuhmerker, 1991; Noddings, 1984, 1995, 2002; Perry, 1999). Foundational cognitive theorists Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Perry recognized the role that ethical dialogue, sequential and cumulative growth opportunities, and authority play in development (Gilligan, 1982; Kuhmerker, 1991; Perry, 1999; Swaner, 2004). Likewise, Social Learning theory purports that "all behaviors—including those that are moral—are learned through observation of others" (Swaner, 2005, p. 25), and they single out behavioral modeling as a particularly effective mechanism for learning (Bandura, 1989). Each of the aforementioned theorists' observations has reinforced the importance of interaction, inherent in relationship, to ethical development and behavioral choices.

Additionally, it has been shown that the quality or nature of the interaction influences moral learning and action. Kohlberg's Just Community, an exercise in mutuality and

interdependence, required joint decision-making and commitment on the part of students, faculty, and administrators (Kuhmerker, 1991). Noddings' (1984) Moral Affect philosophy affirmed the need for personal and caring action (i.e., “modeling, dialogue, practice, and confirmation,” p. 148) to promote a sense of being the “one cared for” (p. 5), which is theoretically a requirement for moral development. Rest's (1986) Moral Sensitivity concept, the first component in his ethical decision-making model, depended on a concern for how one is impacting others. Baxter-Magolda (2001) argued that students need “good company” (p. xvi) for their journey to self-authorship, a cognitive goal also reliant on mutual relationships between institutional agents and committed students. These theorists all suggested that moral learning and action happen *in relation to others*.

The notion of self-in-relation was also a recurring theme in the counseling literature that has informed many of the student-related theories supporting higher education. Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004), a relational model of counseling, has integrated self-in-relation as a central tenet and postulated that a sense of connectedness is essential to mental health and wellbeing. The Stone Center writings—i.e., *Women's Growth in Connection* (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991), *The Complexity of Connection: Writings from the Stone Center's Jean Baker Miller Training Institute* (Jordan, Walker & Hartling, 2004)—a compendium of the ongoing discussions between a group of counseling scholars meeting at Wellesley College's Stone Center for Women, adopted Gilligan's challenge to the established understanding of the developmental process. According to these writings (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004), the preferred developmental goal was not to achieve autonomy, as Piaget and Kohlberg believed, but to develop healthy connectedness to others (i.e., interdependence) (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991;

Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004). Embracing Gilligan's paradigm shift, RTC asserted that, while people grow in connection with others, connectedness alone was insufficient to encourage individual growth and development.

Relational Cultural theorists (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004) have proposed that the quality of the connection influences the relationships' potential benefit. Relational participants capable of empathy possess the ability to consider how one's actions impact another's (e.g., Rest's [1986] Moral Sensitivity concept). This ability develops by being the object of another's concern (e.g., Nodding's [1984] Ethic of Care). Relational participants, who experience mutuality, perceive that they are in reciprocal relationships in which there is shared power and all participants are influential. Empathetic and mutual counselor–patient interactions, characteristics required for moral development, have been shown to produce healthier relational participants (Liang, Tracy, Taylor, Williams, Jordan, & Miller, 2002).

#### *Perspectives on Relationships from the Field of Education*

Educators have also considered interpersonal interaction to be a catalyst for learning and development. In defense of his model of experiential learning in *Experience and Education*, Dewey (1938) described a similar relational responsibility for educators to replace the traditionalist view of authority. To Dewey (1938), not all experiences were equally educational; “everything depends on the quality of the experience” (p. 27). Dewey believed that the faculty should be less of a boss or dictator and more of a leader of group activities, responsible for shaping the quality of the interaction. To educate using his Theory of Experiential Learning requires increased contact and intentionally meaningful interactions between students and



educators. The combination of these individual interactions contribute to an institution's environmental impact.

### *Individuals Interacting with Organizations*

Lewin's (1936) Field Theory of Human Behavior is a theoretical cornerstone in the field of human ecology, stating that behavior is a function of the person (P) interacting with the Environment (E), or  $B = f(P \times E)$ . Lewin's theory addresses the power of interaction to influence behavior as a resolution of the nature–nurture argument. According to the theory, an individual's behavior is not captive to inherent individual characteristics, nor shaped entirely by his or her environmental experience, but emanates from the interplay between the two. Lewin's conceptualization of interaction has accounted for the personal and environmental factors influencing student behaviors and how those factors could be manipulated to affect behavioral change in students. Moos (1976, 1979) expanded Lewin's model to include an understanding of the role social relationships play in the environment (1974, 1976), and to reflect the environment's and the individual's interaction with the adaptive change processes that produce behavior (1979).

The present study's application of a behavior–analytic approach to moral behavior, coupled with its focus on the environmental interaction between institution and student, placed this study within the contextualistic tradition of developmental psychology (Pelaez–Nogueras & Gewirtz, 1995). Contextualistic psychologists have held that: (a) The individual and his or her environment engage in active and mutually influential interaction; (b) The sequential process of interaction is not as central to behavioral analysis as the reciprocal relationship and “bidirectional influence” (p. 175) between the organism and the environment; and (c) The interaction is “a

unique product of past activity in current context, and provides historical context for the next interaction” (p. 176).

### *Conceptualizations of the SIR*

Banning (1978) and Walsh (1978), in early applications of human ecology to the college setting, each posited that the *interaction* between the student (P) and the college environment (E) *is* the student–institution relationship (SIR). Within this model, the student–institution relationship is a function of the person, the environment, and the interaction of the person and the entirety of the environment or  $SIR = f \{P, E, (P \times E)\}$ , as graphically depicted in Figure 2.1, below:

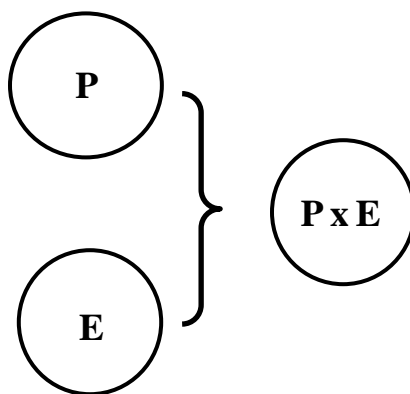


Figure 2.1.  $SIR = f \{P, E, (P \times E)\}$

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009), adapted from Moos (1979; Moos & Insel, 1974).

The student–institution relationship is a type of organization–public relationship. Public relations literature has developed the organization–public relationship construct as a means of assessing the quality of relationships, and also to measure the impact of relationship management efforts (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Ledingham, 2003). An organization–public relationship is the interaction between an organization and one of the organization’s

strategic publics (i.e., groupings of individuals who are affected by and can significantly impact the organization's attainment of goals) (Bortree, 2007; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Hung, 2005; Ki & Shin, 2006; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Conceptually, Hallahan's (2004) amended phrase of organization–community, with publics emerging from within the community reflecting the many publics in the college setting, may more accurately describe the SIR. Examples of these publics include students, staff, faculty, and alumni.

The quality of the relationship between an organization and its strategic publics has been shown to contribute to or explain individuals' actions (Bortree, 2007; Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002) and intended behaviors (Bruning, Castle, & Schrepper, 2004; Bruning & Ralston, 2000; Ki & Hon, 2007a, 2007b; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Global relational quality outcomes include trust, relational commitment, and relational satisfaction (Jo, 2003), while control mutuality (Ki, 2006) appears to also be prevalent in student–institution relationships. The organization–public relationship model could serve as a paradigm for examining the characteristics and properties of the student–institution relationship and its potential to impact student learning and action in college.

Each of these theoretical concepts, relevant to the model proposed later in this study, will be revisited in greater detail later in this chapter. This information was provided here in brief to assist the reader in understanding the context for the subsequently reviewed literature.

#### Historical Foundations of the SIR in the United States and its Relevance to PSR Education

Since their inceptions, U.S. institutions of higher education have been diverse in mission, structure, and practice (Geiger, 2000; 1992). Student–institution relationship characteristics were not universal. Organization–public relationship literature states that the history of the

relationship between an organization and a “strategic public” (in this case, the college and its students), is believed to have a significant effect on a public’s expectations and how closely a public’s behavior reflects the organization’s goals (Coombs, 2000). An exploration of the trends in these historical student–institution relationships, with particular attention paid to influential components, structure, processes, and characteristics (or nature) of the relationships, has demonstrated how the evolving relationships shaped and continue to shape the organization, relational participants (i.e., faculty, staff, and students), and the outcomes of the relationship between the student and the institution. Recognizing which historical factors have generated productive or disruptive student conduct helps educators to understand and shape today’s educationally effective environments and interactions. The following is an historical review of the student–institution learning relationship from the colonial period through the modern era.

### *Birth of a Unique Student–Institution Relationship*

This review of SIR historical themes begins with Blackburn and Conrad’s (1989) discussion and assessment of the validity of each of the two predominant historical camps. This introduction to the history of U.S. higher education is followed by Geiger’s (1992, 2002) synthesis of the traditional and revisionist histories of the nineteenth century college. Geiger’s conclusions are then placed within the context of Rudolph’s (1962) influential writings on the student experience in U.S. higher education. The thematic study of the history of the legally-defined SIR in U.S. higher education closes this section, leading the reader to the present loss of the learning relationship and a reconsideration of PSR as an intended learning outcome. The chronology of events, and the patterns that surface, tell the intertwined stories of the student–institution relationship, teaching and student learning, and pursuit of student personal and social responsibility (PSR) in U.S. higher education.

Blackburn and Conrad (1989) compared and synthesized two perspectives in “The New Revisionists and the History of U.S. Higher Education”: traditionalists and revisionists.

Traditionalist historians held that colonial colleges were founded to respond to the religious and civic needs of a new society. Revolutionary zeal during the Age of Enlightenment briefly produced a spate of college formations to educate republicans, but it was quickly followed by what became known as the Retrogression. Revisionists painted a picture of an elitist religion-bound system of colleges that defended the academic status quo (Rudolph, 1962) and were unresponsive to the clamoring of both students and society for practical and technical coursework and personal freedoms. Religious-affiliated denominationalism, clinging to the classic curriculum, stymied higher education’s development and livelihood (Blackburn & Conrad, 1989). Traditionalists credited the evolution of knowledge, pent-up student desire for practical education and personal freedom, and the influence of the Germanic system of higher education with the eventual departure from the classic curriculum. These changes lead a steady evolution of the Nineteenth-century College toward the research-based university of today (Rudolph, 1962 and Thelin, 1993)

Revisionist historians’ findings brought nuance to traditionalists’ initial assumptions, research, and conclusions. Blackburn and Conrad’s (1989) critical review of the revisionist propositions suggested that, while the revisionists had found evidence of factual differences from those presented by traditionalists, the principal distinction was in interpretation. The curriculum was not limited to the classics and recitation, nor was this the only pedagogical methods used. Discipline and control were maintained because each was essential to the process of educating students for the new republic, not as functions of religion and elitism. Revisionists demonstrated

that colleges and college administrations in all eras have been responsive to the needs and desires of their students and their societies.

Geiger's (1992, 2000) works incorporated both traditional and revisionist perspectives to illustrate the history of the U.S. system of higher education. In *The American College in the Nineteenth Century* (Geiger, 2000), Geiger attributed the historical trajectory of higher education in the U.S. (during the nineteenth century, in particular) to transformations in faculty roles, administration of the organization, and content of the curriculum. Organizational choices inside and outside of the classroom delicately balanced the needs of coexisting constituencies. Societal expectations remained the primary impetus for the evolving institutional mission and curriculum, but the emergence of relational partners' varying levels of power and influence over the institution prompted system-wide organizational restructuring. The original nature of the relationship, and these changing relational components, imprinted the student–institution relationship with certain characteristics and contradictions that continue to mold the expectations and realities of today's college student experience.

Geiger (2000) chronicled the move from “submission and control” (Geiger, 2000, p. 13) to the nineteenth-century's student independence and empowerment. Colonial America needed education to provide for its new world's societal and religious leadership. The classic curriculum was a common set of courses taken by all students, including a regimen of intense personal tutoring, recitations, and chapel, in conjunction with rigid oversight of student behavior. This pedagogy disciplined the students in both mind and body. College faculty and tutors, by virtue of the curriculum and physical proximity of their living quarters with those of the students, closely controlled every aspect of the student experience. The resulting student–institution relationship,

founded on control and discipline, met the colleges' and society's goals for students and graduates.

With the founding of a democratic United States of America, the initial collegiate mission of preparing students for parochial and societal leadership transitioned to developing democratic citizens of character, thus losing the college's pervasive religious emphasis. As memories of the American Revolution faded, tighter control over student lives returned. Soon an outburst of riots erupted on many campuses. Students seemingly rebelled against the expected monitoring of their personal lives reinforced by a stringent academic philosophy of learning (Geiger, 2000). The number and type of institutions and educational experiences greatly expanded during the nineteenth century, changing the content and process of student education (Geiger, 2000). Academicians spent the century not so much emulating German research universities but experimenting to find out which Germanic elements worked in the U.S. system. By the mid-nineteenth century, students gained more freedom over their out-of-class experiences, as academic administrators' and faculty members' curricular attention and energy moved from student character formation to organizational and curricular restructuring, incorporating advanced learning (Geiger, 2000, p. 30). In the span of just one decade—the 1890s—the university system became the prevailing form of U.S. higher education (Geiger, 2000).

Concurrently, the academic abdication of extracurricular responsibility for students cemented the “rise of the student estate” (Geiger, 2000, p. 9). A student culture that valued and reinforced “the formation of the ‘whole man’” (p. 14) evolved in the mind of the typical student as the main goal of college. Students and, increasingly, active alumni, created communal experiences that facilitated learning through practical experiences and interactions. Neither the college itself nor the individual faculty members had any responsibility for these extracurricular

experiences. Students' attachment to the college transferred from academic programs to the extracurricular social experiences, thereby intensifying the relationship with the institution as a whole, but reducing the relationship students had with the institutions' academic purposes and faculty.

As the twentieth century opened, the U.S. system of higher education had embraced the Germanic research agenda, but not the Germanic administrative structure or student freedoms from institutional control (Geiger, 2000). Institutions nationally standardized the general structure of higher education toward research and specialized knowledge, while simultaneously fracturing the curricular structure into departments. The core curricular experience for faculty and students disappeared and, as it went, the institution lost a cohesive institutional identity (Geiger, 1992). The distance between the students, the faculty, and the institution's academic purposes grew.

Unlike its German peer, the U.S. version of a university embraced the presence of undergraduate education in institutions of higher education, thus giving colleges incentive to revisit their role in students' daily lives. The size of the young country and the age of the students did not permit the U.S. to adopt the Germanic relationship with students and university structure, even if such a relationship had been desired (Herbst, 2004). Students in the U.S. were, on average, two to three years younger than their German counterparts. The long distances and travel times during the colonial period limited parental involvement in student-school matters, thus reinforcing the expected parent-like oversight of the student body by the college.

Having resolved the questions of academic structure, colleges attempted, through their representatives and policies, to reassert oversight of a much more complex and increasingly



difficult-to-control student culture. The “student estate” was firmly entrenched in the institutional culture, and the colleges needed to manage this new dimension (Geiger, 2000, p. 9).

Incorporating the student experience and outlook, Rudolph (1962) held a slightly different historical interpretation. In *The American College & University: A History* (Rudolph, 1962), a seminal work of the traditionalist period, Rudolph gave significant attention to student life. Possibly the best-known historical explanation of how and why the U.S. system of colleges evolved, Rudolph limited his narrative to the colonial period and nineteenth century. Rudolph’s (1962) attention to living arrangements and teaching methods on traditional campuses, a function of his faculty background at a liberal arts residential college, provided an introduction to the thematic history of the relationship between the college and the student.

U.S. colleges initially adopted the English classic curriculum and process of holistic education, paired with an overt religious focus. Rudolph’s (1962) vivid portrayals of the student revolts on the heels of the American Revolution were painted as protests against a combination of poor living conditions and institutional control of students’ personal lives, not simply frustration with the curriculum (as suggested by other historians).

Rudolph made the point that increased self-determination and independence in personal matters characterized the period that Geiger (2000) dubbed the “student estate” (p. 9). Student-directed learning experiences (e.g., Phi Beta Kappa at Harvard, literary societies, fraternities, and athletics), along with less stringently enforced student conduct, increased students’ emotional attachment to their colleges. As a result, student unrest subsided. The institution (i.e., trustees, presidents, professors, and students) formalized “a host of relationships that defined responsibility, prestige, and power” (Rudolph, 1962, p. 176), thus giving students some power over themselves and over the college.

Educators and administrators spent most of the second half of the century experimenting with what educational structures and values fit the new country's needs and educators' needs. The acquisition and transmission of knowledge through teaching became the goal of U.S. higher education (Rudolph, 1962). The increasing professionalization of the college professoriate in the late 1800s exposed faculty and academic administrators to the Germanic structures and processes of higher education.

Cornerstones of the Germanic system were *lernfreiheit* and *lehrfreiheit*—student and faculty rights of academic freedom.

*Lernfreiheit* . . . meant that absence of administrative coercion which freed the German student to roam from university to university, to take what courses he chose, live where he would, and to be free from all those restrictions, characteristics of the English and American collegiate way, that were hostile to an atmosphere of dedicated study and research. . . . *Lehrfreiheit* . . . meant the right of the university professor to freedom of inquiry and to freedom of teaching, the right to study and report on his findings in an atmosphere of consent. (Rudolph, 1962, p. 412)

The Germanic academic freedom described above presumed virtually no relationship between the student and the college or its faculty. The German faculty taught in one location and taught what they were interested in. Students were given complete freedom and responsibility for their academic program, progress, and personhood. Faculty and administration oversight of students' activities, both in and outside of the classroom were minimal, and in some cases non-existent. Students shaped their course load and had a cursory relationship with the institutions providing access to the knowledge.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, U. S. students and faculty integrated these freedoms and responsibilities in varying degrees. A unique university system emerged in the U.S. Rudolph (1962) believed that the twentieth century ushered in a faculty-centric period that neglected the student. A bifurcated relationship replaced colleges' holistic approach to the SIR

(i.e., classic curriculum and faculty psychology) (Rudolph, 1962; Colby, et. al., 2003). U. S. higher education melded two relational expectations and structures, each with differing natures. The U.S. university system embraced the Germanic system's faculty rights and reduced interaction with students, without extending to students corresponding rights and personal responsibilities (Rudolph, 1962). The academic arena adopted the German relationship, while the student life relationship retained and attempted to reassert the English system. Faculty responsibility narrowed to students' intellectual edification and nothing more (Rudolph, 1962; Colby, et al., 2003).

Institutions transferred the responsibility of engagement with students to an administrator class of faculty surrogates. Dean of Students positions were created to free faculty and academic administrators from responsibility for student behavior (Rudolph, 1962). This structure melded the organizational elements of the English and Germanic systems to create the distinctive U.S. student-institution relationship. This organizational development cemented the fragmentation of the student experience, increasing the personal separation between faculty and students. Rudolph (1962) predicted that these relational developments set in motion resentments that predictably exploded into new expressions of student unrest. His depictions of the causes of student unrest forecast the impending student concerns and issues of the 1960s.

#### *Dominance of the Legally Defined Student-Institution Relationship*

As long as the administration of the school was enmeshed with academics, the courts' traditional stance of "academic deference" (i.e., courts "defer to the expertise of some decision maker other than itself") (Kaplin & Lee, 2006, p. 67) in curricular and pedagogical matters precluded legal involvement in the daily operational decisions of the college (Kaplin & Lee, 2006). As the prominence of the learning relationship subsided, the relational paradigm

increasingly became administrative and, therefore, more subject to legal attention and definition. Since the early nineteenth century, the courts and the administration and faculty of the colleges agreed that the relationship between the student and the college was parental. *Gott vs. Berea College* (1913), a prominent *in loco parentis* court decision, reinforced and expanded the societal expectation that colleges have a parental duty for the protection and discipline of students (Henning, 2007; Kaplin & Lee, 2006). *In loco parentis*, a legal relational framework for acting “in place of the parent,” dominated the twentieth century student–institution relationship (Henning, 2007).

Learning and administrative decisions about, and interactions with, students were intertwined in the student–institution relationship prior to the twentieth century, but separated as academics and student life diverged (Kauffman, 1966). By the 1960s, students became the “Forgotten Man” (Wilson, 1966, p. 59), out-of-class contact with students and addressing student conduct became an administrative function, no longer with much, if any, faculty involvement. This predominantly controlling influence over a changing student body soon resulted in student revolt (e. g., Alabama State College protests, the Berkley freedom of speech movement). A 5<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals decision struck down the legal doctrine of *in loco parentis* in the *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* (1961) decision, extending due process rights to students in college disciplinary proceedings (Kaplin & Lee, 2006). Student rights and freedoms expanded throughout the 1960s as the courts reviewed and limited the use of long-held means for controlling student actions.

The American Council of Education (ACE) leadership facilitated a dialogue between faculty, administrators, and students about the evolving student–institution relationship and its correlation with learning, in a publication called *The College and the Student: An Assessment of*

*Relationships and Responsibilities in Undergraduate Education by Administrators, Faculty Members, Students, and Public Officials* (Dennis & Kauffman, 1966). The ACE debated the future direction of learning relationships in college without proposing a resolution or recommending a model. The scholarly dialogue coalesced around the notion that higher education's relational problem stemmed from an institutional failure to maintain commitment to student learning and moral development, which resulted in a growing gulf between the students (on the one hand) and the faculty and administrators (on the other). The student collegiate experience was depersonalized to the point of undermining institutional learning objectives and, possibly, engendering "moral anarchy or worse, nihilism" (Kauffman, 1966, p. 149) in students.

Kauffman (1966), proclaiming that "the educational relationship [had] ruptured" (p. 145), attributed the injury to the increasing diversity in the student population, the burgeoning size of campuses, the decreasing degree of faculty–student out-of-class contact, and the expanding demands on faculty time as factors responsible for the seismic changes in the unfolding twentieth-century student–institutional relationship. These changes left students feeling unimportant and abandoned by the faculty and the institution alike. Kauffman, stating that students "will demand a relationship, even if it must be legally prescribed" (p. 145), asserted that this loss of intimacy might have been one of the driving forces behind students' legal challenges to the system.

The increasing disorder on college campuses and the continuing barrage of academic freedom-based legal decisions forced a rethinking of higher education's philosophical approach to students. As constitutional issues flooded into university processes, lawyers replaced experienced deans and faculty as the decision-makers on issues that affected the institution's relationship with students. Without academic clarity of purpose to guide or direct this

relationship, institutional discussion and policy decisions deferred to the legal system's extension of rights to students and its perceived limitations on colleges' ability and responsibility to control student conduct. Little consideration was given to what students *needed* from or *expected* from colleges as regards fostering student behavior conducive to a learning environment (Kauffman, 1966; Kuh et al., 1994; Mullendore, 1992; Mullendore & Bryan, 1992). In the almost 50 years since *Dixon v. the State of Alabama* decision (1961), administrators depending on the legally defined student-institution relationship for definitive direction have continued to be frustrated because of the courts' evolving relational expectations (Cooper & Lancaster, 1998).

With fewer mechanisms available to colleges for controlling student behavior, the nature of the student-institution relationships has changed dramatically (Bickel & Lake, 1999). Unfettered, students' conduct became more egregious and dangerous. The courts' decisions from this era suggested that colleges owed students no duty for their safety nor any obligation to monitor their actions, unless administrators and faculty accepted or implied a duty by having direct knowledge of dangerous conditions or student actions. Institutional attorneys, protecting colleges' best interests first and foremost, interpreted liability case law to mean that institutions of higher education could be considered no more than *bystanders* to their students' conduct and safety. Legally, the institution and the student were believed to be like strangers, as long as they did not accept or imply a duty by knowledge or action.

The legal incentive to know less about student behaviors administratively reinforced the rising educational philosophy of separating the student's life from the college and its influence, but societal expectations of some form of student oversight continued to exist (Bickel & Lake, 1999). Trends in recent case law, requiring schools to be more effective at protecting students, have raised fears of a renewed expectation by the courts that colleges should function *in loco*

*parentis* (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Henning, 2007). Each of these authors suggested that these decisions were less a return to *in loco parentis* and more an acknowledgement of some duty in the SIR.

Kaplin and Lee (2006), respected scholars of higher education law, considered the changes in the legal student–institution relationship to be a combination of the changing age of majority and the expansion of student’s rights, which expanded the student’s contractual rights as consumers and contributed to the evolution of faculty, student, and institutional academic freedom. The change in the age of majority from 21 to 18 strengthened students’ petitions for rights. Paired with the courts’ (and some academicians’) growing sense that students should be afforded stronger academic freedoms, newly deemed *adult* students found the student–institution relationship to be more equally balanced. Kaplin and Lee (2006) suggested this wave of legally recognized student academic freedoms constituted the newest iteration of students’ legal status and shaped the future of the legally defined student–institution relationship.

The present historical review has described the beginnings of a relational framework of SIR components and characteristics. Throughout the history of U.S. higher education, influential relationship participants (e.g., students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and society), along with the educational institutions themselves, came into the relationship with expectations and goals for the time spent together in the educational enterprise. These people, their expectations, and their goals interacted in different settings in and outside of the classroom vis-à-vis curriculum, policy, culture, and personal contact and exchanges. These history of higher education authors have each described student interactions with the college and its representatives as having relational characteristics and elements (e.g., power, responsive, organized structures, intensity of quality or quantity, closeness).

Institutions of higher education took a cohesive academic experience and an almost stiflingly close personal relationship and replaced it with the separation of students' academic lives from their personal lives. The schools held divergent goals for each setting. Students were independent from faculty involvement and personal investment in students' lives, yet still subject to administratively placed behavioral limitations. Over the course of the evolution of the student–institution relationship, interacting relational components and students' feelings about those interactions appeared to influence students' behaviors. The twentieth-century debate continues to challenge, spur, and motivate U.S. higher education's development of the modern student–institution relationship.

#### Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR): An Essential Learning Outcome

The U.S. system of higher education—founded, in part, to provide moral and character education to the young leaders of the new world (Rudolph, 1962)—continues to pursue PSR as one of liberal education's “essential learning outcomes” (AAC&U, 2007, p. 3) for the 21<sup>st</sup> century student (AAC&U, 2004a, 2005, 2007; Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004, 2005). The AAC&U first coined this phrase in “Taking Responsibility for the Quality of the Baccalaureate Degree” (AAC&U, 2004a). This outcome emerged from the national dialogue with the faculty and administrators of colleges and universities (on the one hand) and the business community (on the other), and reflected the expectations of accreditation bodies. The AAC&U's *Liberal Education & America's Promise (LEAP)* (AAC&U, 2005, 2007) and its *Core Commitments: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility* (n.d.a) initiatives sought to reignite and enhance colleges' efforts to graduate personally and socially responsible students.



*Personal and Social Responsibility Defined*

For all the energy expended in developing PSR education initiatives, the AAC&U has not provided a consensus for a definition of the term (Swaner, 2005). Instead of proposing a finite definition, the AAC&U's activities have explained the construct using five dimensions:

1. Striving for excellence—developing a strong work ethic and consciously doing one's very best in all aspects of college
2. Cultivating personal and academic integrity—recognizing and acting on a sense of honor, ranging from honesty in relationships to principled engagement with a formal academic honor code
3. Contributing to a larger community—recognizing and acting on one's responsibility to the educational community (classroom, campus life), the local community, and the wider society, both national and global
4. Taking seriously the perspectives of others—recognizing and acting on the obligation to inform one's own judgment; engaging diverse and competing perspectives as a resource for learning, for citizenship, and for work
5. Developing competence in ethical and moral reasoning—developing one's own personal and social values and being able to express and act upon those values responsibly; developing a mature sense of moral sensitivity and personal character; being able to identify and evaluate moral dilemmas and act appropriately (AAC&U, n.d.a.).

This initiative was a new way of thinking about “values, character, ethical challenges, and/or social justice” (Hersch & Schneider, 2005, p. 8) in education in the postmodern era (AAC&U, n.d.a., 2006; Swaner, 2004, 2005). The official overview of the project stated that *Core Commitments* was dedicated to drawing attention to the importance of encouraging students to examine and personalize their ethical responsibilities. Project materials (e.g., presidential call to action, dimensions documents) characterized PSR as being an initiative dedicated to developing in students integrity, excellence, and ethical and moral skills, combined with civic engagement (AAC&U, n.d.a.). *Educating For Personal and Social Responsibility*, as conceptualized by the AAC&U, developed civically, ethically, and morally competent and committed graduates.

Swaner's (2004) description of morality in "Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility: A Planning Project of the Association of American Colleges and Universities" showed clear evidence that the concept of PSR, as expressed by the AAC&U, and that of moral and ethical development, can be considered interchangeable. Swaner (2005) proposed that the four theoretical perspectives (or "languages") (p. 14) of moral development defined PSR. These perspectives or languages were identified as : (a) Moral cognition (i.e., thought); (b) Moral affect (i.e., understanding, sensitivity, or emotion); (c) Moral behavior (i.e., action); and (d) An integration of the three. While establishing the rationale for a focus on the climate (or environment), Swaner cautioned against only considering how the environment would impact the individual; PSR should describe both student learning outcomes and the nature of the environment in which students can learn. Developing PSR was an interactive process of moral development, occurring in the collaboration between the student and the environment (or climate) of the college. The AAC&U's *Core Commitments* project addressed the environmental aspect of that process without attending to the interaction itself.

*Recommitment to Learning and Moral Education: The Antecedents*

The evolution of student learning and moral education in U.S. colleges and universities parallel one another. The historical narrative of Colby et al. (2003) regarding the move of moral and civic education from the center of the collegiate experience to the periphery summarized the antecedents of the learning movement. The college curriculum, which began (as stated above) as religious training with moral dimensions, quickly evolved after the American Revolution into character development and the building of personal virtues (Colby et al., 2003). The faculty specialization trend of the 1800s prompted a general education movement that was dedicated to retaining knowledge of classic curriculum subject matter (e.g., ethics, critical thinking) by

integrating it into every student's required course load as a core grouping of courses. The multidisciplinary core courses were not housed in the newly created specialized departments. These courses soon became marginalized as college and university curricula grew more department-driven.

The pursuit of scientific knowledge and the development of morality became two separate goals at the same time that colleges lost the expectation of common learning outcomes (Colby et al., 2003). Science, scientific inquiry, and postmodernism—(understood here as a values-neutral philosophy)—crowded character education out of the curriculum. By the 1960s, academics relinquished to student-run extracurricular activities and student life the responsibility for practically applied moral education. Simultaneously, the legal decisions limiting the institution's power over students encouraged faculty and administrators to keep their distance from students' personal lives (Willimon & Naylor, 1995). As noted by authors participating in the 1966 ACE dialogue about the student–institution relationship, these challenges merged with an academic mindset predisposed to limited interaction with, or consideration of, students in the process of higher education, thus altering the educational climate (Dennis & Kauffman, 1966). Despite the expressed concern for the state of collegiate learning, and the place of the student in that education, the entrenched separation of academic pursuits and faculty (on the one hand) from student life (on the other) expanded and reinforced the benign neglect of students that had been growing throughout the century (Willimon & Naylor, 1995; Wilson, 1966). A generation of college students, faculty, and staff came and went without seeing significant pedagogical change following the ACE's dialogue (Dennis & Kauffman, 1966).

A current of criticism, goaded by “public concern about drunkenness, drug abuse, violence toward women, suicides, academic dishonesty, and sexual promiscuity among college

students,” pushed the higher education community to reevaluate what and how it educated students (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999, p. 15). The Wingspread Group on Higher Education (1993), an educational think-tank, published “An American Imperative,” an open letter critical of the disparity between the education colleges provided and society’s needs from colleges and universities. The loss of institutional influence over student values, the letter argued, was eroding learning (Wingspread Group, 1993).

Calling for a return to collegiate commitment to student learning and, specifically, to values education, the letter became a commonly cited impetus for educational reform (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999). The call echoed across higher education, notably in the commitment to “develop coherent values and ethical standards” (Blimling et al., 1999, p. 15) in *Principles of Good Practice* (1996) and the AAC&U’s (2002) *Greater Expectations* and *Core Commitments: Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility* initiative. These discussions were indicative of higher education’s concern for the impact of student behavior on learning environments and the need for values, character, and moral education as a sub-theme of the learning movement in higher education.

The learning movement followed three intersecting strains of research related to PSR education: (a) optimal conditions or properties for student learning, (b) preferred content of collegiate learning, and (c) the explication and assessment of selected student learning outcomes. These strains of research informed the student learning discussion and led to the reaffirmation of PSR as an essential learning outcome. They are detailed below.

#### *Conditions Conducive to Learning*

In *Campus Life: In Search of Community—A Special Report* (Carnegie Foundation, 1990), Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation’s (1990) criticism of higher education and its inability

to agree on a replacement SIR for *in loco parentis* produced their vision of the college's communal relationship with students, complete with a list of aspirational qualities (i.e., purposeful, open, just, disciplined, caring, celebrative). This vision played a pivotal role in the undergraduate education dialogue and the initiation of collegiate reform during the 1990s. Boyer (Carnegie Foundation, 1990), citing student misbehavior and disengagement from the academic and intellectual purposes of college, diagnosed the problem as a loss of community that resulted from the failure to establish a post-*in loco parentis* relational framework for the institution.

Boyer's concerns and ideas were shaped by the 1987 qualitative study of the undergraduate experience on 30 campuses, conducted by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching; the 1989 National Survey of College and University Presidents of 382 institutions, conducted by the Carnegie Foundation; and the National Survey of Chief Student Affairs Officers with 355 participating institutions, conducted by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA). The qualitative study of campuses reported in *The Undergraduate Experience in America* (Boyer, 1987) initially drew Boyer's attention to the inadequacies of collegiate education, extremes of student behavior, and the "ambivalence college administrators feel about their overall responsibility for student behavior" (p. 203).

These studies of university presidents and chief student affairs officers established the dimensions of the problem. The university presidents most frequently noted substance abuse (primarily alcohol) as the campus life issue of greatest concern. Eighty-two percent of presidents at research and doctorate-granting institutions, 84% of presidents at comprehensive institutions, and 75% of presidents at liberal arts colleges rated alcohol abuse as a moderate or major problem on campus (Carnegie Foundation, 1990). Reflecting on these results, the study's authors

identified a need for an understanding of community that integrated the students' experience in creating quality interactions both in and out of the classroom. Insights from each study contributed to the reforms proposed in *Campus Life: In Search of Community* (Carnegie Foundation, 1990).

Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation's (1990) remedy reflected the belief that education and learning were interactive processes and occurred in communion with others. Colleges, as educational settings, needed to be intellectual communities characterized by purposefulness, openness, justice, discipline, care, and celebration. This vision of community required that students, faculty, and staff embrace freedom of expression, accept obligations to the community, and demonstrate concern for the dignity, equality, and wellbeing of all. Boyer had suggested a relational framework. The resulting attention to this vision from scholars in higher education and from practitioners alike was a springboard for ongoing discourse and research into conditions or features indicative of an effective learning community.

### *Learning Outcomes*

Efforts to discover how to educate students effectively were occurring in tandem with the search for what students should learn during college. Associations representing institutions of higher education and student affairs administrators adopted a student learning focus as demonstrated by the ACPA's "Student Learning Imperative" (1994), the NASPA's and the ACPA's (2004) "Learning Reconsidered," and the AAC&U's (2002) "Greater Expectations."

Elements of these learning outcomes evolved into PSR. The NASPA and ACPA *Good Practices in Student Affairs* (Blimling, Whitt, & Associates, 1999) study group, appointed to develop principles for encouraging student learning, came to the conclusion that "helping students develop coherent values and ethical standards" (Blimling et al., 1999, p. 15) was central

to building the 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning environments. Relying on research and dialogue at regional and national conferences and graduate preparation programs, *Good Practices in Student Affairs: Principles to Foster Student Learning* (Blimling et al., 1999) suggested that student affairs practice could be most influential when students “learn and practice academic integrity, live responsibly in the community, develop citizenship skills and commitment for life after college, and grow and learn from personal moral crises and ethical conflicts” (p. 51).

The *quality* of relationships was also emphasized in creating environments conducive to student development of values and ethical standards. The authors’ (Blimling et al., 1999, p. 15) review of the literature generated seven factors that put forward the preferred relational qualities. Colleges that promote student character were institutions where students cared for and were cared for by others; experienced diversity, a peer culture, role modeling, participation in a community, and challenges to their traditional ways of thinking; and were required to make decisions. Citing Chickering and Reisser’s (1993) seventh vector of development, *integrity*, Blimling et al. proposed that students develop character in colleges by: (a) Experiencing institutional values communications (i.e., mission, curriculum, codes of honor, and conduct or creeds); (b) Seeing respected individuals setting good examples; (c) Receiving encouragement to explore and develop their own values and accept personal responsibility; (d) Learning on a welcoming and caring campus that intentionally acclimates its students; and (e) Engaging in student participation, responsibility, freedom of expression, and debate. Students’ ethical development required more than the opportunity to participate in and observe ethical behavior. The environmental quality, often relational in nature, was believed to be a factor in the development of standards and values.

*Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College*

(AAC&U, 2002), was the AAC&U's first step toward rededicating higher education to producing moral responsibility in students. It responded to the challenge issued by Boyer (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) and the Wingspread Report (1993). Arguing for a return to a learning focus on students (as opposed to a teaching focus on the faculty in liberal education), the AAC&U facilitated a research-driven dialogue to determine higher education's pedagogical goals for the twenty-first century (AAC&U, 2002). Supported by a twenty-two campus Consortium on Quality Education, a national panel of education experts determined that colleges should be expected to create intentional learners who are: "(a) empowered through the mastery of intellectual and practical skills, (b) informed by knowledge about the natural and social worlds, and (c) responsible for their personal actions and for civic values" (p. xi). This vision of a responsible learner called for instilling in students a "sense of social responsibility and ethical judgment" (p. xii); as evidenced by "intellectual honesty" (p. xii); "responsibility for society's moral health and social justice" (p. xii), and the ability to detect consequences, ethical or otherwise.

The "Greater Expectations" Responsible Learner construct evolved into educating for personal and social responsibility (PSR), which (as stated above) is one of the four "essential learning outcome[s]" (AAC&U, 2007, p.3) of a liberal education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century student. These recommended outcomes consisted of: "(a) knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world, (b) intellectual and practical skills, (c) personal and social responsibility, and (d) integrative learning" (AAC&U, n.d.b.). The AAC&U's (2005, 2007) design of the *Liberal Education & America's Promise* (LEAP) project, begun in 2005, fostered awareness of the



“essential learning outcomes” and drew attention to educational best practices that achieved those outcomes in students.

### *A Core Commitment*

The AAC&U (n.d.a., 2004b) launched *Core Commitments: Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility* in tandem with the LEAP initiative. *Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility* (PSR), if achieved, fulfilled *Greater Expectation's* vision of creating responsible learners. *Core Commitments* adopted the environmental tactics proposed in *Good Practices in Student Affairs: Principles to Foster Student Learning* (Blimiling et al., 1999) without attending to the relational nature or qualities involved.

From its initial press release announcing *Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility*, the AAC&U sought to raise national attention to the importance of PSR. Additionally, the AAC&U wanted to engender campus support and to develop resources to enhance and assess the effectiveness of PSR education in college. The AAC&U's PSR emphasis responded to the perceived increases in academic dishonesty, substance abuse, violence, and acts of intolerance (AAC&U, n.d.b.; Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004, 2005), concerns raised in the earlier critiques of the state of higher education (Carnegie Foundation, 1990; Wingspread Report, 1993). Leading researchers in moral development and campus life conceptualized the best indicators of PSR, identified what colleges could do to facilitate PSR education, and assessed the impact of curricular and teaching strategies (Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004). This team established a set of principles to guide ongoing research along with the AAC&U initiatives exploring PSR:

- (a) Student learning is the collective obligation of all individuals and units responsible for the curriculum and co-curriculum.
- (b) Education for personal and social responsibility, to be intentionally fostered in all students, should pervade institutional cultures.

- (c) Higher education institutions have an educational and civic obligation to unapologetically teach for personal and social responsibility.
  - (d) Ethical, civic, and moral development should be closely tied to a substantive vision for student learning in the college years that is shared across constituent groups.
  - (e) The development of personal and social responsibility is cumulative, builds on prior knowledge and experience, and should be assessed along the way.
- (AAC&U, n.d.a., p.2)

As noted earlier in this section, *Core Commitments* produced an annotated bibliography about college student moral and character development, education, and assessment, which framed the discussion and design of the project going forward; it also formed the five philosophical statements (given above) to guide the project, outlined the dimensions of PSR, and encouraged and facilitated the creation of research plans and assessment tools.

In the current *Core Commitments* stage, a 23-school consortium of exemplar programs committed to PSR was fashioned to identify, gather, and generate PSR-enhancing resources (i.e., programmatic, assessment, and systems-oriented). Selected participating schools were identified through a competitive grant application process. The grant required schools to create implementation teams that consisted of faculty, staff, and administrators representing both academic affairs and student affairs. Consortium members piloted two assessment resources. The Personal and Social Responsibility Institutional Inventory (PSRII) measured student, faculty, student affairs administrator, and academic administrator perceptions of the campus PSR climate. The *Core Commitments* Institutional Matrix, a self-assessment tool, reflected the five aforementioned dimensions of PSR, five domains of campus culture (incentives and rewards, community and campus partnerships, curriculum, campus life, and mission and educational purpose), and the prevalence of PSR activities on campus.

Much of the *Core Commitments* project was reflected by Colby et al. (2003) in their qualitative study and observations reported in *Educating Citizens: Preparing America's*

*Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility*. These researchers undertook a multi-site case study of twelve campuses known for intentional campus-wide commitment to student moral and civic development. The study sought to identify the general principles and elements of the institutions' educational programming, the challenges they faced, and the strategies they employed. These insights were intended to identify and chronicle the components and conditions present in the meta-curricula of exemplar ethics education programs. This study's design and findings served as a foundational document for *Core Commitments*.

Colby et al.'s (2003) analysis of benchmark schools consistently found intentionally designed systematic integration of moral and civic education with clear definition and goals across the curriculum, both inside and outside the classroom, across programs and campuses. Complete institutional buy-in was not necessary, but presidential leadership was essential. Assessment of institutional efforts was also pivotal to the success of the program.

Based on these themes, the institutions' successes were believed to be substantially attributable to the pervasive and intentional presence of, and commitment to, ethics education in the institutional culture (Colby et al., 2003). These findings are not surprising, given that a pervasive ethics education program was also a key selection criterion for participation. The usefulness of these findings was limited in that there was no evidence that these programs changed students' capacity to make ethical decisions or to behave in more ethical ways, nor did this study determine whether the identified common themes contributed to the process of creating positive change—if, indeed, any change had been noted. These assessment shortcomings were addressed in the design of the *Core Commitments* project.

Not all members of the academic community embraced LEAP's movement to educate students for PSR. Rogers (Krueger & Rogers, 2006), a professor of education, responded to the

question of whether colleges and universities *should* teach PSR in the National Education Associations' *Advocate Online*. There he presented many of the arguments that challenge attempts to educate for PSR. Labeling the PSR initiative as the kind of philosophy and method typical of student affairs work (thus implying that it is outside of the faculty realm) diminished the relevance of PSR as an institutional goal and as crucial to the college's mission. Three reasons were given why colleges should not engage in PSR education. Rogers stated that (a) Faculty members are ill prepared to provide PSR education to students; (b) Faculty–student relationships are not as influential as peer interactions or student organizations and, therefore, not as likely to effect substantial change; and (c) The validity of current student development theory should be questioned. The author's thesis statement questioned why faculty and staff members should expend energy when there is no verified impact from the effort. *Core Commitments* significantly addressed Rogers' challenge by creating tools intended to determine whether PSR education results in changes in students' abilities and actions, while measuring which activities in the environment contribute PSR learning, and to what degree.

Dissatisfaction on the part of higher education and society at large with regard to the outcomes of a college education and students' misbehaviors drove the need for an intentional effort on the part of colleges to develop the students' abilities to make ethical decisions and take ethical action. Acknowledging with *Core Commitments: Educating for Personal and Social Responsibility* the importance of the educational climate and student relationships within that climate, the higher education community has begun to develop the knowledge base and resources needed to assess and manipulate environments that will improve student learning.

### Encouraging PSR Behavior in Students

The development of the *Core Commitments* personal and social responsibility initiative relied on moral reasoning and ethical decision-making theory. It has been shown that students increase their ethical decision-making and reasoning abilities in college; still, more research exploring the mechanisms of development and change in college students is needed (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The following section opened with a discussion of the ways students grow and develop morally while in college. An overview of the theorists who have identified processes underlying moral action in organizations and individuals and how those processes manifest themselves in educational settings and the pedagogical process followed. These portions focused on the relational nature of those processes. The section closed with an exploration of college student behaviors that undermined higher education learning environments, motivating the development of the *Core Commitments* project, and the effects of student relationships on those behaviors.

#### *Theoretical Foundations of Moral Action*

The quality of a student's relationships, thought to be a component of PSR development, was widely believed to be a factor in the degradation of the learning environment and the earlier cited dissatisfaction with college. Meanwhile, PSR initiatives and other complementary projects continued to underscore the importance of the quality of the environment and human interaction in the learning process. Few studies and initiatives considered the impact of the students' perceptions of the relational quality on those students' PSR behaviors; even fewer studies have attended to the relational quality and impact of the SIR as a whole.

### *Moral Development and College*

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), in *How College Affects Students: A Third Decade of Research, Vol. 2*, found that “students generally make statistically significant gains in principled reasoning during college” (p. 367), with an average effect size of .77 of a standard deviation difference between seniors and freshmen. Updating their original work, Pascarella and Terenzini’s combined first and second volumes of research reviewed over 5,000 studies conducted over a span of 35 years. The authors found a number of gains and changes in students’ and recent graduates’ moral reasoning abilities. The amount of time enrolled in college and increases in moral reasoning were positively related. While in college, students’ principal ethical decision-making influence changed from the authority exerted by society (conventional) to universal moral principles (principled). Institutional size and type did not directly correlate with measured levels of moral reasoning (i.e., small liberal arts highest, public universities moderate and smallest at bible colleges). Gains were attributable to the exposure to college and members of the college community functioning at more complex levels of moral competency. While the authors found evidence of colleges’ impact on moral reasoning, and that moral behavior and reasoning were strongly and positively associated, there was less evidence establishing whether the college experience impacted student behavior. These findings gave colleges administrators much to consider when structuring students’ college experiences to enhance their moral reasoning abilities.

Although there is a significant body of research on the effect of college on moral reasoning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), moral cognition was only one of the ethical development perspectives, the others being moral affect, behavior, and integration. Pascarella & Terenzini (2005) found little research on the other elements and how these processes affected

moral development and moral action in college. In addition, the authors reported on studies that measured individual change and environmental variables, not relational qualities and organizational processes. The affective aspects of moral development and the potential for organizations to impact and influence students ethical education and action await intense exploration.

### *Ethical Decision Making and Organizations*

Wittmer's (2005) article, "Developing a Behavioral Model for Ethical Decision Making in Organizations: Conceptual and Empirical Research," published in *Ethics in Public Management*, presented a model that integrated ethical decision-making processes with the interactionist perspective:  $B = f(\text{ethical decision processes, individual attributes, environmental factors})$ . Using a core framework suggesting a continuous interaction of individual and environmental factors with each aspect of the behavior action process, Wittmer adapted a review of the literature on ethical decision making and moral reasoning processes to an organizational context. Wittmer's theoretical structure for considering ethical decision making as a process of interaction within organizations listed elements of the interaction and categories of the process relevant in organizational ethical practice. The environmental factors included reward/punishment structures, press, policies and codes of conduct, top management commitment and behavior, and ethical climate, and individual influences or attributes included locus of control or a sense of personal control, age, experience, and gender. Recognizing the process as responding to an ethical situation, Wittmer (2005) chose to interpret Moos' (1979) adaptive change processes as the ethical decision process of behavioral action first forwarded in Rest's (1986) "Four Component Model of Morality." Wittmer (2005) did not clarify whether his proposal's relevance was limited to human interaction or if it also applied to organization–public

interaction, but he classified relational quality assessment as an individual factor similar to age. Additionally, his model did not address the nature or explain the process in which individuals engage to produce moral action, nor did it specifically address unique aspects of the interaction necessary for ethical decisions to become action.

### *Moral Action*

The four-component model of moral action referred to by Wittmer (2005) was the overarching framework for the theory of Post Conventional Moral Thinking (Rest, Narveaz, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999). Rest et al.'s (1999) Neo-Kohlbergian approach integrated the major moral developmental perspectives of cognitive–structural, domain, affective, and social learning theories to elucidate the moral judgment component of moral action (Swaner, 2004). The tenets of Post-Conventional Moral Thinking were grounded in Kohlberg's cognitive theory and emerged from extensive examination of studies exploring the integration of each of the earlier listed theoretical perspectives (above).

Rest et al. (1999), conceptualizing “the psychology of morality as a whole” (p. 101), proposed four processes intrinsic to moral action, as seen below in Figure 2.2 (Rest et al., 1999). The components—presented in *Postconventional Moral Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach* (Rest et al., 1999) as moral sensitivity, moral judgment, moral motivation, and moral character—provided “units of analysis used to trace how a person responds in a particular social situation” (Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1995, p. 378).

Independently, each component explained little of the variance in an individual's behaviors; but when taken as a whole, Rest et al.'s (1999) study showed them to be sufficiently explanatory. Although these processes were presented in a logical order, the processes have been shown to influence one another and, therefore, the presented sequence is not predetermined.



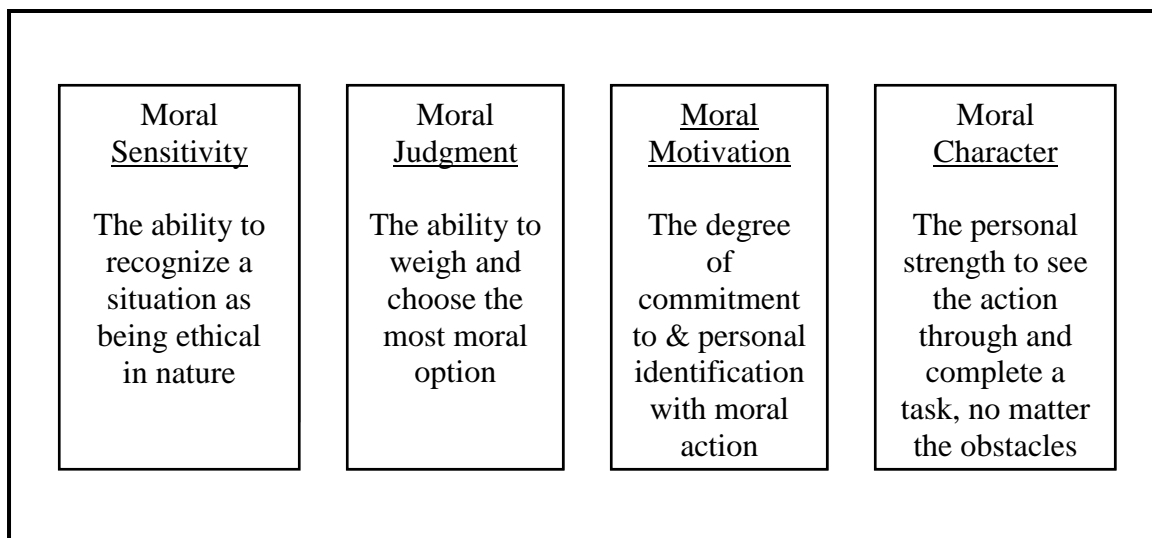


Figure 2.2. Components of Moral Action

Four components of moral action drawn from the work of Rest et al. (1999, p. 101).

Additionally, cognitive–affective interactions (Narveaz & Rest, 1995) impact each component. These findings suggest that affect and cognition have a symbiotic effect on the behavioral process.

Rest et al. (1999) posited that morality is experienced and exercised as macro and micro-morality, referring to the settings of morality—*macro* being the structures of society and *micro* being face-to-face relationships. Targeted interventions in each of these settings could be used to influence behavior, but Rest et al. (1999) did not see an intersection between macro- and micro-morality. He suggested that it was necessary for macro-morality, set within the structures of society, to be impartial, and thus morality could not be relational. In other words, Rest et al. did not identify a role for the relationship in moral action. His collaborating researchers have begun to argue otherwise (Narveaz & Rest, 1995).

*Educational Relationships Producing PSR*

As stated earlier, current scholarship on moral action and ethical education suggests that a student's relationship to the school, faculty, and staff impacts student actions. Relational studies conducted across all educational levels (i.e., primary, secondary, undergraduate, and graduate) in individual, group, and institutional interactions has argued for the significance of the influence of relationship and its quality in achieving learning and behavioral goals. Research conducted with college student populations has demonstrated the significance of the contribution of faculty–student interaction to student cognitive learning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), student satisfaction, attitudes toward college, and persistence (Pascarella, 1980). Student perceptions of their peer relationships have been shown to be equally significant (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). College student perceptions of these relationships (i.e., faculty, peer) and institutional culture has been shown to be an even more significant factor in underrepresented populations' experiences in and reactions to college, such as persistence and performance (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). However, the impact of the student relationship with the overall institution has not garnered anywhere near the level of attention that student social relationships (i.e., both dyadic and peer group relationships) have enjoyed.

A growing body of empirical evidence validates the significance of relational quality at an institutional level to both the learning process and the PSR behavioral choices in schools. The school connectedness and bonding research indicates that student commitment to and positive perceptions of a school and its faculty are associated with improved student behavior, including reduced levels of violence and of drug and alcohol consumption (Maddox & Prinz, 2003; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Wilson, 2004; Wingspread Group, 2004), increased learning and academic performance (Frey, Tobin, & Beesley, 2004; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Wingspread

Group, 2004), and improved emotional wellbeing (Lee, Keough, & Sexton, 2002; Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006; Townsend & McWhirter, 2005; Wingspread Group, 2004).

School connection, defined by Blum (2005) as an environment in which students believe that adults in school care about their learning and about them as individuals, is in the early stages of construct formation and still needs more research to be fully understood. For example, in some cases, school connectedness, independent of school climate, predicted physical aggression (Wilson, 2004), while at other times it was found to mediate school climate for satisfaction, cohesion, and conduct, but not for depressive and emotional problems (Loukas et al., 2006). Not all elements or characteristics of school connectedness contribute equally and in the same direction to the construct's overall benefit. Some elements detract from the effects of the relationship. McNeely and Falci (2004) found that the *type* of connectedness was the most important aspect and can taint the positive impact of other components. In their study, McNeely and Falci (2004) found that a sense of belonging (i.e., peer relationships) suppressed the positive impact of teacher support (i.e., being caring, fair) on students' levels of alcohol consumption and other risky behaviors. These studies demonstrated that the underlying school connectedness processes and interplay of relational quality characteristics have not been fully discovered.

Narveaz (2006), in *Integrative Ethical Education*, extended her work with Rest to include educational settings, forwarding the Integrative Ethical Education (IEE) model as a framework for researching the process of moral learning in elementary and secondary school systems. Based in part on findings from school connectedness studies, the research framework stressed the nature of the relational and interactive processes in which students, educators, and schools engage during ethical education. Narveaz proposed that students needed ethical apprenticeship experiences in caring relationships and supportive climates in order to maximize their learning.

Narveaz believed that ethical values, skills, and commitment are honed through observation, coaching, and reflection in situations where students also have responsibility to regulate their own behavior and actions (Collaborative for Ethical Education, n.d.). The model was based on three foundational ideas with resulting implications: (a) “moral development is developing expertise” (p. 716), (b) “education is transformative and interactive” (p. 719), and (c) “human nature is cooperative and self-actualizing” (p. 722). Narveaz cited traditional character education, Kohlberg’s cognitive development perspective on ethics, and newer integrative approaches’ research to support her conclusions.

The IEE model provided a relationally-based framework from which to promote ethics education. The model postulated that students need faculty members’ guidance through assisted reflection to develop moral expertise (i.e., to be morally competent); even self-regulation required coaching. The author argued that, “by its very nature, moral expertise is relational” (Narveaz, 2006, p. 722). Community was considered essential to developing moral expertise in that learning and exercising moral character occurs in community. As such, moral expertise occurred through interaction with the community.

The application to this present study of this model and the research on which it has been based is limited in three important ways. The IEE model was not designed for ethics education in college. It continued to articulate relational quality as an environmental or climate factor. Lastly, Narveaz did not conceptualize the structure as the SIR or the qualities as the nature of the relationship, although she was describing the PSR educational benefits of relational qualities (i.e., caring, support, helpfulness, and self-determination).

School connectedness does not appear to have been explored as such in college. A search for the phrases “school connectedness” and “college” or “university” in both the EBSCO

Host—Academic Search Complete and the ProQuest Dissertation Thesis search engines did not uncover a single study of collegiate school connectedness. The only school connectedness study conducted with college populations found by the researcher suggested that similar constructs are at play in college student perceptions of and feelings toward their institutions, but that there is a difference between males' and females' levels of association between relationship and behavior, with males' behavior being more impacted by the presence of school connectedness (Lee et al., 2002). One dissertation exploring the association between psychological distress, health behaviors (including the consumption of alcohol), and social connectedness in college (a similar construct that may be a sub-construct of school connectedness) found no correlation between alcohol and social connectedness (Marshall, 2007). This finding is consistent with an observation made in the secondary school setting that the older the student, the less impactful connection becomes (Simmons–Morton, Crump, Haynie, & Saylor, 1999). These combined findings could mean that school connectedness is not relevant in college populations, but there is not enough research at this time to come to definitive conclusions.

Libbey (2004), in a meta-analysis of the relevant literature, defined school connection by listing the terms and constructs that researchers have used to measure school connectedness. The constructs that make up school connectedness, based on Libbey's findings, included, but were not limited to, school attachment, bonding, climate, connection, context, engagement and involvement, student satisfaction, and teacher support. From these measurements, Libbey found nine sub-constructs that, when taken together, comprise school connectedness. Libbey's observed sub-constructs of academic engagement, belonging, discipline, and fairness, like school, student voice, extracurricular activities, peer relations, safety, and teacher support, combine quality, methodological, and operational dimensions. Given the relevance of these

constructs and college outcomes, this research reveals the depth and breadth of the work yet to be done in exploring school connectedness in college.

### *PSR Behaviors*

Alcohol misuse and academic dishonesty are two of the most widespread student misbehaviors impacting the academic environment and undergraduate experience. The Wingspread (1993) report and Boyer's (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) call for community noted these behaviors as an impetus for concern. The AAC&U's *Core Commitments* (n.d.c., 2004b) cited the prevalence of alcohol abuse and academic dishonesty in its rationale for initiating the *Educating Students for Personal and Social Responsibility* initiative, and identified personal and academic integrity as a PSR dimension. Each behavior is an indicator of personal and social responsibility in students. While academic integrity has clear moral action implications, alcohol use is not universally considered to have the same implications. However, students who identify alcohol consumption as a moral decision depend on moral action processes and skills in deciding the frequency and intensity of their consumption (Berkowitz, Guerra, & Nucci, 1991). Apart from the moral dimensions of the individual conduct, both behaviors create environmental factors that undermine student PSR, and both have been used to measure a campus's PSR climate (AAC&U, n.d.a.).

The evidence is clear that individual factors (such as sex, race/ethnicity, year in school, athletic or Greek affiliation) and institutional factors (like place of residence, presence of a Greek system, and a high or higher density of diverse students) highly correlate with levels of alcohol consumption (Ham & Hope, 2003; Weschler, Dowadall, & Davenport, 1995; Weitzman, Nelson, Lee, & Weschler, 2002). With the exception of race, academic honesty research has also established the contribution of a core group of individual and institutional factors contributing to

students' decisions to be academically dishonest (Crown & Spiller, 1998; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Whitley, 1998). The literature suggests that effective alcohol and academic honesty intervention initiatives need to address both the individual student and the environment on multiple levels and through varied dimensions.

### *Alcohol Use*

The prevalence of college students' use and misuse of alcohol poses a persistent challenge for collegiate educators. Weschler's (1996) Harvard School of Public Health College Alcohol Study (CAS) verified for the general public and college administrators the extent and magnitude of the problem on modern college campuses. In this study, 84% of students reported drinking in the past school year and 44% percent of students met the definition of binge drinking (i.e., five drinks in one sitting for men and four for women). One-third of participating schools had more than half of the responding students qualify as binge drinkers.

Weschler's evidence supporting his estimated levels of consumption is strong. Subsequent re-administrations of the CAS found similar patterns and levels of consumption (Weschler & Nelson, 2008). In addition, Weschler's findings mirror those of the 2008 National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) *Monitoring the Future* longitudinal studies. Using measurement standards similar to CAS for more than 30 years, the NIDA (2008) found that 83% of college students drink and 41% reported binge drinking at least once in the two weeks prior to the survey—levels similar to and consistent with the CAS findings.

Students' use of alcohol impacts their ability to achieve excellence (one of PSR's dimensions) while in college. Heavy episodic users of alcohol reported missing class, falling behind academically, and engaging in both unprotected sex and violence (Weschler, Lee, Kuo, Seibring, Nelson, & Lee, 2002). These student drinkers reported lower GPAs and fewer

faculty–student interactions than those who did not drink similar quantities (Porter & Pryor, 2007). Pascarella, Goodman, Seifert, Tagliapietra–Nicoli, Park, and Whitt (2007) reinforced these findings, suggesting that the link between significant alcohol consumption and poor academic performance was causal and general, not conditional. Non-users are also negatively impacted. Students reported experiencing secondhand effects of other students’ alcohol misuse, such as disrupted sleep and studying, property damage, and rude behavior (including physical assault) (Weschler et al., 2002)

The *College Alcohol Study* (Weschler, 1996) results were a wake-up call for college administrators nationwide. Historically, preventative efforts toward alcohol abuse in college followed a medical model to address individual student behaviors and fell into three categories: (a) medical treatment-based, (b) education appealing to personal responsibility, or (c) rules-based prohibitive policies and discipline (Willimon & Naylor, 1995). Larimer and Cronce’s (2007) review of individually-focused strategies showed that generic education sessions and skill- or motivation-based interventions were unsuccessful unless paired with personalized feedback. Recent prevention initiatives, following a trend toward community health models, have adopted an environmental systems management approach (Toomey, Lenk, & Wagenaar, 2007; Toomey & Wagenaar, 2002; Weschler & Nelson, 2008).

Toomey, Lenk, and Wagenaar’s (2007) review of the environmental literature identified objectives and categories of effective alcohol prevention strategies currently being pursued on college campuses. College administrators, intent on reducing alcohol use in underage college students, implemented multiple-strategy approaches to limit social and commercial access to alcohol. Administrators wishing to reduce risky alcohol use in all college students worked to restrict where, when, and how alcohol is sold and distributed, increase the price of alcohol, and



restrict consumption where heavy drinking occurs. College prevention programs deemphasized the role of alcohol, using social norms campaigns in an attempt to create positive expectations on campus. A multidimensional approach was advocated because the impact of these strategies is believed to be cumulative. There is some evidence that policy change and a multi-strategy approaches are effective, but more study is needed (Toomey, Lenk, & Wagenaar, 2007; Toomey & Wagenaar, 2002; Weschler & Nelson, 2008).

The federal government, in its push to reduce adolescent alcohol abuse, embraced a multidimensional environmental strategies approach (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, 2002). An early example of these environmentally-focused interventions, “A Matter of Degree” (AMOD), based its structure on the research findings associated with the CAS (Weschler, 1996; Weschler & Nelson, 2008). Two principles guided AMOD programs in making colleges into agents of social change. First, a college’s environment can encourage high-risk drinking, but intentional policy and targeted interventions can change that behavior and prevent harm. Second, lasting change comes through collaborative relationships. AMOD’s environmental management plans work in conjunction with campus and community coalitions to erect structural, organizational, policy, and climate barriers to students’ access to alcohol. Subsequent research has observed a statistically significant, though appreciably small, reduction in binge drinking rates in AMOD communities. These changes correlated with the amount of institutional commitment to the coalition-based program, as measured by the overall number of intervention strategies employed (Weitzman, Nelson, Lee, & Weschler, 2004).

College students drink more often and consume greater quantities in one sitting than their non-college peers (NIDA, 2008). Demb & Campell’s (2009) proposed developmental factors might provide an explanation for this difference. The researchers argued that there is a

relationship between traditionally-aged student drinking and psychosocial, cognitive, and moral development. Alcohol use provides a means for students to establish identity, develop autonomy, express a desire for individuation, and manage their emotions. These are age-appropriate developmental tasks that college students are known to experience and master in greater levels than their non-college peers (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). College educators need to include developmentally appropriate methods for addressing alcohol abuse.

Alcohol researchers have discovered that emotions influence alcohol use (Simons, Gaher, Correia, Hansen, & Christopher, 2005). Wetherill and Fromme (2007) tested whether emotion, generated by parental and peer relationships, influenced college students' consumption of alcohol. Perceived awareness and caring, a construct identified during a qualitative study conducted with college freshman and sophomores, combined perceptions of being known by (i.e., attended to) and receiving care from (i.e., support from) parents, peers, employers, faculty, and the community. Students' reported levels of perceived awareness and caring by family and peers predicted the frequency and quantity of alcohol consumption. Social motivations moderated the effect of perceived awareness and caring by peers.

In "We Work, We Hard Play Hard," a study of student life at Duke University, Willimon (1993) suggested that the relationships students have with the college and faculty play a role in students' alcohol behavior. At the behest of the president, the campus chaplain embarked on a listening tour of student concerns (i.e., over 200 hours of student interviews, more than 20 group meetings, and a dozen campus organization parties) and late-night visits to campus (i.e., campus police ride-alongs and a residence hall stay). He determined that student abuse of alcohol and the separation between student life and academics, among many other ills undermining the academic

mission, were symptomatic of the loss of an adult presence and clarity of the purpose in students' lives at college. Students "eager for adult interaction" (Willimon & Naylor, 1995, p. 143) needed and mourned the loss of relationships with mature, caring adults while in college.

The *quality* of those connections and interactions was believed to be of equal importance. Willimon and Naylor (1995), in an extension of their earlier study, advocated for colleges to nurture a true community in which participants experienced "a sense of belonging and connectedness" (p. 143) and "faculty and students [were] seriously concerned about each other's well-being" (p. 146). Their model community relied on "participatory management" (p. 160) of student issues and reflected student and institutional shared values and aims, openness to dialogue, and a willingness and ability to effect win-win change. These authors forwarded these ideas as being developmentally appropriate and necessary, though absent, interventions.

There is evidence to suggest that student alcohol consumption has been influenced by student perceptions of relational quality. Sale, Sambrano, Springer, and Turner (2003) found that school connectedness mediated the effects of individual student substance abuse risk factors in a longitudinal multiple-site study of 10,473 youths between 9 and 18 years old. The researchers stated that to be most effective, schools with multi-strategy prevention plans should intentionally cultivate strong connections with their students. The contribution of school connectedness to conditions conducive to personal and social responsibility will be discussed in greater detail later in this section.

Kaplowitz and Campo (2004) considered similar themes in a study of students' participation in and opinions of rioting activities at the University of Michigan. Typically-given reasons for rioting have included levels of student alcohol consumption, excessively controlling regulation and disciplinary processes, a lack of voice in the administration of the college, low

academic involvement, and dissatisfaction with professors caused by large class sizes. Although alcohol consumption best predicted student participation in the riots, most of the findings suggest that student relational perceptions also contributed to student attitude.

Attitudes of participating and non-participating students about the rioting were influenced by their perceptions of the recently enacted alcohol policies. Objections to the restrictive alcohol policies explained 60% of the variance between students who condoned the riots and those who did not. Qualitative data collected with the survey indicated that students believed that increasing the student voice in decision making would reduce the chances of future rioting. Contrary to expectations, the measures of relationships with faculty showed mixed results. Student satisfaction with their professors positively correlated to student riot attitudes. There was no association found between a student's riot attitudes and a student's experience in a large class. These results indicate that size of class may not be an effective measure of disruptive behavior.

Student consumption of alcohol is a function of the individual interacting with the college environment, and the final decision to consume alcohol is seemingly influenced by affective reactions to those interactions. The effectiveness of institutional interventions appears to be influenced by all three (i.e., P, E, P x E) factors and is most effective when each is taken into account. Because alcohol use and academic dishonesty are correlated (Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2005; Whitley, 1998), causes speculation that similar associations occur with student academic dishonesty.

### *Academic Integrity*

Academic dishonesty on college campuses is prevalent and feared to be rising (Gallant, 2008). Definitively establishing exactly how prevalent it is, and determining if that rate is growing, may both be impossibilities. In reviewing the literature, McCabe and Trevino (1997)

and Whitley (1998) discovered that the incidence rate of students' self-reporting at least one act of academic dishonesty during their college years ranged from 13%–95%. Recent studies consistently reported finding rates of between 60% and 80%, with honor-system schools reporting significantly lower rates (Clifford, 1996; Cole, 2002; McCabe & Trevino, 1997; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2005; Pulvers & Diekhoff, 1999; Stearns, 2001). Contrary to the general perception, there is mixed evidence that slightly suggests that the rate of cheating behaviors has actually remained stable since the 1960s (Brown & Emmett, 2001; Cole, 2002; Crown & Spiller, 1998; McCabe & Trevino, 1996). Academic dishonesty is correlated to other disruptive student conduct issues, including alcohol abuse (Eberhardt, Rice, & Smith, 2003; Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2005; Whitley, 1998), future rule-violating behavior (Porter & Pryor, 2007), unethical post-college employee conduct (Harding, Carpenter, Finelli, & Passow, 2004; Lucas & Friedrich, 2005; Nonis & Swift, 2001), and, as stated earlier, alcohol use (Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2005).

The act of being academically dishonest has a moral dimension (Crown & Spiller, 1998; Pulvers & Diekhoff, 1999; Whitley, 1998). The literature has mixed findings, but predominantly supports the conclusion that students who reported engaging in acts of academic dishonesty tended to operate from less mature stages of moral development than those who did not. The challenge for academic honesty interventions and strategies is to make behavioral change without regard for students' moral stage, while sparking moral growth.

Faculty, peer attitudes, and the institutional climate have been consistently identified as the keys to a student's decision to not cheat (McCabe, 2005; McCabe & Trevino, 1993; McCabe, Trevino, & Butterfield, 1999, 2003; Whitley, 1998). However, few interventions, with the exception of an institutional commitment to an honor code—a systems approach emphasizing

student responsibility empowered by faculty respect and support—are identified as being successful at improving student academic honesty behaviors (McCabe, 2005; McCabe & Trevino, 1996). Like the AMOD program findings with alcohol, the institutional depth and breadth of implementing an honor system is believed to impact its effectiveness.

Gallant and Drinnan's (2006) proposal to institutionalize the value of academic honesty—intentionally coordinating structures, procedures, and symbols—is the next iteration of the environmental approach that made honor codes successful. Gallant (2008) conceptualized academic integrity as having at least four environmental dimensions: (a) internal (i.e., student character), (b) organizational (i.e., climate), (c) institutional (i.e., academic system characteristics of the organization), and (d) societal (i.e., the greater culture external to the organization). Since institutions have minimal influence over the internal and societal dimensions of academic integrity, she proposed that effective institutional interventions address organizational and institutional elements (particularly classroom dynamics and student–faculty relationships).

Using Moos' (1979) College and University Classroom Environment Instrument (CUCEI), Pulvers and Diekhoff (1999) measured the relationship between students' perceptions of the classroom and cheating behaviors. The CUCEI measures of the students' perceptions of the classroom included: (a) Personalization—student interaction with and mattering to faculty; (b) Involvement—active student participation and attention given during class; (c) Student Cohesiveness—collaboration, help, friendliness with each other; (d) Satisfaction—students' enjoyment of their courses; (e) Task Orientation—well structured, planned, and communicated activities; (f) Innovation—creative academic activities; and (g) Individuation—students making decisions and class expectations reflecting their skills, abilities, and interests. Pulvers and Diekhoff (1999) reported that 4% of the variance in cheating behavior was explained by

students' perceptions of classroom environmental factors, with significant statistical differences between cheaters and non-cheaters as regards satisfaction, personalization, and task-orientation environments, and no significant difference noted regarding involvement, cohesiveness, or individualization.

Student justification or rationalization of cheating behavior was also linked to the perceptions of the classroom environment. These findings indicated that feelings of connectedness and student affective responses to the environment (i.e., relational characteristics) were associated with student academic dishonesty and students' willingness to retain a sense of personal responsibility for their actions. Faculty behaviors and student responses to those behaviors contributed to these student perceptions and subsequent behaviors.

Research across academic disciplines has supported the idea that faculty actions contribute to and shape climate, student attitudes, and subsequent academic honesty behaviors (Anderson, Louis, & Earle, 1992; Hutton, 2006; Lovett–Hooper, Komarraju, Weston, & Dollinger, 2007; McCabe & Trevino, 1993; Whitley, Jr. & Kite, 1998). Much of the faculty-focused academic honesty research has emphasized the response to acts of dishonesty, not prevention. Faculty-related literature on academic integrity has targeted improved detection and encouraged faculty participation as violation-reporting agents or panel members (Kibler, 1994; Rudolf & Timm, 1998). Current research is beginning to explore faculty contributions to the institutional climate, encouraging faculty to better communicate expectations and the rationale for ethical standards and to improve the quality of their relationships with students (Hutton, 2006; McCabe, 2005).

The Center for Academic Integrity (CAI) developed a list of institutional characteristics necessary for creating a campus climate that promotes academic integrity (Center for Academic

Integrity, 1999). Most of these characteristics anticipated a campus climate that demonstrated a valuing of academic integrity and communication of those values and expectations, with the remainder describing a relational nature that promotes academic integrity. The CAI list of characteristics described a relational climate of trust; mutual respect; and open, risk-free communication; possessing a sense of community where students are known, involved in decision-making, and engaged in shared responsibility and common purpose. Clifford (1996) measured students' perceptions of the presence and importance of these characteristics on student academic dishonesty behaviors using a cross section of 16 campuses to represent all types of institutions. The elements of campus climate students identified as being most important to them in preventing cheating and promoting academic integrity were relational. This study showed that students cheated less if they believed that: (a) Students participated in rule-making and enforcement; (b) They experienced open and risk-free communication, trusting environments, a sense of community and shared mission/purpose; (c) They felt pride and loyalty to their campus; and (d) Faculty promoted respect and involvement (i.e., student mattering), were enthusiastic about teaching, and cared about their students. The survey items measuring the relational elements of the climate, like most of the current relational research on students in college, emphasized faculty–student interaction, not institutional climate.

Whitley's (1998) review of the academic dishonesty literature made the same point. The quality of faculty–student interactions is a significant correlate with academic honesty, but there are other affective influences involved as well. Whitley's findings that student attitudes about their faculty interactions (i.e., a students' sense about an instructor's equity and fairness) and institutional relationship (i.e., alienation, the opposite of connectedness) predicted a student's



intention to cheat and demonstrated the need to consider and explore the influence of each element.

In summary, the exercise of personal and social responsibility includes an expectation of student academic honesty and responsible levels of alcohol consumption. Educating for personal and social responsibility, with regard for types of conduct, requires a multidimensional approach (Swaner, 2004). Experiencing limited success in amending student behavior through individual interventions, both academic misconduct and alcohol abuse prevention have turned to environmental approaches. A nuance seen in both strains of behavioral research has suggested that students' relationship with the institution is one dimension needing continued examination. These observed relationships, and the relational nature (or characteristics) of those relationships, have indicated an association between student attitudes and conduct influenced by affective processes. Independent of the individual and environmental characteristics of the students, and of the institutions, a student's experiences with the institution's policies, organizational structure and climate, and community members appear to influence the level of the student's alcohol use and academic honesty. The remainder of this chapter will explore the student–institution relationship and the ability to encourage and facilitate personal and social responsibility through those relationships.

### The Student–Institutional Relationship (SIR)

Researchers have not identified or proposed a theoretically-constructed model of the student–institution relationship's (SIR's) components, nature, and process hinted at by the school connectedness literature. The courts, educational leadership, and researchers have established the importance of the SIR and proposed guiding principles of a relationship that meets institutional obligations for students' learning and safety. However, administrators have not been given a

clear direction for shaping a theoretically informed understanding of the SIR with relational PSR learning implications. The remainder of this chapter explores theoretical frameworks relevant to understanding relationships between a student and his or her college, introduces constructs that measure the perceived nature or quality of relationships between organizations and individuals impacted by the organization, and discusses the behavioral implications of those relational qualities (i.e., nature) on personal and social responsibility (PSR) behavior.

### *A Structural Framework*

In higher education literature, the term “student–institution relationship” is most often considered a legal term outlining the limits and nature of a college’s legal responsibility for and jurisdiction over the student body (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Dannells, 1997; Hoekema, 1994; Kaplan & Lee, 2006). This understanding only begins to delineate the construct and, as has been shown by the history of the SIR, does not reflect the educational, operational, and interpersonal dimensions of the SIR—the relationship between the student and his or her college which was hinted at by Libbey (2004) and other school connectedness research exploring the relationship between the student and his or her college.

*Webster’s College Dictionary* (1995) defines a relationship as “a connection, association, or involvement” (p. 1136). References to the student–institution relationship in non-legal/non-judicial affairs literature typically reflect this definition (Appleton, Briggs, & Rhatigan 1978; Miller et al., 2005). As stated earlier, Banning (1978) and Walsh (1978), campus ecologists, expressed the student–institution relationship as the interaction between the college environment and the student. Williams (1986) later envisioned the relationship similarly, arguing that the effect of fit – the congruence in values, style, and preferred characteristics between the student and the institution - shaped a student’s cognitive and affective perspectives and attitudes toward

the institution, thus creating the student–institution relationship. Stating that this relationship affects satisfaction, academic performance, and persistence, Williams also made the point that interventions that made the institution seem responsive to “student goals, needs, interests, values, and expectations” (p. 2) could improve a student’s sense of fit and behavior.

NASPA, having identified the need for a pedagogically-driven exploration of the nature of an effective learning-focused student–institution relationship replacement for *in loco parentis* (Kuh, Lyons, et al., 1995), commissioned a team of scholars to explore the student–institution relationship. The *Reasonable Expectations* project team defined the institution as “the organization as well as all those who play a role (faculty, administrators, support staff, and others)” (p. 2). The team’s charge was to answer the question: “What form of educational compact between institutions and their students is most likely to promote the highest levels of student learning?” (Kuh, Lyons, et al., 1995, p. 2). Their report posited “two unequivocal conclusions”: “the more time and energy students invest in educationally purposeful activities, the more they gain” and “the nature and the quality of student, faculty, and staff relations” were more consequential than “institutional characteristics” (p. 2) in institutional success.

Reflecting Williams’ (1986) idea of the student–institution relationship as dependent on the fit between the student and the campus environment expectations, the Kuh et al. (1995) report proposed a framework of reasonable student and institutional pedagogical expectations organized by relational settings within the environment (i.e., teaching and learning, curriculum, institutional integrity, quality of institutional life, and educational services). Throughout each setting and corresponding expectations, common themes arose. Students expected quality faculty, services, and curriculum; clear communication of information, expectations, values, and

commitments; institutional, personal, and interpersonal integrity; available services, information, and people; and institutional and personal role modeling.

Later members of the project team (Miller et al., 2005) implied that the student expectation settings were components of the relationship and suggested that each influenced the relationship's nature. Despite their charge to do so, the project team did not specify which relational qualities or combinations of qualities, if any, were more likely to foster student learning or desired student behaviors. Instead of giving colleges guidance in shaping their relationships with students based on scholarship and research, the team developed a facilitative tool intended to encourage that dialogue on each campus. The remainder of this section addresses this omission by outlining the components, structure, process, and nature of the student–institution relationship, rooted in a theoretical and research-based foundation.

### *Campus Ecology and Behavior*

Moos (Moos & Insel, 1974) proposed a model that articulated the role the relationship construct plays in the process of behavioral decision making and change, while placing the process within the context of the person–environment interaction. Grounded in social ecology and a contextualistic tradition, Moos (Moos & Insel, 1974) sought to encourage preferred psychological outcomes (e.g., self-esteem, personal growth, intellectual development) and behavioral outcomes (e.g., healthy behaviors, avoidance of drug abuse and violence) by further refining society's ability to direct and shape behavioral and psychological evolution through “assessment and development of optimum human milieus” (p. ix). Moos considered interaction to be an evolutionary process: The individual adapts to the new environment and simultaneously influences it.

Attempting to understand “how human environments and human beings interact and shape one another” (Moos, 1976, p. vii), Moos examined environmental settings as diverse as “psychiatric wards, community-oriented psychiatric treatment programs (i.e., halfway houses, hospitals, etc.), correctional facilities, military facilities, residence halls, junior and high school classes, and task-oriented groups, work and family environments,” (Moos & Insel, 1974, p. 18). Moos identified the physical setting, organizational factors, the human aggregate, and the social climate as four independent domains of the environment.

Moos (1979) placed his conceptual framework within the adaptation process (i.e., decision-making about behavior) through which students move while in college—a subject that was largely unexplored and, therefore, not substantially understood at the time of Moos’ writing. Moos’ first stage of adaption, cognitive appraisal (i.e., the student’s perception of the environment and the possible responses), was considered an “essential mediating factor in most issues related to student functioning” (p. 12). In addition, yet independent of the interaction between the person and the environment, environment and person variables mediate the process of adapting to the new environment at each stage of behavioral decision making. Each stage of behavioral decision making is impacted by both the interaction of the person and environment, and by the independent person variables and environment variables.

Murray’s (1938) Needs–Press Model and Stern’s (1974) expansion of the model informed Moos’ (1976) understanding of interaction, the process of press as exerted within the environmental domains and the influence press has on behavior. Stern (1974), in research conducted in high schools and colleges, further defined environmental press as community-supported “conditions which represent impediments to a need as well as those which are likely to facilitate its expression” (p. 565). Murray (1938) stated that beta press, an aspect of the

interaction between the environment (i.e.,  $\text{Press} \subset [\text{P} \times \text{E}]$ ) and the person, expressed as the “general nature of the environment” (p. 123), directly contributes to changes in an individuals’ behavior, whereas Stern (1974) considered press an internal and external process contributing to the individual’s perception of situational variables. He further identified three types of press: (a) private beta press, (b) consensual beta press, and (b) alpha press. Private beta press is the pressure an individual within the environment places on himself or herself. Consensual beta press is exerted by the group of participants in the environment merging, to create a common ideology or group perspective. Alpha press is the pressure observed by an outsider to the environment. Stern proposed that press, experienced at both the molar (i.e., the environmental system) and molecular (i.e., singular environmental element or individual person) levels, swayed the behavior of both the group and the individual in a specific direction. Therefore, the process of press, a function of environmental and individual variables, can be conceptualized as an interaction variable or an element of the nature of the interaction of the person and the environment.

Integrating these ideas, Moos (1976) posited symbiotic relationships between perceived social climate and press (on the one hand) and the press (or the conditions created by press) that established the climate (on the other hand). To illustrate the point, he stated that an individual’s attitudes, roles, and “expectations of . . . environments can influence both an individual’s choice and later perception of an environment” (Moos, 1979, p. 11). As a whole, social climate mediates the other domains (See Figure 2.3). Moos (1976) assumed that “environments, like people, have unique ‘personalities’” that he described in qualitative terms, such as supportive, controlling, and orderly. He dubbed the environmental personality “social climate” (Moos, 1976, p. 320).

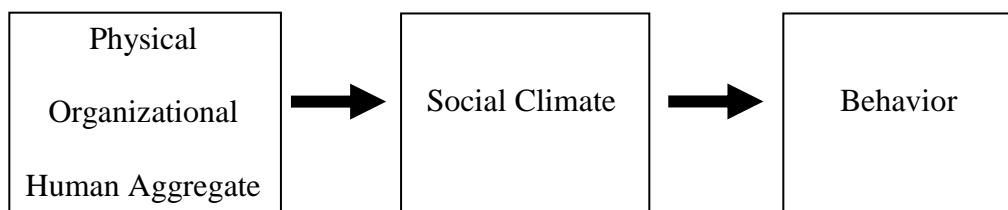


Figure 2.3. Environmental Processes and Behavior

Figure created by the K. D. Boyd, adapted from Moos (1976, 1979).

Dimensions of social climate, an environmental variable, were categorized by Moos as relationship (i.e., the nature and intensity of dyadic and peer group relationships), personal growth or goals orientation (i.e., conditions for growth and success), and system maintenance and change (i.e., orderly, controlled and well-managed, and flexible). As will be shown below, these relational characteristics are consistent with the organization–public relationship’s relational quality outcomes (RQOs). Sub-dimensions within each dimension changed as the environmental setting changed. Relational sub-dimensions [i.e., support, involvement/cohesiveness (expressed as commitment in educational settings), and expressiveness/spontaneity] overtly reflected the affective nature of the interaction between the individual and the college environment. His title choices suggest that he was actually cataloging latent affective qualities of relationship between the individual and the environmental setting.

To Moos (1976, 1979), influential relationships were considered an environmental variable that only occurs between living beings. The social climate, he believed, reflected an overall perception of the relational quality of individuals’ past social interactions (i.e.,  $P \times \sum e_{\text{Social Relationships}}$ ). Moos’ (1976, 1979) classification of relationship as an environmental variable, not interaction per se, shaped social and human ecology’s treatment of the construct.

Moos (1979) found patterns of relational activities or feelings (i.e., “involvement, emotional support, affiliation, teacher or staff support, cohesion, expressiveness, conflict, spontaneity” [p. 15]), but he did not express the possibility of relationships between organizations and publics.

Although Moos asserted that the person and environment influence one another, like most researchers, he limited his model to showing how environmental factors cause student outcomes. Moos acknowledged that the unidirectional model demonstrated only a portion of the interrelated and multidirectional person–interaction process. Moos did not address the influence of relational quality (i.e., nature of the relationship) or the behavioral influence on the environmental domains (i.e., architecture, the human aggregate, organization, or social climate). For example, he did not articulate how the person and environment interaction with the cognitive appraisal process might influence the social climate. However, Moos encouraged additional exploration into the cyclical and qualitative dynamics of human–environment interaction and its impact on individual behavior.

Strange and Banning (2001) updated Moos’ classification of the environment to the college setting. They demonstrated that the study of human ecology, mirroring other fields of psychology, primarily occupied itself with the exploration of the individual or the environment. The human ecology scholarship and research was categorized as falling into four categories of environment as it related to the college: (a) the physical, (b) the human aggregate, (c) the organizational, and (d) the constructed (Strange & Banning, 2001). The constructed environment expanded on Moos’ (1979) social climate domain. Apart from the Moos-based scholarship (i.e., student–teacher and peer-to-peer relationships), the attention given to interaction in the college setting mostly described the product or impact of the interaction on the student—such as



persistence, involvement and mattering—as opposed to the process or the impact of the interaction on the college or its goals for students.

Although Banning (1978) and Walsh (1978), early campus ecologists, referred to the interactions between the student and the college environment as the student–institution relationship, Strange and Banning (2001) did not. Strange and Banning (2001), like Boyer before them (1990), instead articulated the interaction as community and argued that the qualitative nature of the community made a difference in student learning. Using recognized interaction theory constructs developed after Moos’ (1976, 1979) research, the authors proposed a Hierarchy of Learning Environment Purposes, developed using Maslow’s (1968) Hierarchy of Needs. Strange and Banning’s (2001) hierarchy prioritized the needs and motivations of students to which colleges should attend when creating learning environments. First, students must initially feel a sense of security and belonging, an element of “mattering” as described by Schlossberg (1989), if they are to fully participate in a learning environment. Only then are student environments able to promote student involvement (i.e., participation, engagement, and role taking), which will ultimately engender full membership into the community. Environmental management techniques (e.g., individual actions, group interventions, climate, or cultural impacts) that address these purposes and relational quality goals permit institutions to intentionally contour student experiences to increase the likelihood of student learning.

Banning (1978) and Walsh (1978) wrote about the interaction between the student and the environment as the SIR. However, student–environment interaction theories explained or described more than the nature of the relationship between the student and the environment. Each theorist articulated different aspects of the interaction and its impact on students and their behaviors. Tinto (1993) attempted to delineate how the continuous process of interaction

between the student and all elements of the college environment influenced persistence, a behavioral outcome. Astin's (1984) theory of involvement articulated relational maintenance strategies (i.e., quantity and quality of involvement) with affective components that increased the likelihood of a preferred behavioral outcome. Mattering (i.e., a sense of belonging, support, importance and reliance) (Scholssberg, 1989), examined in more depth later in this chapter, was discussed as an affective construct (Elliot, Kao, & Grant, 2004; Tovar, Simon, & Zaragoza, 2008). Stern's (1974) press, presented above, described the process of interaction. Holland's (1973) fit or congruence constitutes an individual's response to the interaction of the person and the environment of the institution (i.e., matching of goals, needs, interests, expectations, values), as explained by Williams (1986) and operationalized in part by the *Reasonable Expectations* project (described above at the opening of the Student–Institution Relationship section). The core of these interaction theories mirrors organization–public constructs and resonates throughout the OPR literature.

### *Organization–Public Relationships: An SIR Model*

The primary construct that frames this exploration is the organization–public relationship (OPR); however, there is not a universally accepted definition of this phrase (Ki & Shin, 2006). Broom et al. (1997, 2000) first wrote about the OPR scholarship's lack of a definition or comprehensive theory. After reviewing the interpersonal communication, psychotherapy, inter-organizational relationships, and systems theory literature, Broome et al. proposed that “relationships consist of the transactions that involve the exchange of resources . . . lead[ing] to mutual benefit, as well as mutual achievement” (p. 91). OPR scholars, attempting to define the relationships, typically detailed the relational outcomes, antecedents, participants, functions, conditions for existence, and rationale for the creation of the relationships, but did not give a

description of the state or nature of the relationship itself (Bortree, 2007). Noting that these definitions illustrated “interdependence, interaction, and impact between two parties or more” (Ki, 2006, p. 15), Ki defined the organization–public relationship as “the state where each party relies on” and is “affected by the other” (p. 15). For these reasons a co-orientational approach to gathering information about the relationship (i.e., asking for all parties perceptions) has been recommended (Seltzer, 2005).

Establishing the need for, and proposing a definition with which to structure, the study of organization–public relationships, Broom et al. (2000) proposed using three lenses to examine OPRs: antecedents, concepts or nature of the relation, and consequences. Relational antecedents were the environmental impetus or pressure for change, and provided a context explaining why an organization–public relationship functions as it does (Grunig & Huang, 2000). The relational context included “social and cultural norms, collective perceptions and expectations, needs for resources, perceptions of uncertain environments and legal/voluntary necessity” (Broom et al., 2000, p. 16). Relational concepts represented the properties or nature of “exchanges, transactions, communications or other interconnected activities” (p. 16), although Broom et al. did not specify characteristics. Relational consequences were defined as “the outputs that have the effect of changing the environment” (p. 16) or goal achievement. These foundational proposals broadly outlined the process components of the organization–public relationship but did not attempt to convey the nature of each component.

Building on and expanding Broom et al.’s (1997) model, Grunig and Huang (2000) proposed the three-part process model of relationships with relational antecedents, maintenance strategies, and relationship quality and goal outcomes (See Figure 2.4), a model that has been widely accepted (p. 29). Grunig and Huang’s insertion of maintenance strategies included a

desire for mutual relational enjoyment (positivity), transparency (openness), assurances of care and commitment (assurances of legitimacy), shared relationships with other publics (networking), and mutual responsibilities (shared tasks).

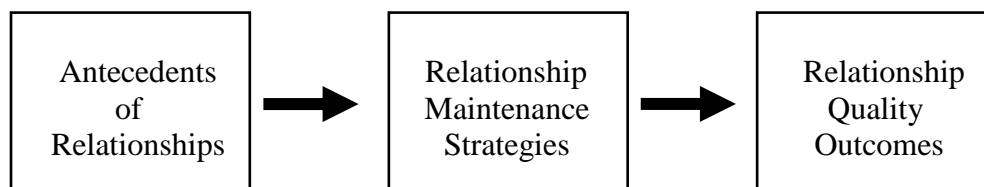


Figure 2.4. Simplified Version of Stages and Forms of Relationships

Reproduced with the permission of the copyright holder (Ki, 2006, p. 17).

Grunig and Huang's model also amended Broom et al.'s (1997, 2000) concepts to include properties or features as quality outcomes recognizing that the quality of the relationship changes the environment. Goal attainment continued to be an important outcome, but explicating the nature or quality outcomes took precedence in this model. The current proposed study of the nature of the student–institution relationship primarily focused on the third element of organization–public relationships, the relational quality and behavioral outcomes of the relationship.

### *Relational Quality*

Three themes ran through relational quality research: One identified RQOs in the public and created tools that measure change in relational quality (i.e., Hon and Grunig [1999] influenced research); another catalogued typologies and established a general theory of relationship management (i.e., Ledingham and Brunig-influenced research); while the third explored the impact of the publics' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. Each began their

studies attempting to measure changes in the quality of the relationship in order to demonstrate the effect of public relations activities on the success of the organization.

*Relational quality outcomes.* RQOs capture the strengths, features, properties, and characteristics that comprise the nature or essence (Grunig & Huang, 2000) of the organization–public relationship as perceived by the public (Ki & Hon, 2007b). Ki (2006) conceptualized RQOs as determining or describing a positive relationship between the organization and its public. Although using positive descriptors (i.e., trust, commitment, satisfaction), relational qualities, if measured on a continuum, serve as good indicators (Hon & Grunig, 1999) of the state of the relationship between the organization and its strategic public. Ledingham (2003) posited that relational quality measurements both accurately depict the relationship and predict participant perceptions and behavior.

Researchers considered a number of indicators of positive relationships identified by literature in the fields of public affairs, community relations, issues management, crisis management, media relations (Ledingham, 2003), interpersonal relationships, marketing, psychology, and social psychology (Ki & Shin, 2006; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Seeking to refine their ability to measure relational quality, scholars considered over 20 characteristics (Ki & Shin, 2006) as diverse as openness, trust, involvement, investment, commitment, control mutuality, satisfaction, reputation, face and favor, personal network, reciprocity, legitimacy, and mutual understanding (Bruning & Ledingham, 1998, 1999, 2000; Grunig, Grunig, & Ehling, 1992; Grunig & Huang, 2000; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Huang, 1997, 2001b).

In Hon and Grunig's (1999) *Guidelines for Measuring Relationship in Public Relations*, the third publication in a series exploring public relations measurement, the authors suggested a framework of four relational quality indicators that could be used to measure the quality of

organization–public relationships: (a) Control mutuality (i.e., balanced control or power); (b) Trust (i.e., integrity, fairness, dependability, and competence); (c) Satisfaction (i.e., acceptable congruence between reality and expectations, overall quality, and the cost–benefit ratio); and (d) Commitment (i.e., emotional attachment and interdependence).

Huang (1997, 2001b) originally developed and measured the four core relational features (i.e., trust, satisfaction, commitment, and control mutuality) expected to be present in successful organization–public relationships. Subsequently, these indicators were presented within the three-part process model as RQOs (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Hon & Grunig, 1999). Huang's (2001b) original instrument was later expanded to include additional cross-cultural measures of relational quality and tested for reliability and validity (Huang, 2001a, 2001b; Jo, 2003).

Examining an OPR between a manufacturer and retailers, Jo's study determined that trust, satisfaction, and commitment were global relational measures and would be relevant measures across cultures. Research associated with Hon and Grunig's (1999) methods of assessing relational quality—measuring the public's affective response to the relationship—continued to refine RQOs, their measurement, and the impact of relational quality on organizational outcome goals.

*Relational types.* In addition to RQOs, Ledingham and Bruning's (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Ledingham, 1999; Ledingham, 2003; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998) line of research categorized a taxonomy of the public's affective perceptions about and attitudes toward the relationship and the organization–public relationship itself. Organization–public relationships had been classified by function-based relational factors (including organizational setting, product type, and function of the interaction) or by the qualitative nature of the relationship (such as level of engagement) (Ledingham, 2003). Different combinations of relational qualities manifest

themselves in the types of relationships organizations pursue and in which they engage with their publics.

Relying on Clark and Mills' (1979) research, Grunig and Huang (2000) hypothesized that in addition to the four proposed RQOs, two types of relationships are characteristic of organization–public relationships: exchange relationships (i.e., social interdependence) and communal relationships (i.e., genuine concern for the welfare of the publics). Based in a commerce mindset, a participant in an exchange relationship expects to receive evenly traded benefits when giving something to the other relational participant. Communal relationships, characterized by participants' concern for all relational partners' wellbeing, provide benefit without either party's expectation of something in return. Grunig and Huang (2000) postulated that communal relationships are less conflictual and more supportive of their publics over time. Neither relationship was believed to be completely independent of the other. Many communal relationships have been shown to begin as exchange relationships (Hung, 2005).

Grunig and Hunt (1984) initially grouped an organization's publics (i.e., groups of people or organizations in an environment impacted by or impacting the organization) as non-publics, latent publics, aware publics, and active publics, depending on the organization's behavioral impact on the group or organization. Publics move from a state of latency to activity as awareness and responsive action increase. The more aware a public becomes of undesirable treatment by the organization or the possibility of the public's interests being subservient to the organizational interests, the more active those publics become (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Researchers have identified other relational configurations as well. Hung's (2005) qualitative study of 40 interviews with representatives of the international business field found that organization–public relationships lie on a motivational continuum ranging from “concern for

self interest” to “concern for other’s interest” (i.e., covenantal and communal relationship) (Hung, 2005, p. 411). Bruning and Ledingham (1999), having initiated their research agenda exploring relational characteristics of OPRs, later began to uncover an underlying pattern to relational participants’ attitudes: professional, community, and personal.

Ledingham and Bruning’s (1999) relational characteristic combinations emerged as relational typologies in college student–institution relationships (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Bruning & Ralston, 2001). In one mixed-methods study of college populations, the qualitative nature of each relational type delineated the participant’s perceptual assessments of relational quality from one type to the other, at least perceptually, if not in reality (Bruning & Ralston, 2001). Using the results of a quantitative study of 164 first-year college students in a communications course and two focus groups of upperclassmen students, Bruning and Ralston (2001) found response patterns indicating that the student–institution relationships can be categorized as personal, professional, or communal relationships. According to these authors’ quantitative results, each type of relationship was significantly related to the students’ predisposition to continue preferred behavior—in this case, intended persistence in school.

The student focus group participants who were asked to define the relationship types described personal relationships as trusting and respectful interactions with faculty and staff who are concerned about students’ academic and personal wellbeing (Brunig & Ralston, 2001). Shared goals and organizational settings, in which students are listened to and helped to overcome challenges, typify professional relationships. Most OPR scholars, including Bruning and Ralston, interpreted “community” as referring to the town or local community in which an organization functions, whereas student responses in this study suggested that “community,” for students, meant their campus community. Students operationalized community relationships as a



connection between students and the people with whom they share the campus, resulting in personal commitment to the institution and a feeling that the students were integral to the school. The qualitative portion of this study informed the researchers' understanding of students' perceptions of qualities related to each type of relationship, and the differing dimensions of the SIR provided direction for the development of collegiate RQOs.

*Behavioral outcomes—institutional goals*

Broom et al. (1997, 2000) first suggested that the process of the organization–public relationships has consequences, one of which is goal achievement. Echoing Broom et al., Grunig and Huang (2000) identified goal attainment as a relational outcome and proposed that the goals are achieved through participating in mutually complementary behaviors. Organization–public relationship researchers have established a link between relational quality and a public's attitudes (Brunner, 2000; Ki & Hon, 2007a), behavioral intent (Banning & Schoen, 2007; Bortree, 2007; Bruning & Ralston, 2000, 2001; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998), and actual behavior (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Ki & Hon, 2007a).

In seeking to better understand the nature of the relationships between adolescent publics and organizations, Bortree (2007) examined organizations' maintenance strategies for working with adolescent publics and the impact of those strategies on the adolescents' perceptions of the relational quality and intended behavior (i.e., intention to volunteer). A structural equation modeling analysis of quantitative data collected from 315 fifteen-to-eighteen year-olds supported the applicability of Grunig and Huang's (2000) relationship model to adolescent populations and affirmed that relational quality was related to a likelihood to volunteer in the future. Control mutuality was found to be a predictor of satisfaction, trust, and commitment, while satisfaction was found to be a predictor of trust and commitment. The use of guidance as a maintenance

strategy had a significant positive relationship with each of the relational qualities. The relational quality influence on OPR, according to Boretree's study, functions differently in adolescents than in adults, despite the presence of similar processes and abilities to influence behavioral intent. Additionally, this study showed that relational quality can influence behavior other than persistence or brand loyalty.

### *Perceived Organizational Support Theory*

The development of OPR, a less developed theory of relationship management, chronologically followed the introduction of Organizational Support Theory. Organizational Support Theory or POS (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986) posited that employees, as subordinate members within an organization, individually develop "global beliefs" (p. 501) about and behavioral reactions to the nature of the organization's affective response to its employees. POS relied on Levinson's (1965) notion of the "personification of the organization" as a function of employee's "anthropomorphic ascriptions of dispositional traits to the organization" (Eisenberger et al., 1986, p 500). Levinson asserted that the employees' perceptions were influenced by the organization's legal, fiduciary, and ethical responsibility for its agents and by the power dynamics inherent in employee–employer interactions. The organization used precedents, traditions, and policy to create the culture characteristics of the organization—employee interactions (i.e., the Whichever Organization way).

Eisenberger et al. (1986, 2002) asserted that Perceptual Organizational Support crystallized positive expectations of organization–employee interactions. The support "incorporate[d the employees' association with the organization into their] self-identity and thereby develop an emotional bond (affective attachment) to the organization" (Eisenberger et. al, p. 501). The organization's commitment to its employee created and continuously reinforced

the employees' commitment to the organization. Perceived Organizational Support was most effective when believed to be voluntary, rather than coerced. Transitivity, negative organizational behavior is typically forgiven by the employee if it was perceived to be beyond the organization's control, as long as the employee had a strong sense of organizational perceived support.

Eisenberger, Aselage, Sucharski, & Jones, 2004 outlined Organizational Support Theory (OST) as having an inherent order of POS antecedent activities, the state of POS, psychological outcomes of POS, and behavioral outcomes. Fairness of treatment, support from organizational representatives, and practices that impact and policies that govern employees combine to form POS. Employees' experiencing organizational commitment, in turn become committed even more to the organization, which understood to be a psychological outcome of POS, as were new-found expectancies of continued organizational support for them.

The anthropomorphic approach of each theory to the relationship between the organization and the individual were similar. Both organizational relationship management theories explored the impact of the nature of the relationship on behavioral outcomes, achieving organizational goals. OPR's RQOs explored the relationship through a realm of identified characteristics of the nature of that relationship, whereas Perceived Organizational Support (POS) stipulated the nature of a positive relationship and explored the impact only. Each approach contributes to a greater understanding of the processes underlying the nature of the student-institution relationship.

## PSR and the Nature of the Collegiate Student–Institution Relationship

The remainder of this section of the literature review explores the collegiate student–institution relationship (SIR) and offers models of the SIR, with particular attention paid to the nature (i.e., relational quality) of these relationships, as suggested by the *Reasonable Expectations* project (Kuh, Lyons, et al., 1995). The historical context of these models was presented earlier in this chapter. These highlighted models were trying to achieve similar student behavioral outcomes (i.e., behaviors conducive to learning and safety) and relational qualities expected to be effective in achieving those behaviors. Additionally, the models discussed in this section (as well as those presented throughout this chapter) provide insight into the SIR’s components and structure, and the process by which it is believed to influence PSR.

### *Relational Quality of Collegiate SIRs*

The relational quality of the organization–public relationship between the college and the student has been consistently shown to affect college students’ behaviors and attitudes (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Brunner, 2000; Ki & Hon, 2007a). Bruning and Lambe (2002) discovered that college students who responded that they were in a relationship with the university were much more likely to persist in their college educations. Ki and Hon (2007a), using a variation of Hon and Grunig’s (1999) proposed RQOs, measured students’ overall evaluation of the university and their intention to return to school. The researchers’ results showed that satisfaction and control mutuality most significantly affected attitude, and that “satisfaction and control mutuality indirectly and significantly affected behavioral intentions” (p. 14) to persist.

Most of the OPR research conducted with college populations has explored the correlation between relational quality and intended or actual behavior. These studies have been

related to student persistence or retention almost exclusively. One study intimates that relational quality can contribute to the achievement of collegiate learning outcomes (Brunner, 2000). A mixed-methods, co-orientational study of the University of Florida's student-institution relationship examined students' and administrators' perceptions of the OPR. Hon and Grunig's (1999) indicators and student ratings of the University's commitment to diversity provided a baseline for exploring the student-institution relationship's impact on student openness to institutional messages about and commitment to diversity (Brunner, 2000). Brunner quantitatively captured student perceptions of the relationship, and attitude about the university's commitment to diversity, and qualitatively gathered administrators' perceptions of the relationships and of students' perceptions.

Brunner (2000) stated that students rated their relationship with the university as being neutral; RQO scores were neither high nor low. SIRs were reported as being both exchange and communal relationships, but students were more likely to agree with indicators of an exchange relationship. When comparing responses by ethnicity, differences arose. Caucasian and Hispanic/Latino students more often reported higher levels of trust, satisfaction, and commitment toward the university than African American/Black students. In addition, Caucasian and Hispanic/Latino students were more likely to characterize the relationship as communal. Asian students' ratings did not statistically differ from the other ethnic groups in the aforementioned areas. Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian students reported more positive attitudes toward the university's commitment to diversity than African American/Black students. These findings suggested that students' relational quality perceptions were related to students' belief in the integrity of the institutional diversity message.

The history of racial discord and political diversity discussions present at the time of the survey could have been antecedents to students' relationship ratings and/or the perceptions of institutional commitment to diversity; therefore, the results should be used with caution. Written before the more recent studies establishing a link between behavior and the relational quality outcomes (RQOs), Brunner's (2000) limited exploration of the association between relational quality and student attitudes did not ascertain a causal link or directionality between the two. The results of this study are not generalizable, but the findings do provide some insight when explicating the student–institution relationship.

The OPR model's usefulness in evaluating and harnessing the impact of the student–institution relationship is limited by the same challenges that relationship management researchers face in attempting to outline the theoretical basis of organization–public relationships. There is a need to clearly define and delineate what constitutes an OPR/SIR, to identify a common understanding of what is meant by outcomes or dimensions, to create a fuller accounting of the breadth of this categorization and link between these aspects of the relationship and strategic public's behavior, and to place these understandings within an overall understanding of how this influence is exerted in the relationship (Ki & Shin, 2006). As of yet, college student and organization–public relationship literature has not been synthesized, creating one interdisciplinary approach. It would be beneficial to have a collegiate SIR model that reflects college student and OPR theory and research and that outlines the components and nature of the SIR and the process by which it may influence student behavior.

### *Collegiate SIR Models*

Over the history of higher education in the U.S., many iterations of the SIR have been proposed, with each campus embracing a slightly different mix of characteristics that reflect the

campus' mission and community members' philosophies. Nuss (1998), continuing the work of the *Reasonable Expectations* project, advocated for colleges to consider and create updated parameters for the relationship. The author, the executive director of NASPA at the time the project launched, suggested that Boyer's (Carnegie Foundation, 1990) framework for decision making and descriptive principles endorsed using relational quality as a criterion when establishing an SIR and provided a foundation for the desired nature of the SIR. Nuss was responding to fears of a knee-jerk return to *in loco parentis*, given a flurry of legal decisions expecting increased institutional responsibility for students' risky behaviors. She considered *in loco parentis* to be an "inappropriate and unproductive" and "not . . . fair or just" (p. 185) relationship structure. Nuss asserted that the nature of higher education's overarching SIR did not, and does not, remain static and should evolve, rather than revert to an old paradigm, in response to changes in societal expectations.

Nuss (1998) proposed three types of SIR, each with differing different nature to inform practitioners' and institutions' discussions: (a) legal duty SIRs, (b) quasi-legal administrative SIRs, and (c) learning SIRs

#### *Legal Duty SIRs*

Since the beginning of higher education in the U.S., educators have worked within the parameters set and influenced by the legal climate (Dennis & Kaufman, 1966), but the courts have not been definitive about the SIR relationship. Legal models reflect societal, and to some extent student, expectations, which are believed to impact relational effectiveness at achieving institutional goals (Huang & Grunig, 2000; Kuh, Lyons, et al., 1995). Legal duty SIR models and learning relationships share similar behavioral outcome objectives for students.

In the immediate wake of *Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education* (1961), the number of theoretical legal models exploded when compared to an almost two-century-old commitment to a single relational paradigm, *in loco parentis*. Post-*in loco parentis*, predominant legal theoretical models have demonstrated constitutionalism, with a singular focus on student rights (Bickel & Lake, 1999; Henning, 2007); consumerism and recognition of student economic rights independent of the parent, as found in contract theory (Melear, 2002); fiduciary or relational duty, based on “trust principles. . . .that the colleges [will] act in the best interests of students in all matters” (Henning, 2007, p. 542); and the bystander/no duty, followed by bystander/no duty models of the legal student–institution relationship presented above (Henning, 2007).

Bickel and Lake (1999) characterized the student–institution relationship as that of a “facilitator university,” a concept based on a legal risk-management theory. The authors described a relationship in which each student is responsible for his or her own choices, but is provided a more experienced guide (i.e., faculty, administrators, staff, and institution) who prepares the student for life’s challenges. In short, the courts expect colleges to guide, but not control, students. College faculty and administrators are expected to educate and encourage students to make safe and healthy decisions *for themselves* by setting reasonable parameters of conduct, role-modeling behavior, facilitating personal interaction, and managing the environment.

Henning (2007), exploring the student–institution legal relationship more broadly, suggested that the SIR is actually “*in consortio cum parentibus* or in partnership with parents” (Henning, 2007, p. 539). Parents and institutional agents were key components in this model. Henning held that students are autonomous, but need connection with people who care for them



if they are to make good decisions and to learn from those decisions. In addition to connection, students need reflection-producing relationships and experiences. These experiences and reflection opportunities rely on the colleges' and students' mutual respect.

### *Educational Administrative SIRs*

Pavela proposed a slightly different vision for the preferred nature of the relationship, in direct response to Bickel and Lake's (1999) influence-based facilitator model. Agreeing that traditionally-aged students need "guidance and structure" (Pavela, 2008, p. 2), and postulating that facilitation can be a control-oriented relational style, Pavela argued that, "if a lasting change in student life is to occur it will happen in association and collaboration with students" (p. 3). Pavela wrote that association requires mutuality of purpose and values. It was his belief that the act of depending on rules, regulations, policies, and authority only separates students from the college and its agents, thus creating an "us versus them" climate that undermines educational goals.

### *Historical Models of Learning the SIR Nature*

The defining relational characteristics of historical student–institution learning relationships did not progress chronologically. While the diversity of institution type, size, and mission diminished the universality of clearly delineated periods or relational eras, five broadly defined pedagogical U.S student–institution relationship models emerged: (a) Collegiate Way, (b) Faculty Psychology, (c) Relational Coexistence, (d) Administrative Oversight, and (e) Rights and Freedoms. Portions of these types of relationships remain on today's campuses.

*The Collegiate Way—the LSU model.* Louisiana State University President William Tecumseh Sherman's founding promise ". . . to be a father to them [students] all" (Rudolph, 1962, p. 86) captured the dominant characteristic of the relationship colleges had with their

students during the first two centuries of U.S. higher education: paternalism. The nature of the SIR that accompanied the Collegiate Way, described above, varied in much the same way that parenting styles differed based on the type and needs of child and familial goals. Control and discipline, as described above, best characterized the nature of the colonial and pre-revolutionary student–institution relationship (Geiger, 2000; Rudolph, 1962), while the nature of the post-revolutionary relationship, though still pedagogically intending to instill mental discipline while empowering the future citizen to think independently, was more supportive and guiding (Herbst, 2004).

*Faculty Psychology—the Yale model.* As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the *Yale Report of 1828*, the foundational student–institution relationship statement of that era, displayed the educationally relevant relational components and preferred nature of the post-revolutionary relationship. Written in response to legislative questions about the classic curriculum, the *Yale Report* presented the Yale College faculty’s philosophy of education: Faculty Psychology (Herbst, 2004). The document, given the predominance of Yale graduates on the faculties of Southern and Western institutions, was potentially the most influential pre-twentieth-century pedagogical statement of purpose and process. As such, it continues to influence societal expectations of the SIR relationship. In Herbst’s (2004) interpretation, the Faculty Psychology model represented a subtle shift in the college’s colonial period relationship with students.

The Yale faculty proposed that education required interactions of a specific nature in order to educate effectively (Herbst, 2004). The educators argued that the structured curriculum, with its disciplined educational process requiring educators to respond to individual student needs, educated all students. The Faculty Psychology model expected that educational interactions should be “founded on mutual affection and confidence” (Goodchild & Weschler,

1989, p. 173), and that discipline should be achieved through “kind and persuasive influence; not wholly or chiefly by restraint and terror” (p. 173). The *Report* revealed the faculty perspective that “faithful and affectionate guardian[s should] take [students] by the hand, and guide their steps” (Herbst, 2004, p. 228).

*Relational Coexistence—the University of Virginia model.* The historical account of the antecedents and consequences of student behavior at the University of Virginia (UVA), described in “Honor and Dishonor at Mr. Jefferson’s University: The Antebellum Years” (Wagoner, 1989), provided a prescient first example of the nineteenth-century flirtation with SIR concepts found in the German education system and demonstrated relational considerations of integrating these systems

When it was chartered as a university, UVA rebuffed the classic curriculum and religious influence. Students were permitted to choose their own courses of study and were charged with disciplining their peers (Wagoner, 1989). Unique for its time in the U.S., Jefferson’s vision of a university was founded on the principles of mutual freedom for students and faculty alike. The institutional design gave students responsibility for themselves. Attempting to create an intellectual and moral environment, Jefferson dismissed discipline by fear and sought to produce character through “the affectionate deportment between father and son . . .” (Wagoner, 1989, p. 140). The close proximity of faculty and student living quarters was designed to encourage close relationships between the students and the faculty.

Despite these innovations, UVA still experienced a number of disruptive student riots. These riots were a function of the lack of meaningful interaction and understanding between post-revolutionary students and the style of often young faculty and tutors (Wagoner, 1989). Inexperienced faculty, disinterested in their students and their students’ motivations, were

appalled at the insobriety, disrespect, and lack of academic integrity. These tensions inadvertently escalated the misconduct. The riots and other student misconduct at UVA subsided only when new faculty were appointed who understood the student population and were committed to repairing the relationship. The manner of interaction between the students and the faculty superseded any potential benefits gained by UVA's less-controlling curricular and regulatory choices. Positive interactions emanating from administrators and students understanding one another created a better environment than a less-controlling structure.

*Administrative Oversight—the University of Illinois and Thomas Arkle Clark model.* In Finnegan's (1989) view, recounted in "Promoting 'Reasonable Freedom': Administrators and Social Fraternities at the University of Illinois, 1900–1931," The University of Illinois's Dean of Men, Thomas Arkle Clark, chose to balance the institution's behavioral expectations of students with respect for students as being mutually responsible for and important to the overall institutional mission. Dean Clark's example supported the significance of the relationship between students and college administrators to student behavior. At a time when most academic administrators were convinced fraternities "...fostered drinking, gambling, poor scholarship, undemocratic attitudes, and sexual immorality..." (Finnegan, 1989, p. 33) and academic dishonesty, Clark championed fraternities as partners in achieving the institutional mission, rather than enemies. His guidance encouraged influential student leaders to assist in reestablishing standards of conduct and institutional involvement in student activities. His relationships with these students permitted Clark to maintain "...firm control without appearing to be overly domineering" (p. 36).

*Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms.* "The Joint Statement on Rights and Freedoms of Students" of 1967 provided "a guideline for policy formulation in determining the institution's

proper relationship with students” (Mullendore, 1992, p. 61). “Enumerat[ing] the essential provisions for students’ freedom to learn” (AAUP, 1967, p. 272), the Joint Statement outlined limits of institutional power over students in a framework that closely followed the United States Constitution (Mullendore, 1992). At its core, the statement was explication of the learning relationship mutually agreed upon by faculty, students, and administrators. The Joint Statement, developed by a committee of student, faculty, and student affairs administrator organization representatives from various representative associations, was widely respected and embraced as the only consensus student–institution relational statement issued at the height of the legal challenges.

The Joint Statement was a philosophical commitment to an equitable balance between student and faculty academic freedoms and institutional power. This statement of relational autonomy, freedom from retribution, and the expectation of fundamental fairness emphasized student independence from institutional control. At the same time the expectation that “the broadest possible participation of the members of the academic community” (AAUP, 1967, p. 273) be included in institutional decisions and actions suggested that the authors recognized interdependence as a “condition conducive to [students’] freedom to learn” (p. 273). This SIR learning model valued a student’s right of self-determination in activities and beliefs, tempered with responsibility for maintaining others’ rights to teach and learn.

Although much of the written history of higher education chronicled the changes in the environmental and student components of the SIR, the preceding historical models have suggested that the nature of institutional interactions may have been just as influential in shaping student behaviors. Past disruptive student behavior has been attributed to a number of factors including, in part, a disregard for students’ interests, values, and wishes; a lack of respect for

student self-determination and partnership in the educational venture; and faculty and administrator separation from students, as evidenced by the loss of personal interaction and knowledge of one another as individuals.

The historical impact of institutional proximity to student life, and the nature of that impact (either controlling or hands-off), implied that student behavior became less disruptive as the intrusiveness of the academic experience lessened and allowance for student self-direction increased. By the same token, too much separation without common values and personal relationships with faculty and administrators was a consistently observed historical theme in student disorder and misconduct. Institutions that refrained from exercising power over their students while continuing to hold shared values and close relationships could depend on the students to implement goals central to the mission and purpose of the college.

#### Nature of the PSR-Enhancing Student–Institution Relationship in Colleges

In addition to organization–public relationship research, a small group of studies has specifically addressed the unanswered question posed by the NASPA’s *Reasonable Expectations* project (Kuh, Lyons, Miller, & Trow, 1994). These studies attempted to identify the desired relational qualities of college SIRs believed to educate for and result in PSR.

There are indications that the influence of the student–institution relational quality, suggested by the school connectedness scholarship, extends to students’ PSR education and behavior in college. Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) researchers, conducting connectedness studies with college student populations, showed that feelings of connectedness were associated with student wellbeing, including mental health and physically healthy decisions (Liang et al., 2002). The RCT studies found multiple types of connections (i.e., relationships), including a community construct similar to the SIR. RCT research, mirroring the school connectedness

literature that was presented above, has been found to be associated with outcomes consistent with PSR behavior, such as reduced levels of alcohol consumption. Although both men's and women's behaviors were strongly associated with feelings of connectedness to the community, women's responses were influenced by other factors, while men were only influenced by the community.

Relational Cultural Theorists have understood connectedness as an individual's state of being, not an environmental variable. As stated in the theoretical framework portion of this chapter, the nature of this state of being is characterized by mutuality (i.e., where participants feel equally important and powerful in the relationship) and empathy (i.e., where participants feel cared about and understood) (Jordan, Kaplan, et al., 1991; Jordan, Walker, et al., 2004). These findings suggest desired relational qualities to create a PSR-enhancing SIR.

Unlike the other research at the time, Hoekema (1994), a philosophy professor and ethicist, conducted a mixed-methods study with the intent of specifically identifying the desired properties of the student–institution relationship that would support an educationally-sound moral climate. An ethical philosopher, Hoekema cited a culture of lapsed academic honesty, extreme alcohol consumption, and the loss of a clearly defined student–institution legal relationship to justify exploring the campus rules and the influence of a disciplinary system on the health of a moral community. He reviewed published student conduct procedures to frame his proposals for establishing ethical system and rule goals, guiding principles of ethical disciplinary policies and practices, and ethically preferable systemic and relational characteristics.

Hoekema's (1994) observations about the student conduct rules and procedures and the goals of this system implied ethically effective qualities of the student–institution relationship.

Specifically, he found that SIRs “(a) prevent exploitation and harm, (b) promote an atmosphere of free discussion, and (c) nurture a sense of community” (p. 115). Through these observations, the author spoke to the role of institutional policy and practice in the overall impact of the discipline system on the campus environment. He suggested that the “character of the campus those policies create [(i.e., environmental press)] should encourage a campus atmosphere characterized by respect, openness and mutual recognition of rights and responsibilities” (p. 129). Most telling was his advocacy for a directive stance with students that exercised influence, neither controlling nor ignoring student behavior. Hoekema’s recommendations limited his examination and SIR recommendations to the role of student conduct administration on the SIR and the ethical climate of the college or university.

To address this limitation in part, Boyd and Cooper’s (2008) study encompassed, but was not limited to, questions related to the student discipline process. Relying on the direct and extensive experience and scholastic knowledge of their phenomenological study’s participants, Boyd and Cooper (2008) also explored how colleges should philosophically re-envision the student–institution relationship to enhance students’ PSR. Through interviews conducted with seven senior student affairs scholars, “Embracing the Student–Institution Relationship: Creating a Connection Conducive to Personal and Social Responsibility” (Boyd & Cooper, 2008) explored the essence of student–institution relationships believed to have enhanced PSR according to the Association of American College’s and Universities definition (AAC&U, n.d.a.). Interviews were conducted with seven exemplar scholar–practitioners, each of whom had at least ten years of experience, to understand their conceptualization of these relationships, based on their experiences. Each scholar–practitioner had served as a student affairs practitioner



supervising multiple functional areas and had made scholarly contributions to the field significant enough to be acknowledged with an ACPA or NASPA Senior Scholar designation.

The findings indicated a core relational essence across institutional type and functional area in which “(a) institutional agents embrace and institutional culture reflect [in] an ethos of personal and social responsibility, (b) collegial mutuality is expanded to include students, (c) students have personal and caring interactions, and (d) action is taken to encourage and foster student personal and social responsibility” (Boyd & Cooper, 2008, p. 10). The student–institution relationship was considered as a learning relationship first and a personal and socially developing relationship second. Each participant described being engaged in similar activities, strategies, and a relational nature that he or she believed contributed to students’ development.

While the senior scholars’ perspectives may not have been representative of most professionals in the field, they do represent informed and reflective judgments and observations. This study was limited to the perspective of what *senior student affairs scholars* believed to be true; as such, it does not determine whether and how the relationship actually affects students. The suggestion that developing PSR is a learning process similar to other learning processes would indicate that moral education initiatives would benefit from the application of learning theory and research. A culture of PSR that embraced personal and caring interactions with students would allow institutional representatives to take action in a spirit of collegial mutuality. This culture, in turn, would encourage and facilitate students to accept and reflect PSR. The findings presented in the senior student affairs scholars study identified components and qualities of a PSR-fostering SIR, but the study did not explain whether or how the SIR influences a student’s PSR education or PSR behaviors.

Both Hoekema's (1994) and Boyd and Cooper's (2008) findings have provided evidence verifying the relevance of the student–institution relationship and its relational quality to students' development of PSR. Few empirical studies have examined the association between PSR and the student–institution relationship. Additionally, neither study defined nor fully explicated the relationship, only alluding to its dimensions and leaving scholars to infer the range of possible relational characteristics.

### *Collegiate Relational Quality Outcomes with PSR Implications*

A review of the literature has suggested a number of relational quality outcomes (RQOs) of student–institution relationships. These outcomes are expected to influence levels of alcohol use/misuse and academic dishonesty and will be used as collegiate relational outcomes for the remainder of this study.

Further, the review of the literature relevant to the organization–public relationship, moral development and behavior, and the higher education setting has proposed a set of RQOs of student–institution relationships. As noted earlier, an array of relational characteristics has been proposed by OPR scholars. Humanistic and economic paradigms of interpersonal relationship have informed the OPR exploration of relationship (Kim, 2001). Huang's (2001) four core RQOs (trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, and control mutuality) reflect the influence of these combined paradigms. Trust, satisfaction, and commitment have been consistently found across relationship types, contexts, publics, cultures, and intended behavioral outcomes (Bortree, 2007; Huang, 2001, Hung, 2005; Jo, 2003; Ki & Hon, 2007a, 2007b). Jo's (2003) global RQOs – Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, and Trust - have been linked with positive attitudes toward the university (Bruning & Lambe, 2002, Brunner, 2000; 2005; Ki & Hon,

2007a), behavioral intention to persist (Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Ki & Hon, 2007a), persistence (Bruning & Ralston, 2001) and openness to diversity messages (Brunner, 2000; 2005).

Hon & Grunig (1999) provided precise, measureable, and generally accepted definitions for Huang's relational quality outcomes (RQOs). Recent studies, particularly with college student populations, have indicated that control mutuality may also be a core relational quality, particularly in adolescent (Bortree, 2008) and diverse populations (Brunner, 2000; Hon & Brunner, 2001; Jo, Hon, & Brunner, 2004; Ki & Hon, 2007a). These RQOs have resonated with the higher education and moral development literature and research. The higher education and moral development literature has suggested an additional student relational construct that complements, but does not replicate, Huang's RQOs—namely, mattering (Schlossberg, 1989). These outcomes are expected to influence levels of alcohol use/misuse and academic dishonesty and will be used as collegiate relational outcomes for the remainder of this study.

### *Trust*

Hon and Grunig (1999) defined trust as being a relational participant's "confidence in and willingness to open [him- or herself] up to the other party" (p. 3). In the case of the student's perception of the SIR, trust is dependent on the student believing that his or her college is "fair and just [(integrity)] . . . [and] will do what it says it will do" (p. 3) (i.e., dependability), and is able to deliver on its promises (i.e., competence). Huang (1997) expanded this discussion, describing control mutuality as one of the primary indicators of relational quality in OPRs and a cornerstone of successful business, governmental, and employee relationships. In studies validating his OPRA instrument, Huang (2001b) found that trust and control mutuality were pivotal in participants' perceptions of the relationship. Each construct mediated intervention effects on participants' behavior, a conclusion also noticed in Bortree's (2007) findings.

Research conducted in higher education settings has confirmed that trust is an indicator of relational quality in collegiate and educational relationships. Trust has been shown to be a dimension of school connectedness, which is a correlate of alcohol consumption (Blum, 2005). A correlation between trust and alcohol consumption was also identified in individuals with alcohol problems (Hopwood, Morey, Skodol, Stout, Yen, Ansell, Grillo, & McGlashan, 2007). Trust is believed to be a factor in students' academic honesty decisions. As stated earlier, Bruning and Raltson (2001) discovered that students expect trust to be at the core of successful personal relationships with faculty, staff, and students representing the institution. Clifford (1996) reported that a team of experts gathered by the Center for Academic Integrity anticipated that trusting environments would promote academically honest students. Her research verified that students who self-reported not trusting the campus, faculty, and peers were likely to also self-report academic dishonesty and vice-versa.

#### *Relational Commitment*

Hon and Grunig (1999) defined relational commitment as "the extent to which each party believes and feels that the relationship is worth spending energy to maintain and promote" (p. 3). Two types of relational commitment were identified. Continuance Commitment insured that relational participants would persist on a similar course of action to the one that they were pursuing. Affective Commitment is the emotional attachment the participants have for one another. Huang (2001b) suggested that relational commitment, an affective outcome, could be used to "distinguish [between] social and economic exchanges" which have differing expectations for reciprocity (p. 68). He also noted that mutual commitment is fundamental to creating successful customer service-oriented relationships. Commitment has also been shown to have behavioral implications. Costello, Anderson, and Stein (2006) discovered that commitment

to school, a measure similar to school connectedness, was a strong predictor of heavy episodic drinking.

Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction were unique from student commitment to college and satisfaction and, in addition to those widely accepted constructs, should be included in institutional assessments and decision making. The distinction between Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction from the general understanding of commitment and satisfaction was important. This construct of Relational Commitment includes a college's commitment to the student, not just the student's commitment to the college. The OPR literature and this study found that students' perceptions that the student and the college were mutually committed to one another resulted in fewer students engaging in academic dishonesty and alcohol use and misuse.

#### *Relational Satisfaction*

Hon and Grunig (1999) defined satisfaction as "the extent to which each party feels favorably toward the other because of positive expectations" (p. 3) were met. Huang (1997) explained that the size of the gap between what was expected and what is experienced is the basis for satisfaction. The affective nature of relational satisfaction suggests that satisfaction perceptions are emotion driven (Huang, 2001b). She also found that relational satisfaction measured the effectiveness of relational maintenance strategies or interventions. Relational satisfaction was also believed to be an evaluation of whether the participants get more out of being in the relationship than the relationship takes from them (Hon & Grunig, 1999). As reported earlier, students' satisfaction with their classroom has been determined to predict acts of academic dishonesty and rationalization of the conduct (Pulver & Diekhoff, 1999; Stearns, 2001; Whitley & Kite, 1998). Despite the historical indications that satisfaction and the cost-benefit

analysis discussed by ethical decision-making theory play a role in student conduct (i.e., Kholberg's [1984] punishment–obedience orientation), there is minimal empirical evidence that student satisfaction with college itself impacts student behaviors.

### *Control Mutuality*

Hon and Grunig (1999) defined control mutuality as “the degree to which parties agree on who has the rightful power to influence one another” (p. 3). Though unequal power is expected, all relational participants “have some control over the other” (p. 3). The balance of power is negotiable and dynamic (Ki & Hon, 2007a, p. 5). Huang's (1997) expanded discussion described control mutuality as an element of a win–win decision-making process. Relationships where control mutuality is present are interdependent and each party feels shared legitimacy, reciprocity, empowerment, and power distribution (Huang, 2001b). Mutuality rests on shared responsibility, vision, and goals for the academic enterprise, balanced by a commitment to and respect for individual pursuits (Beyene, Anglin, Sanchez, & Ballou, 2002; Gillespie, 2005).

In addition to the organization–public literature, higher education and counseling literature (already presented above) has suggested that mutuality, as a relational construct, is a desired RQO of collegiate and educational relationships. Bortree's (2007) study of the effects of relational quality on adolescents' volunteer behavior (a PSR action) found that perceptions of control mutuality (in addition to trust) were more highly correlated with volunteer and continued involvement behavior in adolescent relationships. Relational Cultural Theorists have believed that mutuality (i.e., “active participation, engagement, and responsiveness” (Spencer, 2000, p. 14), is central to psychologically healthy relationships and contributes to the emotional wellbeing of college students (Liang, Tracy, Taylor, Williams, Jordan, & Miller, 2002). Boyd and Cooper (2008) found that senior student affairs scholar-practitioners believe that student–institution

relationships that extend to students mutuality (defined as an attitude of co-learning and respect common in college faculty culture) will enhance student PSR.

### *General Mattering*

Mattering describes a person's perception or feeling, "whether right or wrong," (p. 9), that he or she is important to another (Schlossberg, 1989). Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) first explained mattering as an impetus for behavior made up of an individual's combined perceptions of: (a) Attention (i.e., another notices and is interested); (b) Importance (i.e., the other "cares about what we want, think, and do, or is concerned about our fate" [p.164]); (c) Ego extension (i.e., "proud of our accomplishments or saddened by our failures" [Schlossberg, 1989, p. 19]); and (d) Dependence (i.e., a sense of being needed). Schlossberg introduced the construct of mattering to college student-related researchers and practitioners in relation to marginality (mattering's polar contrast), adding that mattering includes the perception that one's "efforts were appreciated" (p. 10).

Rosenberg and McCullough (1981) conceptualized mattering as a relational construct, suggesting that individuals experience both general mattering (i.e., a general sense of mattering to society or community) and interpersonal mattering (i.e., mattering to a specific person). Elliot, Kao, and Grant's (2004) empirical construct validation of interpersonal mattering categorized Rosenberg and McCullough's original elements into two distinct super-subordinate categories: awareness and relationship. Awareness was understood as the perception of having the cognitive interest of and acknowledgement by others, while relationship was an affective sense of importance and reliance, with importance being the predecessor of the others. Elliot, Kao, and Grant (2004) concurred with Rosenberg and McCullough's (1981) premise that a person's feelings or perceptions of mattering were a function of these combined perceptions, independent

of reality. Elliot et al. (2004) also found that mattering attitudes are distinguishable from, yet related to, self-esteem and support. Other researchers have found that relatedness (Marshall, 2001) and a sense of belonging (Tovar, Simon, & Zaragoza, 2008) were also separate, but associated, constructs.

Most of the mattering research deconstructed its components, explored causes or contributors, and examined the construct in differing populations. Studies have shown an association between mattering and depressive symptomology (Taylor & Turner, 2001); purpose in life, wellness, and depression in older adults (Dixon, 2007); wellness in adolescent girls (Rayle, 2005); and suicide ideation (Elliott, Colangelo, & Gelles, 2005). In college settings, mattering has been found to be associated with academic stress levels (Rayle & Chung, 2007) in first-year college students and total wellness in West Point cadets (Myers & Bechtel, 2004).

Mattering's identified correlates have also been associated with alcohol consumption and academic honesty; however, minimal research has tested Rosenberg's hypothesis that mattering is a behavioral motivator. Most studies occurred in adult student or commuter college populations and tested Schlossberg, Lynch, and Chickering's (1989) often-quoted hypothesis that mattering positively influenced students' persistence and academic success in college. These studies found mixed results. Diamond (1995) found a positive association between adult students who reported higher levels of perceived mattering and levels of reported satisfaction and intent to persist, yet Fauber (1996) found no difference in the measured level of mattering between adult students who persist and those who do not. Apart from direct academic performance behaviors, no behavioral studies have measured the link between moral/cognitive development, alcohol, academic integrity, delinquency, or risk behaviors found by Fauber. More research is needed to better understand the relationship between mattering and students' behaviors.



Though embraced by Student Affairs practitioners, mattering, as a theoretical construct or its association with student behaviors, has rarely been empirically tested in the college setting. Most often the examination has been in relation to a mattering to a specific person or groups of persons (Marshall, 2001) or the impact of mattering on a specific sub-population (Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989; Schlossberg, 1991). General Mattering instead explored students' feelings of mattering to the college as a whole (Marcus, 1991a; 1991b). General Mattering combined school connectedness and bonding's "sense of belonging" (McNeely, & Falci, 2004) and "Perceived Organizational Support" (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Eisenberger, Aselage, Sucharski, & Jones, 2004).

The research incorporating mattering as a construct in the collegiate setting has focused predominantly on mattering's association with mental health or advising preferences, not student conduct concerns (Connolly, & Myer, 2003; Diamond, 1995; Fauber, 1996; Moody, 1996). General Mattering has rarely been included as a predictor variable, much less a *behavioral* predictor variable in the college setting.

Having reviewed the extant literature relevant to our present study, the next chapter proposes a structure and process model for an SIR that promotes personal and social responsibility behavior. This model is rooted in research findings, historical insights, and current legal (some would argue, society's minimal) expectations for the SIR. Theoretically, it is designed to encourage and facilitate student behaviors consistent with personal and social responsibility in order to enhance the institution's learning climate. This model conceptually expresses a commonly held belief in higher education: namely, that the quality of the relationship between the student, the institution, and relational participants influences student

learning and action. It also details the framework and process of how those components are believed to influence a student's behavior and the student–institution relationship.

### CHAPTER 3: STUDY MODEL

As shown in chapter two, the relational quality of, and student's affective response to, the student–institution relationship (SIR) should, theoretically, impact a student's personal and social responsibility (PSR) behavior. Chapter 3 now synthesizes the literature presented in Chapter 2 and presents a model that governs this remainder of the current study (See Figure 3.8 for the full model). Chapter 3 outlines the hypothesized components of the SIR, a process by which relationally based changes in PSR behavior occur, and selected organization–public relationship (OPR) and hypothesized collegiate-setting relational quality outcomes (RQOs) that influenced action (See Appendix A for the assumptions and tenets underlying this model and Appendix B for the theoretical basis and hypothetical relationships within this model) . This conceptualization has effectively expanded Moos' (1979) process model to include individual affective influences using OPR constructs and ethical action processes. Appendix A presents the assumptions and tenets of this model. The proposed model has integrated Moos' (1979) and Rest's (Narveaz & Rest, 1995; Rest, 1984, 1986; Rest et al., 1999) process models with an OPR constructed to explain the influence of the SIR on PSR behavior. Simply stated, the researcher hypothesized that the student–institution relationship interacts with the process of moral and ethical decision-making, resulting in behavioral outcomes. This hypothesis is graphically depicted in Figure 3.1, below. The study this model was devised to support examined the final linkage between Phase II and III in Figure 3.1, below.

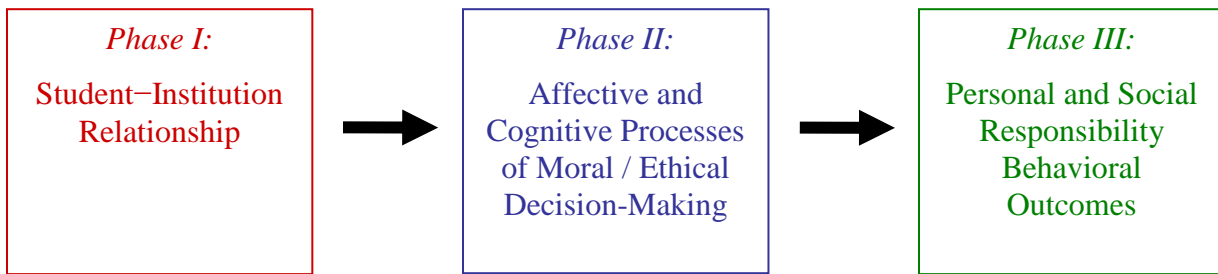


Figure 3.1. Boyd's Model Overview

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009).

The content validity of the hypothesized model was established through theoretical identification and specification of the constructs using diverse, yet intersecting, lines of research and comparing those conclusions with historical and empirical literature addressing the SIR and PSR behaviors. The proposed model awaited empirical construct validation. The remainder of the present chapter explicates each of the components of these constructs and outlines the process by which these components were hypothesized to influence one another.

#### Phase I: Student–Institution Relationship (SIR)

A college is related to a community of publics including, but not limited to, the student body, faculty, administrators, staff, alumni, parents, general public, governmental entities, town residents, and leaders (See Figure 3.2). The institution's publics are interrelated, contributing to and impacting one another's relationships with the college and with one another.

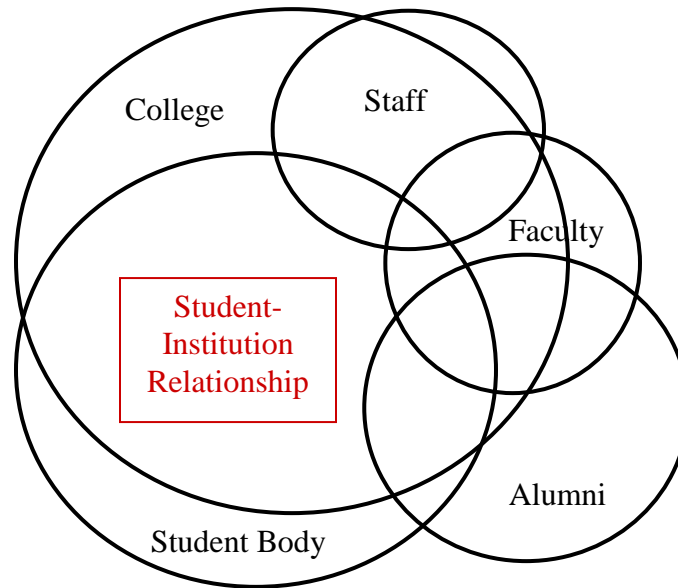


Figure 3.2. Interrelatedness of a College's Relationships

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009) based on Hallahan (2004) and Ledingham (2003)

In our study, the institution's relationship with its students met the criteria of an organization–public relationship, as outlined in the public relations scholarship. As such, the properties, conditions, and outcomes of student–institution relationships were consistent with the parallel to components found in human relationships.

The initial campus ecology assertion that the SIR *was* the interaction of the student (P) and college environment (E) reflected and expanded on Lewin's (1936) and Moos' (1979) behavioral ecology model (Banning, 1978; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Miller, Bender, & Schuh, 2005; Walsh, 1978). The present study's proposed model clarified that the SIR is comprised of three variables or components: the student (S), the environment (E), and the interaction of the student and the environment (P x E), with the interaction of all three initiating the process of Press, Fit, and other interaction variables. That process is further discussed later in this chapter. In the present study, the SIR was a function of each of those variables:  $SIR = f(S, E, [S \times E])$ . As

stated in Chapter 1, the *interaction* of P and E, ( $P \times E$ ), was the interaction variable representing the nature of the relationship of the person and the environment. Stated differently, the interaction between the student and the institution was the nature of the SIR (i.e.,  $S \times E = N_{SIR} = \text{Nature of the SIR}$ ). Therefore the SIR portion of the model included the student, all elements of the college environment, and the nature of the interaction of the student and the college environment, as demonstrated in Figure 3.3.

In keeping with Lewin (1936), Moos (1979), and Banning (1978), this model proposed that the three SIR variables, combined with other interaction variables (including press and fit), contributed to the students' behaviors, which can achieve or undermine the attainment of an institution's goals.

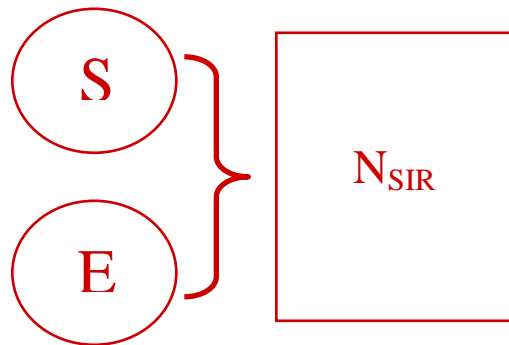


Figure 3.3. Boyd's Model, Phase I: The Student–Institution Relationship

Model created by K.D. Boyd (2009), adapted from Moos' (1979) framework and Banning (1978) and Walsh's (1978) SIR definition

This model of the SIR applied to both the individual student's relationship and to the collective student–institution relationship (CSIR). The relationship between the student body and

the college was an environmental variable (i.e., climate) and was a conglomeration of each individual student's interactions with the college environment, as seen in Figure 3.4, or CSIR =  $(P_1 \cap E) + (P_2 \cap E) + (P_3 \cap E) \dots + (P_n \cap E)$ .

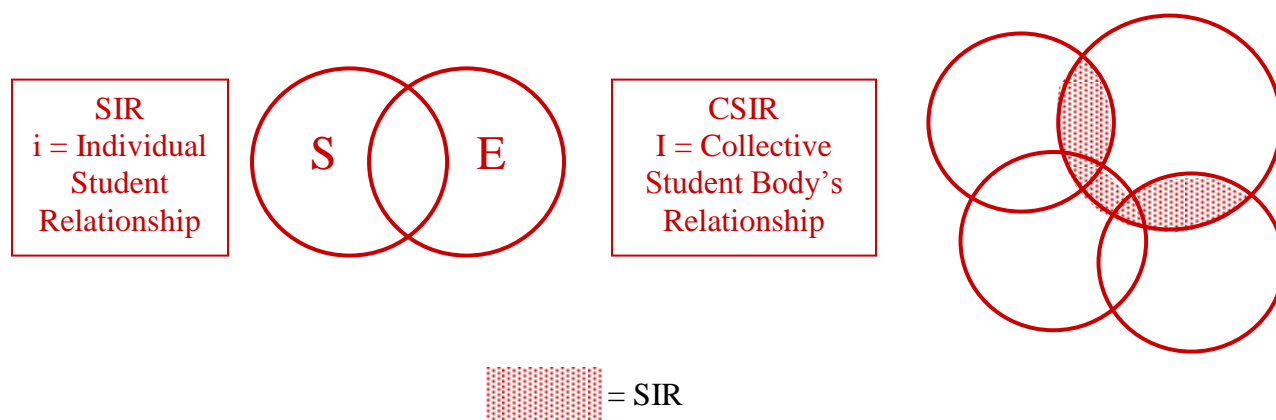


Figure 3.4. Individual and Student Body SIR

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009).

## Phase II: The Moral and Ethical Decision-Making Process

### *Affective Processes of Relational Quality Outcomes (RQOs)*

The relational quality of the affective response to an environment shaped an individual's PSR behavioral response (Blum, 2005; Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Narveaz, 2006; Resnick, Bearman, & Blum, 1997; Wilson, 2004; Wingspread Group, 2004). Relational quality outcomes (RQOs) were the students' affective appraisal, coupled with their cognitive and affective response to perceptions of their collective interactions with all aspects of the college environment (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Moos, 1979). The relational quality outcomes (RQOs) captured student perceptions and affective responses to

the SIR. RQOs, a function of the SIR, ( $RQO = f\{f[P \times E]\}$ ) were products or outcomes of both an individual's perception of the SIR and an environmental antecedent (i.e., elements of the climate) to future relational interactions. This model proposed that the SIR's influence was exerted through the affective process of the individual considering the nature of that relationship as it applied to him or her (i.e., affective cognitive appraisal), coming to a perception of the relational quality, and developing personal attitudes and an emotional response toward that relationship (i.e., affective response), as seen in the Affective Processes portion of Figure 3.5. This ongoing process continuously interacted with the cognitive decision-making process.

Trust, Relational Commitment, and Relational Satisfaction (all affective responses to the SIR found to be present and influential in organizational relationships with publics across cultural or functional settings) were anticipated to contribute to student PSR behaviors (Brunner, 2000; Hon & Brunner, 2001; Jo, Hon, & Brunner, 2004; Ki & Hon, 2007a). Additional affective responses of control mutuality and mattering have been shown to be important in college students' relationships and, therefore, were expected to also be influential collegiate relational outcomes (Liang et al., 2002; Narveaz, 2006; Schlossberg, 1989).

#### *Cognitive Components of Moral Action*

This study's model deferred to, and was consistent with, Rest's (Narveaz & Rest, 1995; Rest, 1984, 1986; Rest et al., 1999) conceptualization of the components of, and the process by which, individuals engage in moral action. A person capable of acting morally must first have moral sensitivity or cognizance, moral judgment or reason, moral motivation or identity, and moral character or commitment, as represented in the Cognitive Processes portion of Figure 3.5, below. An individual must engage with each component, but not in any particular order, to act



morally. The proposed model has added the affective process to Rest's cognitive process, illustrating the processes by which a student acts morally.

### Phase III: Press and Fit Intersect the SIR and the Behavioral Decision-Making Process

The proposed model has suggested an affective process by which press and fit (i.e., interactional processes) function to influence an individual's inclination and behavior toward an institutional goal, embrace an institutional message, or fulfill an institutional expectation. Social ecologists believe that the concept of press, a process of continuing interaction between the student and the environment, influences affective and behavioral responses of the students within an environment (Pace & Stern, 1958; Stern, 1974). Stern (1974) suggested that press is exerted by the college's climate (i.e., beta consensual press) and the individual's internal pressures (i.e., private beta press). Press is experienced by both the individual and the environment at large. Williams (1986) articulated that a student's fit with the institution's environment, another interaction variable, influences the affective response and, ultimately, behavior. This study's model proposed that press and fit: (a) Are interactional variables; (b) Together are factors contributing to the nature of the interaction between the environment and the student (i.e., the SIR); and (c) Function across the entire student decision-making process from the initial interaction to the students' efforts to make personal meaning of the events and choices that lead to behavior.

Expanding on Moos' (1979) concept of cognitive appraisal to integrate the affective aspects of decision-making, the model proposed in this study, as depicted in Figure 3.6, suggested that the nature of that interaction (e.g., press, fit) continued throughout the decision-making process to influence students' perceptions of cognitive, affective, and, subsequently, behavioral responses to the relational quality. The contribution of this affective process and its

impact on cognitive processes was integral to the ethical decision-making process in the study, and mediated the influence of the student and the environment, as conceptualized.

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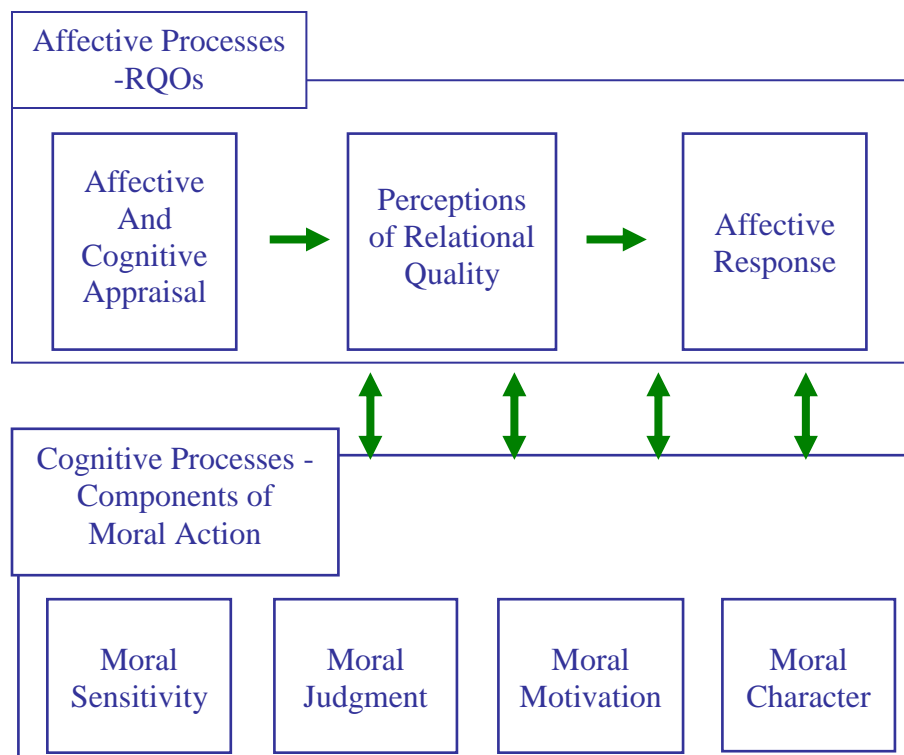


Figure 3.5. Boyd's Model, Phase II: Moral and Ethical Decision-Making Process

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009).

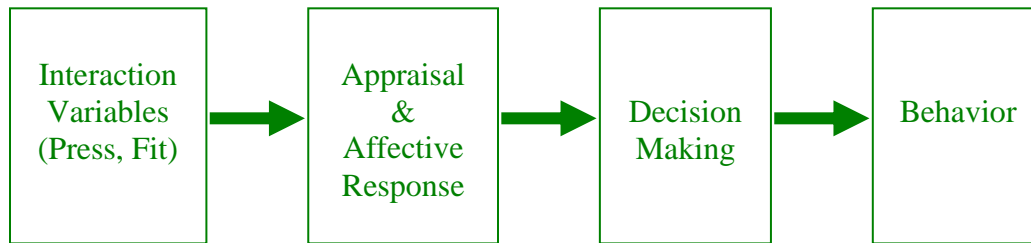


Figure 3.6. Interaction Variable Components and Process Model

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009), adapted from Moos (1979).

The nature of the interaction between the student and the environment ( $S \times E$ )—that is, the SIR—impacted the individuals’ ethical or moral development (MD) and subsequent behavior (B) or  $B = f(P, E, [P \times E], MD)$  (Moos, 1979; Narveaz and Rest, 1995). Therefore, the SIR impacted behavior and the ethical decision-making process. This impact occurred as a function of the interaction between the relational quality outcome (RQO) of (a) students affectively processing their experience with the SIR and (b) cognitively determining a course of action (as in Figure 3.7).

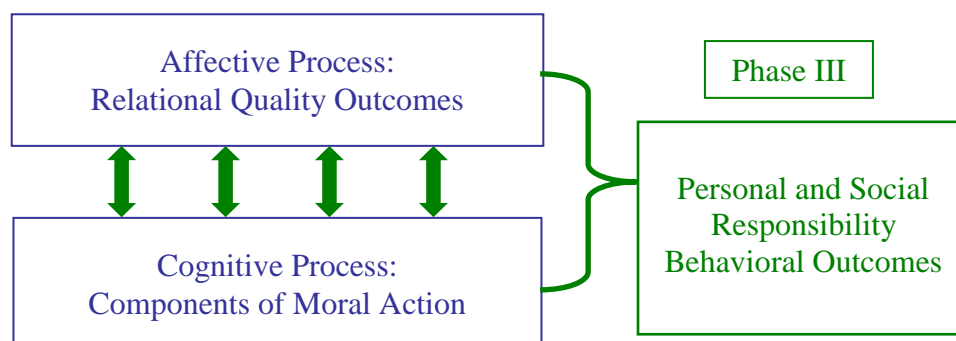


Figure 3.7. Boyd’s Model, Phase III: Process of Committing to PSR Behavioral Outcomes

Figure created by the K. D. Boyd (2009).

### *Multi-Directional Interaction*

The student's individual experience with the SIR and the overarching institutional climate created by the student body's collective SIR were reciprocal, cumulative, and continuously evolving. The current contextual experience of the student became a factor in the future environment. Institutional climate was a product of all community members' perceptions of their collective interactions in the environment. Moos (1979) limited his model to a unidirectional accounting of the influence of the collective social experience on the individual, although he alluded to a continuous cycle of influential interaction. Acknowledging the impact of relational quality and behavioral outcomes on the individual and the climate, the proposed model provided an outline of the multidirectional influence of each.

#### Boyd's Model of Educating for PSR Behaviors with the Student–Institution Relationship

Figure 3.8, below, demonstrates the full proposed model and the multidirectional relationships between the components in this model. Figure 3.8 also illustrates the process by which students in the study experienced the environment and the student–institution relationship (Phase I), responded to that experience emotionally and intellectually (Phase II), and then generated their behavioral responses to the preceding processes (Phase III). In Phase I, if a student (S) was faced with a behavioral situation or choice, the student and the environment (E) interacted and that interaction constituted the nature of the student–institution relationship ( $N_{SIR}$ ), which reinvented itself at each interaction.

The press of the environment, acting through the nature of the SIR that the students had just experienced, affected the students' moral and ethical decision-making processes (Phase II). During this phase, the students engaged in both affective and cognitive processes before taking action (or choosing inaction). Initially, the students appraised the nature of the relationship and

situation in which they found themselves, which resulted in perceptions about the quality of the relationship and which, in turn, elicited an affective or emotional response from each student. These emotional responses continuously interacted with each of Rest's cognitive moral components until that interaction produced action. The level of personal and social responsibility reflected in this action was related to both the cognitive moral skills and the affective relational quality outcomes.

### Summary

This study's proposed model has been rooted in research findings, historical insights, and legal expectations for the SIR. Theoretically, it was designed to encourage and facilitate student behaviors consistent with personal and social responsibility in order to enhance the institution's learning climate. This model conceptually expressed a commonly held belief in higher education, that the quality of the relationship between the student, the institution, and the relational participants influences student learning and action. It also detailed the framework and process of how those components were believed to influence both a student's behavior and the student–institution relationship.

As a result, trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering (i.e., selected relational quality outcomes) represented the nature of the student–institution relationship and academic integrity, along with alcohol use and misuse, all presented as behavioral indicators of personal and social responsibility. This study explored the correlations, predictive power, and best combinations of each relational quality outcome on the PSR behavioral indicators. The review of the literature, upcoming synthesis, and process model framed the design of this study and the selection of collected variables that are now discussed in the next chapter

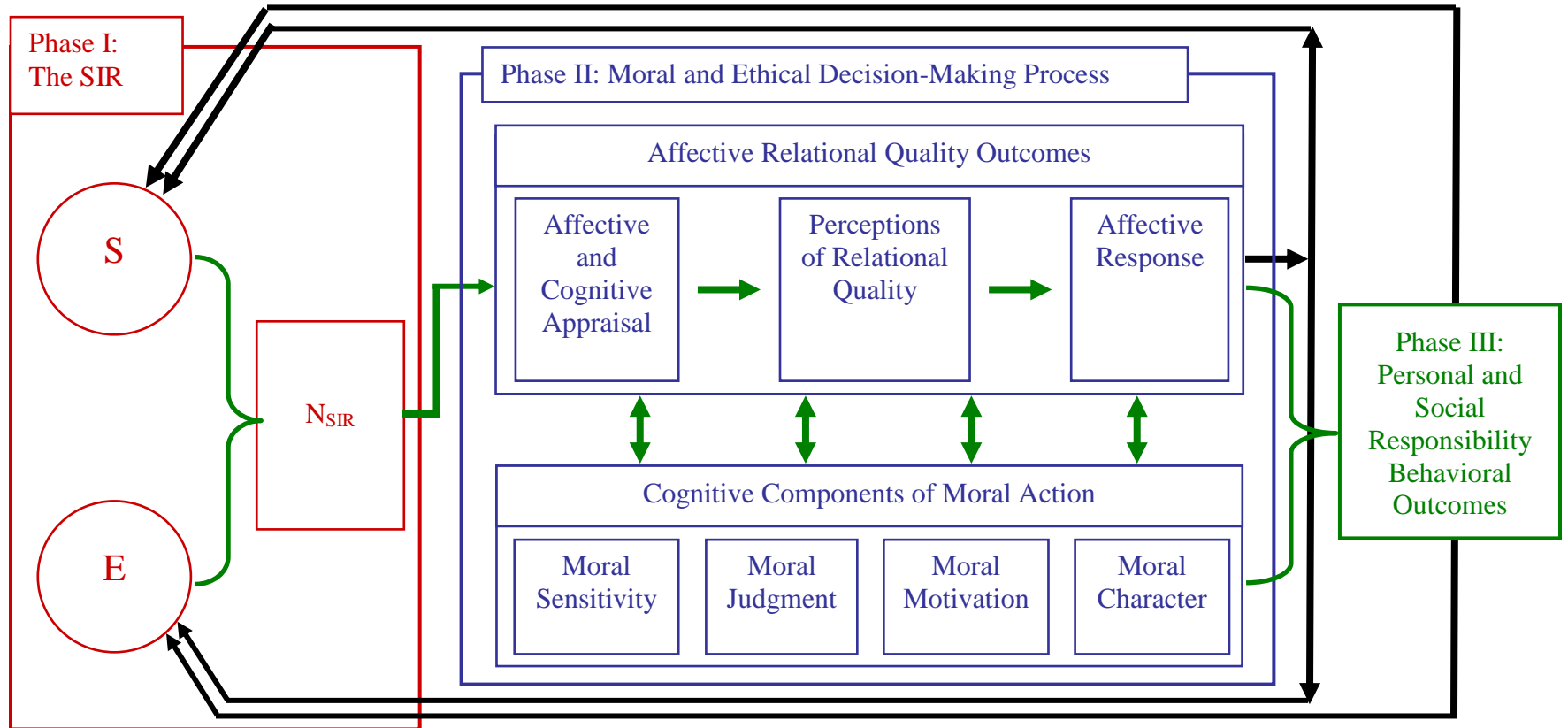


Figure 3.8. Boyd's Model of Educating for PSR Behaviors with the SIR

Figure created by K. D. Boyd (2009).

Note: See Appendix 2 for more information showing how student development theory, social ecology theory, organization–public relationship constructs, and interaction theories are represented across the model in Figure 3.8.

## CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to better understand the nature of the student–institution relationship (SIR), how it may or may not impact college student behavior, and how to shape these associations to enhance the likelihood of students engaging in personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors. This research was exploratory in the sense that the relational quality of the student–institution relationship and its influence on student PSR behaviors has not been empirically examined. The study therefore examined the association between and predictive value of students’ perceptions of trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering, [proxies for the nature of the SIR] as they relate to self-reported levels of academic honesty and alcohol use and misuse [proxies for PSR behavioral indicators]. This chapter outlined the mechanics of the study design including the research design, sample selection, instrumentation, and the data collection, management, and analysis process.

### Research Design

This quantitative correlation study was designed to be both explanatory and predictive. The study: (a) Explored and quantified the independent correlation between selected student affective responses to the student–institution relationship quality, on the one hand, and personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors, on the other; (b) Quantified the combined predictive ability of selected RQOs over self-reported levels of PSR behaviors; and (c) Examined which combination of trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering best predicts self-reported levels of alcohol use/misuse and academic



dishonesty. These goals grounded the study's assumption that students were in an anthropomorphic relationship with their college and that this relationship made unique contributions to students' PSR education and action. The dependent variables for this study were self-reported levels of alcohol use and misuse, and self-reported levels of academic dishonesty. The independent variables were trust, control mutuality, relational satisfaction, relational commitment, and general mattering.

#### Invited Sample Selection

This study invited a randomly selected sample of 1,510 students from "Whichever University," a masters comprehensive university with a teaching emphasis in a suburban location in the South, to participate in an online survey. The sample was stratified to reflect Whichever University enrollment by race/ethnicity, classification, and sex. At the time of the study, Whichever University's enrollment of just over 5,000 predominantly female (69%), Caucasian (66.4%) undergraduate students hailed from 42 states and 54 countries. Undergraduate degrees granted included liberal arts and sciences, education, business, and the visual and performing arts.

The Association of American of Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) *Core Commitments* Leadership Consortium selected Whichever University as one of its original members. The consortium selection process criteria included the expectation that selected campuses be able to demonstrate, in both values and action, a commitment to educating students for PSR (AAC&U, n.d.a.). Using a Consortium school as the site of the study ensured that the study participants would have been exposed to widespread institutional PSR culture, messages, and action—activities believed to encourage personal and social responsibility in students (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Boyd & Cooper, 2008)

Study participants ranged from first-year (i.e., freshman students, defined as undergraduate students enrolled in their first term at the institution) to seniors (defined as undergraduate students enrolled in—or most recently completed, if administered during the summer—their eighth consecutive non-summer term at the institution). Students younger than 18 were excluded from the sample. The calculated respondent sample size was based on a .85 power, an effect size of .07, and an alpha coefficient level of .05%. The anticipated response rate was 15 %, based on rates experienced by other researchers gathering similar behavioral data (McCabe, personal communication). [More information about the sample and final useable response rate of 13.2% can be found in Chapter 5.]

#### Instrumentation

This study explored the impact of college student perceptions of, and affective responses to, the nature of their student–institution relationship (SIR) on behaviors associated with personal and social responsibility (PSR). The core of this study’s instrument combined four established scales that had all been validated in prior research: (a) Ki and Hon’s (2007b) adaptation of Huang’s (1997, 2001b) Organization–Public Relationship Assessment (OPRA) scale; (b) Marcus’ (1991a, 1991b) General Mattering Scale; (c) Lovett–Hooper, Komarraju, Weston, and Dollinger’s (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale; and (d) the World Health Organization’s (Babor, Higgins-Biddle, & Saunders, 2001) 10-item Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT). (See Appendixes H–N for each scale and the study’s instrument.) Additional researcher-generated questions collected demographics to determine whether the sample was representative of the participating school’s student population. Participant perceptual context questions assisted the researcher in exploring the relevancy of the study’s assumptions.

One open-ended question provided insight into the respondent's point of reference when responding to the questions.

Because each scale was scored on a different range and with different responses, this instrument's sections (See Appendix G) were organized by scale with: (a) The first section (1.1–1.28) being the RQOs measured by the OPRA and one researcher-generated question; (b) The second section (2.1–2.5) measuring the General Mattering score and two researcher-generated questions; (c) The third section (3.1–3.20) measuring the academic dishonesty responses; and (d) The last section (3.21–3.30) measuring the respondents' self-reported alcohol consumption. Once the scales and researcher-generated questions (1.29, 2.6, 2.7, 4, 5) were combined into a single instrument (See Appendix G), this instrument was subjected to a content review by student affairs professionals engaged in a doctoral program, as well as a pilot test with undergraduate students to assess and improve the construct validity and reliability of the instrument.

#### *Measuring the Student–Institution Relationship*

The review of the literature proposed the adoption of five selected RQOs as proxies for the student perception of the nature of the SIR: four RQOs traditionally found in the organization-public relationship (OPR) literature and an additional hypothesized collegiate RQO that reflected student affairs' theoretical tradition. The Adapted OPRA (Ki & Hon, 2007b) collected participants' perceptions of the quality of their relationship with the university on a seven-point scale (*1 = strongly disagree; 2, 3, 4 = neutral; 5, 6, 7 = strongly agree; and NA = not applicable*), and were reported by the relational quality outcome subscales of Relational Commitment, Trust, Control Mutuality, and Relational Satisfaction. The General Mattering Scale (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b) used a four-point scale (*1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = somewhat, 4 = a*

*lot*) to identify the respondents' global affective responses regarding their perceptions of being important, attended to, the object of another's interest, depended on, and noticed when absent. General Mattering was the additional collegiate RQO hypothesized by this study. These scores were generated using factor analysis. (See Appendix O for Factor Loadings of RQO Items).

The RQOs portion of Ki and Hon's (2007b) organization–public relationship instrument measured students' affective responses to their perceptions of the SIR's relational quality. The relational quality indicators selected by Ki and Hon (i.e., Trust, Control Mutuality, Relational Satisfaction, and Relational Commitment) were initially identified in Huang's (1997) study. The scales were first published by Hon and Grunig (1999) in a guide to developing measures of an organization–public relationship's quality. Grunig and Huang (2000) labeled the qualities as outcomes. They placed these outcomes within their process model, theorizing the relational impact on behavioral outcomes and organizational goal attainment. This set of measures, which has become known as Huang's (2001b) Organization–Public Relationship Assessment (OPRA), have been validated in multiple cultural and industry settings (Huang, 2001a; Hung, 2005; Jo, 2003; Ki & Hon, 2007b).

Ki and Hon (2007b) pilot-tested Hon and Grunig's (1999) four indicators of relational quality. These researchers then tested their instrument using the 493 responses to a mail survey collected from members of a state farm bureau. The instrument measured the constructs using a nine-point modified Likert Scale (1932), with points on the scale ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Neutral” (5) to “Strongly Agree” (9), with no label between these numbers. Students were also permitted to respond “Not Applicable.” Their initial Cronbach's (1951) alphas for the four RQOs were .90 for Trust, .92 for Relational Satisfaction, .93 for Control Mutuality, and .88 for Relational Commitment.

Ki and Hon (2007b) then performed both exploratory and confirmatory analyses to refine the number and quality of the included items. Exploratory factor analysis revealed whether items were too closely associated with other factors, not associated closely enough with the anticipated factors, or were opposite signed from the other items loading on a factor (e.g., if all were negative and the factor was positive). Confirmatory factor analysis then confirmed that the hypothesized factors held together. The final scale consisted of 28 questions, eight reverse coded, with seven Trust questions, eight Satisfaction questions, eight Control Mutuality questions, and five Commitment questions, using the above-described scoring. (See Appendixes H–N.) All of Cronbach's (1951) alphas were above .90 and all factor loadings for each item were between .73 and .89. The current study adopted this instrument to measure the SIR's RQOs.

Ki and Hon (2007a) later amended their scale to collect RQOs data about the student–institution relationship, relying on Jo et al.'s (2004) adaptation of Huang's (2001b) OPRA scale to the college setting, for the purpose of developing their collegiate scales' wording. A major finding of the Ki and Hon (2007a) study was confirmation of the construct validity of the RQOs measures in the college population. The instrument used in the current study adopted Ki and Hon's (2007a) collegiate wording where appropriate, adapting the longer, more reliable scale to a collegiate population. Ki and Hon's (2007a) collegiate instrument was not selected, because these scales were a subset of the scale selected for inclusion in this study. Additionally, the Cronbach (1951) alphas for each of the collegiate RQO scales were in the mid to low .80s, whereas the Cronbach's alphas in Ki and Hon's (2007b) general instrument were in the mid .90 range. (See Appendixes H - K, below, for Ki and Hon's (2007b) scale, along with the study's instrument in Section 1, questions 1.1–1.28 of Appendix G – this study's instrument). The current study expanded Ki and Hon's (2007b) RQOs to include Marcus' (1991a, 1991b) General

Mattering Scale. Marcus's scale measured "societal or global mattering" (Marcus, 1991a, p. 5)—that is, an individual's perceptions of mattering to the community at large. The General Mattering construct was included because it is an affective interaction construct found to significantly influence affective responses of students in collegiate settings (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b; Moody, 1996; Rayle, 2005; Rayle & Chung, 2007; Schlossberg, 1989; Wicker, 2004).

The General Mattering Scale (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b) was developed in conjunction with Rosenberg's (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b) Interpersonal Mattering Scale. Comprised of five questions, the General Mattering Scale captured the respondents' global perceptions of mattering, without regard for specific categories of relating persons (e.g., family, teachers, or significant others). This scale gathered information about the respondents' feelings of being attended to, the object of others' interest, important, noticed when absent, and depended on by others. (See Marcus' (1991a, 1991b) General Mattering Scale in Appendix L, below, and in Section 2, questions 2.1–2.5, of Appendix G – this study's instrument).

Marcus (1991a, 1991b) developed the scale using the responses of 400 college students. A Cronbach's (1951) alpha of .87 established the scale's reliability. Marcus' General Mattering Scale has been used in studies across multiple settings—e.g., with the homeless (DeForge & Barclay, 1997), traditional and non-traditional aged college students (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b; Rayle & Chung, 2007; Schlossberg, 1989), adolescents (Rayle, 2005), job satisfaction (Connolly & Myers, 2003), the mentally ill (Taylor & Turner, 2001). In all these cases, Cronbach alphas ranged from .87 (Connolly & Myers, 2003; Marcus, 1991a, 1991b) and .85 (DeForge & Barclay, 1997) to .74 (Rayle, 2005).

For the General Mattering Scale, Marcus presented evidence of content, convergent, discriminant, and construct validity. Content validity was maintained by detailed dimensional

specification prior to the development of the scale. A factor analysis revealed an existential factor in the responses, meaning that the questions and responses were collecting information about respondents' disposition or personal qualities. A zero-correlation of .44 with Rosenberg and McCullough's (1981) secondary measures of parental mattering suggested the presence of convergent validity (i.e., correlation between measures of similar constructs). A correlation of .17 with a social support scale indicated that the General Mattering construct measured an independent construct (i.e., discriminant validity).

### *Measuring Indicators of Personal and Social Responsibility*

Academic integrity and safe use of alcohol were shown in Chapter 2, above, to be behavioral indicators of PSR. The Lovett–Hooper et al. (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale and the World Health Organization's (WHO) (Babor et al., 2001) Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) measured academic dishonesty and alcohol misuse as proxies. McCabe's Academic Dishonesty Scale (Lovett–Hooper et al., 2007) determined the level of academic dishonesty behaviors in which participants had engaged over the past year with a four-point questions scale (*1 = never, 2 = once, 3 = more than once, and NR = not relevant*). The Academic Dishonesty Scale scores measured participants' self-reported instances of academic dishonesty in order to generate a measure of academic integrity. Lower Academic Dishonesty Scale scores indicated academic honesty, while higher scores indicated academic dishonesty. The ten-item AUDIT (Babor et al., 2001) collected information on a five-point scale about the levels of participants' frequency of alcohol use (*0 = never, 1 = monthly or less, 2 = 2–4 times a month, 3 = 2–3 times a week, 4 = 4 or more times a week*), quantity of alcohol consumed in one use (*0 = 1 or 2, 1 = 3 or 4, 2 = 5 or 6, 3 = 7 to 9, 4 = 10 or more*), and frequency of alcohol use/misuse behaviors (*0 = never, 1 = less than monthly, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly, 4 = daily or*

*almost daily*). Lower Alcohol Use scores indicated responsible use of alcohol, while higher scores indicated problematic drinking. (See Appendix M for Lovett–Hooper et al (2007). Also see Section 3, questions 3.1–3.20 of the Appendix G – this study’s instrument).

Lovett–Hooper et al. (2007) used 18 items from McCabe’s (1993) Academic Dishonesty Student Survey, a widely used measure of student academic integrity and dishonesty behaviors and attitudes, and added two researcher question to create the academic dishonesty scale used in this study. One section of McCabe’s survey asks students to self-report academically dishonest behaviors on a four-point scale (i.e., 1 = “never”, 2 = “once”, 3 = “more than once”, and 4 = “not relevant”). Students were given the option of selecting “not relevant” because some of the behavioral actions might not be relevant to their academic experiences (e.g., unauthorized collaboration is irrelevant if the student has not been assigned collaborative work). McCabe’s (1992) study sample of 11,818 participants found a .87 Cronbach’s (1951) alpha coefficient for his scale score, while Lovett–Hooper et al. (2007) reported a .93 alpha coefficient for their scale.

Three subscales emerged from the Lovett–Hooper et al.(2007) data: (a) Self-dishonesty, with eight items and a Cronbach’s alpha of .88; (b) Social/falsifying dishonesty, with six items and an alpha of .78; and (c) Plagiarism, with six items and an alpha of .79. Lovett and Hooper (2007) used a principal components analysis (with Varimax Rotation, an exploratory factor analysis), to identify these subscales.

The World Health Organization (WHO) (Babor et al., 2001) designed the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT) in 1982 to identify harmful, hazardous, or excessive alcohol consumption in the users’ recent past. The assessment instrument, which identifies early alcohol problems and prevalence of use in respondents, has been used extensively and validated in six countries. The initial validating study included approximately 2,000 participants from



Norway, Australia, Kenya, Bulgaria, Mexico, and the United States of America. Items were selected based on correlations with quantity, frequency, instances of binge consumption, and the ability to differentiate levels of problematic alcohol consumption-related behaviors.

The AUDIT is a ten-item instrument using four different five-point modified Likert (1932) scales. It produced an overall score that predicts harmful drinking patterns. The instrument asked participants to respond based on their behavior over a one-year period: the last academic year, beginning with the Fall 2008 semester and continuing through the Spring 2009 semester. Questions included those related to quantity, frequency of consumption and binge consumption, and frequency with which the respondent experienced an indicator of problem drinking (e.g., unable to stop, changed plans because of drinking, experienced guilt, loss of memory). (See Appendix N for WHO 10 Item AUDIT, (Babor et al., 2001). Also see Section 3, questions 3.21–3.30, of Appendix G – this study’s instrument).

Large numbers of studies have validated the AUDIT instrument across gender and cultures, and with university students (Babor et al., 2001). The instrument’s sensitivity for problematic drinking, meaning the percentage of positive cases accurately identified, was commonly in the mid .90s. The AUDIT’s specificity (i.e., the percentage of negative cases accurately noted) averaged in the .80s. The correlation between the AUDIT instrument results and three other alcohol surveys appeared to suggest the presence of convergent validity (i.e., correlation between measures of similar constructs) – as is seen by the MAST ( $r = .88$ ), correlations of .47 (male respondents) and .46 (female respondents) on covert content alcoholism screening, and a correlation of .78 with the CAGE (Babor et al., 2001). One test–retest reliability study found a correlation of .86. Similar results were found even when the order and wording of

the questions were emended. Each of these studies supported the validity of the AUDIT instrument, contributing to its inclusion in this study.

### *Researcher-Added Perceptual Contextual Questions*

The researcher developed questions that supplemented the exploratory nature of both this study and the assumptions supporting the study. These included demographics and other construct-specific questions, which will be described in the next section, below. Institutional climate, ethos, and action (all expected to be present in an AAC&U Core Commitment Consortium school) were believed to impact students' PSR (AAC&U, n.d.a.; Boyd & Cooper, 2008). Additionally, some OPR studies have found that persons who identified themselves as being in a relationship with the organization in question are more likely to engage in pro-organization behaviors (Bruning & Lambe, 2002). PSR behaviors are pro-organization behaviors at a Core Commitment college. These observations were the foundation of this study's assumptions. Therefore, this instrument collected these perceptual context data in order to evaluate whether there was a difference in the level of self-reported PSR behaviors reflected in the responses for these factors. Respondents were asked: "How committed to being personally and socially responsible is Whichever University and its representatives?" and "How much has Whichever University done to facilitate personal and social responsibility for students like you?" Respondents were also asked if they agree that "In general, students like me have a relationship with the Whichever University? (See Appendix P for the researcher-generated questions. Also see Section 1, question 1.29 and Section 2, questions 2.6 and 2.7, and Questions 4 and 5 of Appendix G—the study's instrument).

Open-ended questions also provided insight into which institutional agents, from the student respondent's perspective, contributed to the relationship, along with the respondent's evaluation of relational quality. (See Questions 4 and 5 of Appendix G - the study's instrument.)

### Reliability and Validity

This study attended to the reliability and validity of the instrument, adding to the reliability and validity already established by the studies that generated the pre-established scales. Reliability and validity need to be established when conducting empirical research to establish whether the instrument consistently collects what it is intended to collect. A common form of reliability is internal consistency (Vogt, 2007). A study is deemed to be internally consistent when similar results are found across responses to the same question, allowing researchers to be confident that all or most respondents interpret the items in the same way. Cronbach's (1951) alpha measured the reliability constructs.

Validity, in this context, means that the instrument or scale is measuring what it is intended to measure (Vogt, 2007). Content validity and construct validity establish an instrument's efficacy. Content validity is achieved by having someone with reasonable understanding of, or expertise in, the phenomena being studied review the questions for accuracy of measurement. Construct validity indicates that the instruments' score reflects the hypothetical construct as stated by the researcher. The results of a confirmatory factor analysis, a pilot study, and a content review by student affairs professionals engaged in a doctoral program were used to determine the construct validity of this study's instrument.

The current study's instrument was reviewed by a team of eight reviewers and pilot tested with six undergraduate students to improve content validity and to test the reliability of the instrument, with special focus on the researcher-generated questions. The review team included

three men and five women, two African Americans and six Caucasians, with between eight and thirty years of experience working with students. The undergraduates who pilot tested the instrument were predominantly female and upperclassmen, but did include students of different ethnicities. The pilot participants were asked to complete a survey with open-ended questions about the survey, following their own understanding of what was being asked. The final wording and organization of the instrument reflected the pilot group's and the review team's observations. The pre-established scales were not emended.

### Data Collection

The instrument was administered online. Whichever University's Office of Institutional Research generated the randomly selected stratified sample and provided potential participants' e-mail addresses to the Division of Student Affairs at the University of Georgia (UGA) Office of Student Affairs Assessment. Students included in the sample received a total of three e-mails each. (See Appendixes C, D, and E for the e-mail text.) Participants were notified of their selection and encouraged to participate in an initial e-mail and two follow up e-mails. The first e-mail was delivered to the student participants' e-mail accounts six days after the last day of final exams for undergraduates, and the Monday after the Saturday graduation in May for graduating seniors. The second e-mail was distributed four days later; and the third, six days after the second e-mail. Access to the study survey website closed four days following the last e-mail reminder. The online instrument was available for a total of 15 days, and access was closed four days after the second e-mail follow-up was distributed.

Each e-mail contained a link to the survey, which was housed on a secure server maintained by the UGA Office of Student Affairs Assessment. The link took the participant to the survey. The first screen of the questionnaire was the consent screen (See Appendix F). After

agreeing to participate, the participant was taken to the questions. The instrument included 66 items and two open-ended questions, along with six general demographic questions.

Participation was confidential. Unique, personal identifiers were not requested or captured by the researcher or by the technical equipment used. Upon completing the survey, respondents were offered the opportunity to register in an independent database for one of six (i.e., two per campus) \$50 Amazon.com gift certificates. Participation in the study was not required in order for a respondent to be included in the drawing. Once the survey was closed, staff from the Office of Student Affairs Assessment provided the data to the researcher, without any identifying information other than the collected demographics.

#### Data Management: Data Cleaning, Coding, and Scoring

As is frequently the case, the scales selected for this study were prone to the issues of missing data and non-normal distributions. Participants were free to choose not to disclose the requested information, due to the nature of the questions asked. Responses in both the Academic Dishonesty and the Relational Quality Outcomes scales that allowed for an answer to be coded as “missing data” exacerbated these issues.

Coding choices, whether made to address missing data or other data-coding issues, can pose a challenge for researchers and may unduly influence a study’s findings (Allison, 2002; O’Rourke, 2000). Most often, researchers address these issues by removing participant data and/or items with significant anomalies, estimating data for missing responses, and transforming the data to achieve a more normal distribution. The most conservative analytical approach to address missing data is to eliminate the case from the study. However, removing cases to eliminate incomplete responses reduces a study’s “n” and its power, thus increasing the likelihood of making a Type 2 error. In some instances, removing participants’ responses would

undermine the validity of a study. Each of these conditions was present in this study's data.

Therefore, where possible, this researcher attempted to make data decisions that balanced each of these priorities, while replicating the original research methods used to manage the data and score the scales.

In the spirit of Ki and Hon's (2007a; 2007b) RQO studies, the researcher initially reviewed, by item and by case, all submissions for anomalies, but did not automatically remove all cases with missing data. Cases were removed if a participant's answers were shown to be inexplicable in totality. In cases where large amounts of data were missing, the researcher retained the submitted data if at least one of the predictor scales and one of the response scales were complete.

### *Scoring*

Once the data set was finalized, each scale scoring process approached missing or unquantifiable data differently. Adopting Ki and Hon's (2007a; 2007b) research methods, this study used factor analysis scores with listwise deletion of missing data to generate the Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering Relational Quality Outcome Scale scores. This study replicated the summative approach to calculating each set of scores from the AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale and the Lovett–Hooper (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale. This study's processes for generating scale scores and accounting for missing or unquantifiable data will be described in greater detail, below.

#### *Scoring: Generating Predictor Scores with Factor Analysis*

Ki and Hon's (2007a, 2007b) original research used factor analysis scores derived during a Structural Equation Modeling process as the Relational Quality Outcome (RQO) Scale scores. Marcus (1991a, 1991b) was silent on the process used to produce the General Mattering Scale

scores, implying the use of summated scores, as did the other studies using this scale (Rayle, 2005). Factor analysis scores can be used to validate hypothesized dimensions within the data without losing the “meaningful variation in the original data” (Rummel, 1967, p. 444). Therefore, this study relied on independent factor analysis procedures to generate each of the Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering Scale scores. The items contributing to each RQO scale were entered separately, and each factor was computed independently of the other scale items.

*Scoring: Generating Response Scores with Missing or Unquantifiable Data*

The response variables were calculated summatively. The AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale score allowed for “0” answers; therefore, missing responses for AUDIT Alcohol Use items were coded as “0” for each item. Each response was then added together to create a total score ranging between 0 and 40. A score of “0” reflected no alcohol consumption or abuse indicators. A score of forty indicated all were reported at the greatest possible magnitude.

Lovett–Hooper’s (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale coded “Not Relevant” responses as missing data, replacing all missing data with a mean value using what appeared to be pairwise deletion. The current study replaced “Not Relevant” responses with individual series means when generating Academic Dishonesty scores, if the mean was “based on a high percentage of items with non-missing values” (Green & Slkind, 2005, p. 124). Data estimates were not included if, per participant, more than 20% of scale item responses were missing, or if more than 20% of the total variable responses were missing. The Academic Dishonesty Scale score was generated for each participant by summing all the Academic Dishonesty item responses with the data estimators included.

Estimating data for the “Not Relevant” Academic Dishonesty responses was the least conservative data decision made in this study. A “Not Relevant” response provided information and, if given, should not preclude consideration of the other data provided by the respondent. A “Not Relevant” response indicated that the respondent had not been in a position to cheat in that manner. The individual series mean was selected because it reflects the *respondents’* typical or average Academic Dishonesty behavior, thus providing a reasonably accurate estimate of the response without dismissing or masking additional information. (Roth, Switzer, & Switzer, 1999.)

### Research Assumptions

*Assumption 1.* Students are in an interpersonal relationship with the college itself, in addition to interpersonal relationships with individuals and groups of individuals.

*Assumption 2.* Institutional PSR commitment to and facilitation of personal and social responsibility does not solely predict a student’s PSR behaviors.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

The key research questions (RQ) and null hypotheses ( $H_0$ ) of this study were:

*RQ1.* What are the correlations between college students’ perceptions of the hypothesized student–institution relational quality outcomes (RQOs) and personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors?

*H<sub>01</sub>.* There is no positive correlation(s) between college students’ perceptions of the trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering in the student–institution relationship (SIR).



*H<sub>02</sub>*. There is no positive correlation between college students' demonstrated levels of PSR, as measured by scores on Lovett-Hooper et al.'s (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale and scores on the WHO's Ten-Item AUDIT.

*H<sub>03</sub>*. There is/are no negative association(s) between college students' perceptions of trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering in the SIR (on the one hand) and scores on the Lovett-Hooper et al. (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale (on the other hand).

*H<sub>04</sub>*. There is/are no negative association(s) between college students' perceptions of trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and general mattering in the SIR (on the one hand) and scores on the WHO's 10-Item AUDIT (on the other hand).

*RQ2*. To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs together explain college students' demonstrated levels of academic integrity, an example of PSR behavior, as measured by scores on Lovett–Hooper et al.'s (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale?

*H<sub>05</sub>*. The hypothesized student–institution RQOs together do not explain college students' demonstrated levels of academic integrity, an example of PSR behavior, as measured by scores on Lovett-Hooper et al.'s (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale.

*RQ3*. Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students' demonstrated levels of academic integrity, a PSR behavior?

*H<sub>06</sub>*. No linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students' demonstrated levels of academic integrity, a PSR behavior.

*RQ4.* To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs explain college students’ demonstrated levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior, as measured by scores on the WHO’s AUDIT?

*H<sub>07</sub>.* The hypothesized student–institution RQOs together do not explain college students’ demonstrated levels of academic integrity, an example of PSR behavior, as measured by scores on the WHO’s AUDIT.

*RQ5.* Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students’ demonstrated levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior?

*H<sub>08</sub>:* No linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students’ demonstrated levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior.

#### Data Analysis

An exploratory factor analysis confirmed for this population the reliability of each scale. To better understand the associations between the students’ affective responses to the relational quality of the student–institution relationship (SIR) and behavioral indicators of PSR, this study used Pearson’s correlation coefficient to report the strength and direction of bivariate correlations between all predictor and response variables. The analysis identified significant correlations at the .05% level of significance. This study hypothesized a negative relationship between RQO scores and scores for academic dishonesty and for alcohol use/misuse; therefore one-tailed tests of significance were used. These tests also provided an indicator of multicollinearity between these explanatory variables.

The researcher generated two multiple regression models: one for each response variable (i.e., self-reported levels of PSR behavior), using the five predictor variables (i.e., RQOs). These statistical procedures were run to determine whether and which combination of the RQOs (i.e., a

participant's affective response to the nature of the SIR) predicts the student's PSR behaviors of self-reported levels of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse (research question 3 and 5). The  $R^2$  reported the strength and direction of the overall explanation of the independent variables (research question 2 and 4). The standardized beta weights reported the strength and direction of each of the factors to the dependent variables' variances. The F statistic at the .05% alpha coefficient level indicated significant explanatory power. Using the same multiple regression models described above, the researcher then completed a stepwise regression selection, searching for the most efficient and best predictor model of the hypothesized variables. The stepwise process used backward and forward evaluation, which provided the most information about each predictor.

Inferences from this data analysis enhanced the exploratory value of the study and added to the knowledge about the interplay of predictors, but the study was limited in what inferences could be made from the data. Other organization–public relationship (OPR) studies, using structural equation modeling, presented findings of commonality between relational quality outcomes. In some cases, OPR research suggested that some of the hypothesized quality outcomes may be antecedents of others. This level of analysis was beyond the scope of this research, except where the stepwise regression limited the number of predictor variables in the model to two, allowing for some analysis of the demonstrated causal relationship between variables. Otherwise, these results could not be utilized to establish causality or to determine whether one predictor was an antecedent of another.

#### Data Not Analyzed: Student and Institutional Characteristics

This study was an exploratory study of the nature of the student–institution relationship and its association with educating for PSR, as manifested in PSR behavior across undergraduate

student populations. This study focused on the SIR nature and what elements of that nature predicted and explained PSR behaviors, as opposed to constructs that predicted PSR behaviors. As stated in Chapter 1, the correlation model did not include the impact of individual or institutional characteristics on the associations within the relationships. The chosen sampling techniques (i.e., stratified random sampling) permitted the results to be generalized to the student–institution relationship across the participant institution.

As seen in Chapter 2, individual and institutional demographic variables have been shown to explain much of the variance in academic dishonesty and alcohol consumption. Pedhazur (1997) suggested that “higher order commonalities” (p. 271) can be masked by second- and third-order commonalities, if included in a correlation matrix and regression model. For this study, this means that the collected demographics might subsume any other explanatory variables. Uniqueness is a positive quality if seeking to predict a variable, but not if the researcher is trying to explain what contributes to a phenomenon. A contributing variable may be significantly interrelated with a number of factors and, therefore, not unique. Pedhazur proposed grouping second- and third-order commonalities and analyzing the variables separately to understand the contribution of each. Therefore, the current study isolated institutional and individual contributions to PSR behavior, thus allowing the contribution of the RQOs to be examined independently of other factors. These variables were not included in the correlation matrix or the regression analysis, for the reasons cited above.

### Summary

This study collected data in a survey instrument administered online. The instrument combined seven established scales which measured the predictor and response variables. Respondent perceptual context questions allowed the study’s assumptions to be tested. A team of

student affairs professional/PhD students reviewed the instrument's content validity and reliability. The instrument was also pilot tested with undergraduate students before it was finalized and distributed to the study participants. Once collected, the data were analyzed, answering the study's research questions with multiple regressions, Pearson correlations, and T-tests. Results from this analysis are presented in Chapter 5, below.

## CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

This study explored the impact of college student perceptions of, and affective responses to, their student–institution relationship (SIR) on behaviors associated with personal and social responsibility (PSR). The last chapter opened with an overview of the statistical analysis of the study’s methodology, including the response rates, generalizability, descriptive statistics of the participants, and scale reliability. Exploratory results of participant responses to relationship perceptual context items provided a framework for interpreting the study’s assumptions of an anthropomorphic relationship between the student and the college and the unique contribution of that relationship to a student’s PSR behaviors. Exploratory results of participant responses to PSR perceptual context items provided a framework for interpreting the study’s results. The findings of the data analysis were presented for each of the research questions and assumptions.

Research question one investigated the association between reported levels of trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, general mattering, academic dishonesty, and alcohol use/misuse (i.e., measures of relational quality outcomes and PSR behaviors). Research questions two and four addressed how much, if any, the participating college students’ combined affective responses to the relational quality of the SIR explained the students’ demonstrated levels of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse. Research questions three and five asked which linear combinations of relational quality outcomes best predicted these selected PSR behaviors. The chapter closed by reporting on tests that determined whether there are differences in academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse behaviors

dependent on participants' responses to the personal context variables, selected to reflect the current paradigm-informing PSR research.

As stated in Chapter 4, when possible this study replicated the conditions and coding decisions the original researchers for each scale applied when cleaning the data and scoring the scales. Where prior researchers used different approaches or the researcher was silent on a point, this researcher chose the most conservative method (i.e., the method that retained the most data possible).

### Response Rate

Of the invited, stratified random sample of 1,510 students selected from a general population of 4,442 undergraduate students at Whichever University, 201 subjects submitted responses to the Web-administered questionnaire. The researcher reviewed all the responses for cases and variables with large amounts of missing information to determine how to treat the data. One participant's responses were removed because the student answered only the demographic and relational survey items. Unlike Ki and Hon (2007a, 2007b), the researcher did not completely remove data from respondents giving consistently neutral responses. The invited sample provided a usable response of 200, a rate of 13.3%. Lastly, no inexplicable outliers were detected in demographic or study predictor, criterion, or perceptual contextual variable item responses. Therefore all items were used to conduct the analyses described below.

### Demographics and Representativeness of Sample

The stratified sample of invited participants reflected the selected characteristics, as found in the population of the Whichever University student body. This process resulted in a demographically diverse obtained response (See Table 5.1), although on which was not statistically representative for all characteristics. Like the university, the participants were

predominantly students of traditional college age, white, and female. One hundred and sixty-five (82.5%) of the students self-reported ages between 18 and 22, yet 4 respondents were over 50 years old. Three-quarters of respondents were female ( $n = 150$ ); three-quarters were Caucasian ( $n = 151$ ); 15.6% ( $n = 32$ ) were African-American and less than 1% ( $n = 1$ ) were Hispanic.

Table 5.1

## Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variable	Sample N	Sample %	Population %
Sex: Female	150	75.0	67.8
Time at Whichever University			
1 year	74	36.0	19.2
2 years	40	19.5	23.6
3 years	46	23.0	26.4
4 or more years	40	21.5	30.8
Age			
22 and under	165	82.5	77.3
Over 22	35	17.5	22.7
Race			
African American	32	16.0	26.5
Caucasian	151	75.5	66.9
Other	17	8.5	6.6



Of the respondents, 36.0% ( $n = 72$ ) were in their first year at the university, 19.5% ( $n = 39$ ) in their second, 23.0% ( $n = 46$ ) in their third, 16% ( $n = 32$ ) in their fourth, and 5.5% ( $n = 11$ ) in the fifth or later year.

At  $p < 0.01$ , the chi square goodness-of-fit test showed no difference between the means of the population and obtained responses by age,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 200) = 2.402$ ,  $p < .01$ , and gender,  $\chi^2 (1, N = 200) = 4.768$ ,  $p < .01$ . Significant differences by year in school,  $\chi^2 (3, N = 200) = 43.542$ ,  $p < .01$ , and race/ethnicity,  $\chi^2 (2, N = 200) = 13.852$ ,  $p < .01$ , were found. More first-year students responded than students of any other college year, and more Caucasian students responded than students of any other ethnic/racial group. Therefore, this study's sample ( $n = 200$ ) was representative of the general population by age, grouped as (a) 18–21 years old and (b) 22 and older, and by sex, but it was not representative by (c) year in school or by (d) race or ethnicity. For 113 (56.5%) respondents, the student–institution relationship they have with Whichever University was the only SIR they have experienced, while the remainder took some coursework—either for credit or not—at another institution.

#### Explanation of Data Analysis Interpretation

This study measured academic dishonesty and alcohol misuse as proxies for academic integrity and responsible use of alcohol. While the scores were reported as academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse, this study referred to the terms “academic integrity” and “responsible use of alcohol” when discussing these constructs and explaining the meaning of the findings as they relate to the research questions.

The Academic Dishonesty scale and the Alcohol Use scale used inverted scores to measure personal and social responsibility (PSR) behavior on a continuum. Higher scores on these PSR measures indicated lower levels of demonstrated PSR behavior—academic dishonesty

and alcohol misuse. At the same time, Relational Quality Outcome (RQO) scores are positively related to reported relational quality. RQO scores increased as participants responded positively to RQO items: the higher the Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering scale scores, the better the respondent rated each. Therefore, this study hypothesized a negative association between RQO scores and Academic Dishonesty or Alcohol Use scores. One-tailed tests of significance were used in these analyses.

### Descriptive Findings

This study's data fit into three categories: perceptual context variables, behavioral indicators of personal and social responsibility (response variables), and relational quality outcomes (predictor variables). Scale items were scored as either three points, four points, or seven points per item. The assumptions of normality, variance, skewness, and kurtosis for the perceptual context items and the Alcohol Use/Misuse, Academic Dishonesty, Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering scales, as well as for the items contributing to these scales, were examined. The response and predictor variables' items and scales were found to have slightly non-normal distributions. After a review of the histograms and comparative analysis of other measures of distribution, the personal context items and predictor and response variables scores were determined to be sufficiently normal, so that a transformation was not required. This study relied most heavily on histograms to test assumptions, because skewness and kurtosis coefficients are not as reliable as an interpretation of an histogram in large samples of 200 or more (Keppel & Wickins, 2004; Pallant, 2001).

*Predictor Variables: Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering*

The predictor variable item scores were reported on either seven- or four-point scales, with high scores indicating high levels of relational quality. The full range of Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering item responses were reported on all but one item. In general, participants reported positive perceptions of relational quality. On all but two items, fewer than half of the responses indicated a negative or neutral perception of the relational quality. Just over half of the participants reported being in agreement or neutral that Whichever University throws its weight around (53.6%), and in disagreement or neutral that students like them have influence (55.2%). No items had greater than a quarter of the respondents indicating a negative perception of the relational quality. Whichever University student participants reported a positive student–institution relationship (SIR) relational quality.

The means of the seven-point non-General Mattering Relational Quality Outcomes items ranged from  $M = 4.20$  to  $M = 5.71$ , with standard deviations ranging from  $SD = 1.26$  to  $SD = 1.71$ . The means of the four-point General Mattering items ranged from  $M = 2.84$  to  $M = 3.39$ , and standard deviation ranged from  $SD = .74$  to  $SD = 1.06$ . The factor analysis-generated means for all Relational Quality Outcome Scales were  $M = .000$ , with standard deviations ranging from  $SD = 0.97$  to  $SD = 0.94$ . These RQO items' slight skewness ( $-1.19$  to  $.10$ ) and kurtosis ( $-1.00$  to  $.01$ ) fell within adequate ranges, indicating an acceptably normal distribution of the data (Vogt, 2007). The RQO scale scores skewness ( $.18$  to  $.19$ ) and kurtosis ( $-.68$  to  $-.15$ ) also fell within adequate ranges. The factor analysis-generated RQOs scores improved the skewness coefficients and weakened the kurtosis coefficients for these variables without exceeding acceptable limits.

*Response Variables: Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse*

The response variable scale scores were calculated on a counter-intuitive personal and social responsibility (PSR) continuum. Low scores represented high levels of PSR behavior (academic integrity or responsible use of alcohol), while high score represented low levels of PSR behavior (academic dishonesty or alcohol use/misuse). The response variable scores were reported on either a four- or a three-point scale per item. Of the reported data, only three of the ten Alcohol Use/Misuse questions included the full range of response options. All Academic Dishonesty items included the full range of responses. Few students reported moderate to sizeable alcohol misuse or academic dishonesty and, therefore, fewer reported the most serious response option.

The Lovett–Hooper (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale was scored on a 20–60 range. The highest scores represented the least academic integrity/sizeable academic dishonesty, while the lower scores reflected small numbers of self-reported incidents of cheating. (See Table 5.2, below.) The highest reported Academic Dishonesty Scale score (i.e., the highest reported amount of academic dishonesty) was 56. On the Academic Dishonesty portion of the instrument, 41.7% ( $n = 80$ ) of participants scored 20, meaning they did not report having cheated in the past year. Twenty-seven respondents (14.1%) reported having cheated once, and 11.2% ( $n = 22$ ) cheated more than five times. The means of the three-point Academic Dishonesty item ranged from  $M = 1.02$  to  $M = 1.35$ , with the standard deviations ranging from  $SD = .16$  to  $SD = .67$ . The Academic Dishonesty Scale score mean was  $M = 22.23$ , with a standard deviation of  $SD = 3.91$ . With a mode of 20 (i.e., no incidences of academic dishonesty reported) and a median of  $Mdn = 21$  (i.e., one instance reported), the data showing that most students were academically honest

was positively skewed. Scores with decimal points reflected the series means, replacing “Not Applicable” responses per the scoring process described in Chapter 4.

The range for the AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale scores had a smaller range than that of the Lovett–Hooper (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale. (See Table 5.3, below.). This study’s participants reported low levels of alcohol abuse indicators. Out of 40 possible points, the highest recorded AUDIT Alcohol Use score was 20. A low score indicated responsible use, while a high score indicate both use and misuse of alcohol over the past year. On the Alcohol portion of the instrument, 30.5% ( $n = 61$ ) of participants scored 0, meaning they did not report having consumed alcohol or any alcohol use/misuse over the past year. Eight percent ( $n = 16$ ) reported a score of eight or more, which the AUDIT scoring suggests an elevated level of risk of alcohol dependency (Babor, et al., 2001). The means of the four-point AUDIT Alcohol Use item, excluding the responses to “Need a morning drink,” ranged from  $M = .05$  to  $M = 1.29$ , with standard deviations ranging from  $SD = .32$  to  $SD = 1.08$ . The AUDIT Scale score indicated that participants drank alcohol rarely, if at all but the spread of reported alcohol abuse of those who do drink was large,  $M = 2.89$ ,  $SD = 3.29$ , mode = 0.

Table 5.2

## Academic Dishonesty Scale

Score <sup>1</sup>	Frequency	Percent
20.00 <sup>2</sup>	80	41.7
21.00	27	14.1
21.05	5	2.6
21.11	2	1.0
21.25	1	0.5
22.00	18	9.4
22.11	6	3.1
22.22	1	0.5
23.00	9	4.7
23.16	1	0.5
23.33	1	0.5
23.53	1	0.5
24.00	8	4.2
24.21	1	0.5
24.44	1	0.5
25.00	5	2.6
25.26	2	1.0
25.88	1	0.5

Table 5.2 (cont.)

## Academic Dishonesty Scale

Score <sup>1</sup>	Frequency	Percent
26.00	2	1.0
26.32	1	0.5
27.00	5	2.6
27.37	1	0.5
28.00	5	2.6
28.24	1	0.5
28.42	1	0.5
30.00	1	0.5
31.00	1	0.5
31.58	1	0.5
31.76	1	0.5
44.00	1	0.5
56.00	1	0.5
57–60 <sup>2</sup>	0	0.0

<sup>1</sup> Score include series means for “NA” responses

<sup>2</sup> 20 = No Academic Dishonesty, 60 = Highest Possible Academic Dishonesty

Table 5.3

## AUDIT Alcohol Use Scores

Score	Frequency	Percent
0 <sup>1</sup>	61	30.5
1	27	13.5
2	26	13.0
3	16	8.0
4	25	12.5
5	9	4.5
6	9	4.5
7	11	5.5
8	3	1.5
9	4	2.0
10	2	1.0
11	1	0.5
12	3	1.5
14	2	1.0
20	1	0.5
21 – 40 <sup>2</sup>	0	0.0

<sup>1</sup>0 = No alcohol consumption reported

<sup>2</sup>40 = Every indicator of alcohol abuse selected



The descriptive data suggested moderately large variability in the predictor responses. (See Table 5.4, below.) The Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse response items showed strong positive skewness and leptokurtic distributions. Academic Dishonesty item responses were significantly skewed (1.65 to 11.14) and predominantly leptokurtic (1.25 to 129.75). The Academic Dishonesty scale scores were also skewed to the right (4.72), with a notable leptokurtic distribution (33.18). AUDIT Alcohol Use items showed similar distributions, with items' skewness coefficients ranging between .28 and 8.26, and kurtosis coefficients between .90 and 74.35. The AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale scores' skewness and kurtosis coefficient distributions were 1.72 and 4.712, respectively. (See Table 5.4 for detailed descriptive data of each scale.)

#### *Perceptual Context Descriptive Findings*

Four questions captured information about perceptual context variables. Respondents answered open-ended questions about which institutional representatives they were most often thinking about when completing the survey. Pre-coded survey items gathered respondent perceptions of: (a) Institutional commitment to personal and social responsibility (PSR); (b) Facilitation of PSR in students; and (c) Participants' anthropomorphization of the relationship with the university. The study's collected data placed its findings within a contextual framework and assessed the research assumptions, thus enhancing the exploratory value of the study and giving meaning to the results.

Table 5.4

## Response and Predictor Variable Descriptives

	Alcohol Misuse Scale	Academic Dishonesty Scale	Relational Commitment Scale <sup>a</sup>	Relational Satisfaction Scale <sup>a</sup>	Control Mutuality Scale <sup>a</sup>	General Trust Scale <sup>a</sup>	General Mattering Scale <sup>a</sup>
N	200	192	181	183	159	173	198
Mean	2.89	22.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Std. Error of Mean	0.23	0.28	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07
Std. Deviation	3.29	3.91	0.94	0.97	0.97	0.95	0.94
Variance	10.82	15.28	0.88	0.94	0.93	0.91	0.89
Skewness	1.72	4.72	-0.50	-0.51	-0.38	-0.48	-0.51
Std. Error of Skewness	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.17
Kurtosis	4.15	33.18	-0.16	-0.51	-0.68	-0.15	-0.60
Std. Error of Kurtosis	0.34	0.35	0.36	0.36	0.38	0.37	0.34
Range	20	36	4.43	4.20	4.45	4.64	3.82
Minimum	0	20	-2.96	-2.76	-2.75	-3.03	-2.58
Maximum	20	56	1.47	1.44	1.70	1.61	1.24

<sup>a</sup> Scores are factor analysis-generated scores

Participants identified four core groupings of institutional representatives that were prominent in their thoughts while completing the survey: Academics, Administrators, Staff, and Students. Academics were the most often-cited (58.2%). Other institutional groups, with the exception of Students (10.5%), were prominent in at least a third of student responses. Student respondents categorized Administrators, Staff, and Academic Staff as independent of one another. Respondents also discussed Faculty and Faculty Advisors as being distinct from one another in function or intimacy of interaction, but similar in overarching purpose. (See Table 5.5 for more detailed information.)

Using a scale of 1 = “Strongly Disagree” to 7 = “Strongly Agree,” participants were asked whether they believed Whichever University students were in a relationship with the college. In general, these responses suggested that students believed they could be in a relationship with their university. Over seventy percent of respondents generally agreed (17.2% completely disagree) that students like themselves were in a relationship with Whichever University ( $M = 5.2$ ;  $SD = 1.417$ ). Respondents also reported on a scale of “1 = not at all” to “4 = a lot” that Whichever University and its representatives were committed to facilitating, and have facilitated in the past, personal and social responsibility (PSR) in their students. Approximately 18% of respondents reported that Whichever University and its representatives were “not at all” or “a little” committed to being PSR, while 41.6% reported “a lot” of commitment ( $M = 3.21$ ;  $SD = .786$ ). Just under 40% of respondents reported Whichever University facilitating PSR at the highest level (i.e., “A lot”), with 20.6% reporting “a little” or “not at all” ( $M = 3.16$ ;  $SD = .805$ ). (See Table 5.6 for more details.)

Table 5.5 Institutional Representatives as Relational Participants in Human Interaction

N = 134

	% of respondents Referenced <sup>1</sup>	# of references
Administrators	40.3%	54
President	20.2%	27
General Non-Academic Administrators	15.7%	21
Executive Administrative Leadership	11.9%	16
Academics	58.2%	78
Faculty	51.5%	69
Academic Staff and Advisors	14.9%	20
Staff	35.8%	48
Named Offices and Office Staff	19.4%	26
Other Unspecified Staff	17.9%	24
Students	10.5%	14
Other Students	4.5%	6
Student Leaders	6.0%	5
Clubs and Organizations	1.5%	2

<sup>1</sup>Participants could submit multiple institutional representatives.

A review of the skewness and kurtosis coefficients and histograms for the quantitative personal context items did reveal a slightly negative trend in most of these items. However, the values were not overly skewed, thus meeting the assumption of normalcy (Huck, 2004). For each of the personal context items, the skewness lies slightly to the left of the normal distribution curve. The kurtosis for institutional commitment to being PSR and facilitating PSR in students was slightly less peaked than normal. Participants' agreement that students were in a relationship with the college was slightly more peaked. (See Table 5.6 for complete results.)

Table 5.6

## Perceptual Context Variable Coded Item Descriptives

	Relationship (Scale of 1–7)	PSR Committed (Scale of 1–4)	Facilitates PSR (Scale of 1–4)
N	198	197	199
Mean	5.20	3.21	3.16
Std. Deviation	1.42	0.79	0.81
Skewness	-0.69	-0.65	-0.58
Kurtosis	0.20	-0.33	-0.42
Range	6	3	3

## Factor Analysis

As stated in Chapter 4, this study's RQO predictor scores, General Mattering included, were factor analysis-generated independently of one another, per the scoring process used in Ki and Hon's (2007a, 2007b) original research with this scale. The factor analysis statistical

technique also assessed the strength of the combination of items making up a scale (Field, 2005). These scales proved to be adequate measures of each RQO construct. Table 5.7 (below) shows the full results of the maximum likelihood factor analysis for the scale items for each predictor variable. (See Appendix 8 for each scale's factor loadings.) Items in each scale explained between 62 and 69% of the variance in the data. Despite a sample size of less than 300 (Field, 2005), a generally accepted rule of thumb for factor analysis, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) statistics and the Bartlett's Test of sphericity significance level indicated that the sample sizes were adequate to apply these statistical techniques (Garson, 2010). The Eigenvalues for each Scale more than met the Kaiser criterion of dropping factors with Eigenvalues of less than one. For each individual RQO, the R matrix determinant showed no multicollinearity; all were greater than .00001. These theoretically designed scales measure one, and only one, construct. These results provided additional support for the decision to use factor analysis-generated RQO scale scores for this study. Factor analysis was not used to develop the Academic Dishonesty scale scores or the AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale scores, because it was not called for by their scoring procedures.

#### Scale Reliability

The Cronbach alpha coefficient, an internal consistency estimate, was computed for each of the selected predictor and responses scales. These reliability scores represented the likelihood that similar results will be reached each time the scale is used. The obtained coefficients ranged between .933 and .752 and were consistent with those reported by the original researchers. The Cronbach alpha showed high reliability for each scale. (See Table 5.8 for all the scale Cronbach alphas.)

Table 5.7

## Relational Quality Outcome Scale Factor Analysis Results

Scale	N	Eigen Value	% of	KMO	Bartlett Significance
			Variance Explained		
Relational					
Commitment	181	3.26	65.15%	0.81	0.00
Relational					
Satisfaction	183	5.49	68.58%	0.92	0.00
Control					
Mutuality	159	4.96	62.00%	0.91	0.00
Trust	173	4.38	62.61%	0.91	0.00
General					
Mattering	198	3.28	65.67%	0.85	0.00

The prior analysis provided a frame for evaluating the study and the statistical quality of its findings. The sample was representative of age and sex, but not year in school or race/ethnicity. In general, the assumptions were met and the data were sufficiently normal to sustain non-parametric statistical analysis. However, participants assigned relatively high scores for relational quality, rarely giving a poor assessment, and they reported low levels of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse, which did skew the data. The scales used were found to be reliable with this sample and should provide consistent and, therefore, trustworthy information when answering the research questions.

Table 5.8

## Scale Reliability

	Original Study	Current Study
Scale	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha
Predictor Scales		
Relational		
Commitment	.86	.86
Relational		
Satisfaction	.93	.93
Control Mutuality	.90	.91
Trust	.90	.90
General		
Mattering	.86	.86
Response Scales		
Academic Integrity	.86	.89
AUDIT-2	.75	.75

The analysis also provided a better understanding of participant context to assist in interpreting the findings of the research questions and tested assumptions. Most respondents agreed that students like them were in a relationship with the college and that the college has done “a lot” to facilitate and demonstrate commitment to PSR. Human and organizational interactions contributed to the respondents’ perceived student–institution relationship (SIR) quality. Despite a sizeable number of references to interaction with academic foci, setting, or



representative, non-academic experiences and interactions made sizeable contributions.

Respondents considered all members of the college community, with the exception of alumni, donors, and parents, as relational participants.

## Research Question Results

### *Research Question One*

*What are the independent correlations between college students' perceptions of the hypothesized student–institution relational quality outcomes (RQOs) and personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors?*

To answer research question one, a correlation matrix was created with the scores from the Lovett–Hooper (2007) Academic Dishonesty Scale, the WHO's AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale, and the five relational quality outcome (RQO) measures. (See Table 5.9 below.) This research hypothesized that the RQO measures of Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and General Mattering were negatively associated with academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse (i.e., higher Academic Dishonesty Scale and AUDIT Scale scores). A one-tailed test of significance and an alpha level of .05 for all remaining statistical tests were used.

These correlations revealed the strength and direction of the associations at the zero order between these variables. Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse, the response variables, were highly and significantly correlated with each other,  $r = .420$ ,  $p < .01$ . Additionally, each of the predictor variables, the RQOs, also correlated,  $p < .01$ . As stated above, high RQO scores were expected to result in low PSR behavior scores. The results of the correlation analyses reported in Table 5.9 identified three statistically significant correlations between the RQOs and the PSR behaviors. Alcohol Use/Misuse moderately correlated with Relational Commitment ( $r =$

-.139;  $\rho = .031$ ) and Trust ( $r = -.135$ ;  $\rho = .038$ ), while Academic Dishonesty correlated substantially with Relational Commitment ( $r = -.202$ ;  $\rho = .004$ ). Despite not meeting the established .05 level of significance, other correlations included Academic Dishonesty with General Mattering ( $r = -.116$ ;  $\rho = .056$ ), Control Mutuality ( $r = -.108$ ;  $\rho = .09$ ), and Trust ( $r = -.119$ ;  $\rho = .063$ ) as well as Alcohol Use/Misuse with Control Mutuality ( $r = -.102$ ;  $\rho = .101$ ).

Though of weak significance, all variables correlated at  $\alpha = .1$  with both Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse, except satisfaction. Relational Satisfaction correlated with neither. All but one of the predictor variables were negatively correlated with the response variables, as hypothesized. General Mattering was positively correlated, though without statistical and practical significance, with alcohol use/misuse ( $r = .045$ ;  $\rho = .266$ ). The small size of this correlation suggested that this directional finding might differ in a different sample. However, unexpected directional findings, such as this one, can be caused by interacting or mediating variables (Rosenberg, 1968; Waldo, unpublished).

These findings suggest that RQOs and the respondents' PSR behaviors exerted some influence over one another. In general, students who report positive RQOs appeared to be less likely to be academically dishonest or demonstrate alcohol misuse. The highly significant and large correlations between the RQOs also raised a concern about multicollinearity within the organization–public RQOs. Additionally, if students stated that their college or university was committed to students like them, those students reported less alcohol use/misuse and academic dishonesty. Students who said they trusted the college also tended to report more responsible use of alcohol.

Table 5.9

## Correlations

	Alcohol						
Scale	Use/ Misuse	Academic Dishonesty	Relational Commitment	Relational Satisfaction	Control Mutuality	Trust	General Mattering
Alcohol Use	—	.42**	-.14*	-.05	-.10	-.14*	.05
Academic Integrity		—	-.20**	-.05	-.11	-.12	-.12
Relational Commitment			—	.87**	.79**	.83**	.54**
Relational Satisfaction				—	.90**	.90**	.61**
Control Mutuality					—	.93**	.69**
Trust						—	.62**
General Mattering							—

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed)

### *Research Question Two*

*To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs together explain college students’ demonstrated levels of academic integrity, an example of PSR behavior?*

A multiple linear regression was calculated with pairwise deletion in order to determine the extent to which the respondents’ student–institution relational quality outcomes (RQO) explained their levels of academic integrity, as measured by Lovett-Hooper (2007) Academic Dishonesty scale scores. The RQO indicators were Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering scores, with a hypothesized negative correlation with academic dishonesty. The correlation matrix, presented in Table 5.9, demonstrated that the predictor and response variables were negatively correlated. Therefore, regression analysis methods were used to test this hypothesis and evaluate the overall theoretical model.

The  $R^2$  coefficient of determination, the strength of the association between the response and the predictor variables, is a measure of the goodness of fit of the proposed model. For this study, the  $R^2$  indicated the proportion of variation in Academic Dishonesty Scale scores accounted for by Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering Scale scores. Approximately 13% of the variance in participants’ academic dishonesty responses was explained by the students’ affective responses to these five measures of the student–institution relationship, ( $R^2 = .133$ ,  $F(5, 141) = 4.319$ ,  $p = .001$ ). (See Table 5.11 for greater detail.) An effect size ( $F^2$ ) of .15 was calculated for the full model, and .12 for the stepwise model. Applying Cohen’s  $F^2$  rule of thumb, the association between the RQOs and academic dishonesty was considered to be of medium strength (Cohen, 1988). The  $R$  statistic is unstable in smaller samples with higher numbers of variables. Therefore the  $_{adj}R^2$  was provided

( $adjR^2 = .102$ ). The  $adjR^2$  suggested that the amount of variance explained could be as low as 10.2%.

The ANOVA procedure and  $F$  statistic tested the hypothesis that the predictors, as a whole, did not explain the variance in the criterion/response variables. This statistic tested the hypothesis that  $R^2$  was equal to zero. The omnibus test rejected this hypothesis, ( $R^2 = .133$ ,  $F(5, 141) = 4.319$ ,  $p = .001$ ). The size of this test statistic was an indication that this was not a chance finding; the association existed in this population. These findings suggested that students' perceptions of their relationship with the college moderately explained students' academic integrity.

The regression equation was computed by entering all the hypothesized RQOs together. The beta coefficient represented the slope of the line and demonstrated how much a one-unit change in one variable changes the dependent variable. The regression line in this study used standardized betas because General Mattering had a different range of scoring responses than the other predictor variables. The y-intercept of 22.23 had limited interpretive value.

The regression line equation for the full model, as seen below, explained the structure of the data and provided a framework for understanding how changes in each hypothesized predictor variable predicted changes in the criterion variable.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Academic Dishonesty} = & 22.226 - .634 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .826 (\text{Relational Satisfaction}) \\ & - .183 (\text{Control Mutuality}) - .127 (\text{Trust}) - .070 (\text{General Mattering}) \end{aligned}$$

In the full model of this study, self-reported academic dishonesty increased as respondents' reported relational satisfaction increased, and it decreased when respondents

reported relational commitment, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering increased. This analysis showed negative regression coefficients for all but Satisfaction. Satisfaction changed direction from negative in the zero-order correlation calculations to positive at this stage, which typically indicates some type of interaction between variables. Significant independent predictors were Relational Commitment ( $\beta = -.634, p < .01$ ) and Satisfaction ( $\beta = .826, p < .01$ ). Beta weights are standardized measures allowing for comparison across differently scored variables. The standard deviation of each RQO score times the beta weight, holding for the other variables, equals a standard deviation of the measured personal and social responsibility behavior. Therefore, Relational Satisfaction has one-third again as large an impact on academic dishonesty as relational commitment.

Multiple regression is predicated on assumptions that affect the analysis of the data (Vogt, 2007). Therefore, the study's residuals graph was reviewed for normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, and independence of residuals. The examination found an approximately rectangular pattern, indicating normalcy, with a positive skew and no indications of a violation of homoscedacity. In large part, the data in this study met the assumptions for multiple regression. The tolerance and VIF collinearity statistics, combined with the high correlations between predictors, suggested that, with this data set, multiple regression's reliance on variables being correlated, but not overly so, was problematic (See Table 5.10).

Vogt (2007) proposed that Tolerance statistics smaller than .20, and VIF statistics greater than 5.0, represent the presence of multicollinearity and indicated an analysis problem. The Tolerance and VIF statistics for Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, and Trust scales were all less than .2 and greater than 5. These statistics suggested that these scales may be multicollinear, possibly masking the underlying associational structure of these constructs.

Table 5.10 Relational Quality Outcome Scales' Collinearity Statistics

All Models	Tolerance	VIF
Relational Commitment scale	.23	4.35
Relational Satisfaction scale	.12	8.42
Control Mutuality scale	.11	9.56
Trust scale	.11	9.26
General Mattering Scale	.52	1.91

The moderate magnitude of the model's association (Cohen, 1988) supported the overall hypothesis of this study: that relational quality is associated with personal and social responsibility, ( $_{adj}R^2 = .102$ ,  $F(5, 141) = 4.319$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and to a small degree explains academic dishonesty. However, when in a predictive mode, three of the variables were not found to be statistically significant and the direction of the Satisfaction scale's association with academic dishonesty was counter to the hypothesized direction. This finding meant that as Satisfaction scores rose, the amount of academic integrity diminished and academic dishonesty increased. Additionally, the collinearity concerns indicated a possible explanation for the lack of significance.

### *Research Question Three*

*Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students' demonstrated levels of academic integrity, a PSR behavior?*

The results of the full multiple regression analysis provided information to guide the analysis for Research Question Three. The regression line equation for the full model is this:

$$\text{Academic Dishonesty} = 22.226 - .634 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .826 (\text{Relational Satisfaction}) \\ - .183 (\text{Control Mutuality}) - .127 (\text{Trust}) - .070 (\text{General Mattering})$$

This model explained the structure of the data and provided a framework for understanding (when taking all of the hypothesized variables into consideration) how changes in the predictor variables anticipated changes in the criterion variable. The next step was to perform a stepwise multiple regression analysis to consider which linear combination of perceived relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering best predicted college students' self-reported levels of academic integrity. Stepwise regression mimics forward selection in that the most significant variable is entered into the model first. Then all entered predictor variables are re-evaluated as each additional variable is entered. This study's variables were entered and removed, dependent on each variable's meaningfulness at every stage of the selection process. The process, therefore, ended with the most variance in academic dishonesty explained by the fewest possible relational quality outcome variables.

The model proposed by the stepwise selection process entered two predictors—Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction—and explained 11% of the variance in the respondents' self-reported Academic Dishonesty Scale scores. The computed F score was significant: ( $R^2 = .110$ ,  $adjR^2 = .097$ ,  $F(2, 144) = 8.882$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The analysis of these data found that a student's demonstrated level of academic dishonesty was best predicted by the following combination of predictors:

$$\text{Academic Dishonesty} = 22.226 - .665 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .533 (\text{Relational Satisfaction})$$



When Relational Commitment was first entered into the model, the  $R^2$  was .041. Relational Commitment accounted for less than 4% of the variance in Academic Dishonesty. Adding Satisfaction in the second step changed the model's  $R^2$  to .11. Satisfaction appeared to account for an additional 6.9% of the variance in academic integrity. The three other variables (Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering) were removed because their zero-order correlation with Academic Dishonesty was not sufficiently strong to be selected. To avoid an increased risk of a Type I error, this predictor-selection procedure should only be used as it was here—that is, for prediction, not explanation (Pedhazur, 1997). (See Table 5.11 for complete details.)

After completing the initial academic dishonesty regression analysis, a review of the influential data points using the Mahalanobis, Cooks' D, Dfit, and Leverage values indicated four potential outliers. These diagnostics provided a general measurement of the influence of one person, or the deletion of a case, on the statistical conclusions (Vogt, 2007). The four individual cases were removed, the analysis re-run, and the results compared with the original analysis. The loss of the removed data slightly increased all measures of association between RQOs and academic dishonesty, with greater statistical significance for each in the stepwise model ( $R^2 = .193$ ,  $F(3, 139) = 11.094$ ,  $p = .000$ ). In the full model with outliers removed, RQOs explained 19.3% of the variance in academic dishonesty. In the stepwise model with the outliers removed, the best academic dishonesty prediction equation included an additional predictor (General Mattering) when compared with prior post-stepwise model with the complete data set. All standardized  $\beta$ s were statistically significant respectively, ( $p < .01$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $p = .023$ ). However, despite the influence these data points exerted on the results, the four cases were not removed from the final analysis. When individually examined, each case appeared to contain legitimate

data which, with equal legitimacy, exerted influence on the equation. Removing this information would undermine the validity of the results.

The complete analysis of these data showed that academic dishonesty (and, therefore, academic integrity) can best be predicted by the following linear combination of predictors:

$$\text{Academic Dishonesty} = 22.226 - .665 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .533 (\text{Relational Satisfaction})$$

Minimally, this reduced model explained 9.7% of the variance in academic dishonesty scores,  $_{adj}R^2 = .097, F(2, 144) = 8.882, p < .01$ ). As anticipated, multicollinearity was a problem for two of the removed variables.

In this study, students who reported greater combined levels of relational commitment, satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering also reported lower levels of academic dishonesty. The combination of students' relational commitment and satisfaction most efficiently predicted their levels of academic dishonesty. Although a small amount of the respondents' academic dishonesty behaviors can be predicted by knowledge about students' perceptions of commitment and satisfaction, this research did not establish causality. Nor did it eliminate any variable's predictive viability. It did suggest that students' affective responses to the quality of the student–institution relationship influence students' academic integrity.

#### *Research Question Four*

*To what extent do hypothesized student–institution RQOs explain college students' demonstrated levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior?*

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted with pairwise deletion to identify the extent to which respondents' perceived student–institution relational quality outcomes (RQOs)

explained the levels of alcohol use/misuse as measured by the WHO's AUDIT Scale scores. It was hypothesized that the five RQO indicators of Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, Trust, and General Mattering were each negatively associated with alcohol use/misuse. The correlation matrix, presented in Table 5.9, demonstrated that, as hypothesized, the same predictor and response variables were minimally correlated—albeit with General Mattering correlated positively. Therefore, regression analysis methods were used to test the explanatory ability of RQOs on alcohol use/misuse and to evaluate the overall theoretical model.

Table 5.11

## Academic Dishonesty Regression

Variable	Full Model			Stepwise Model		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Relational Commitment	-2.640	.306	-.634**	-2.772	.664	-.665**
Relational Satisfaction	3.332	.918	.826**	2.149	.643	.533**
Control Mutuality	-.740	.982	-.183	---	---	---
Trust	-.521	.450	-.127			
General Mattering	-.292	.450	-.070			
$R^2$		.133**			.110**	
$adjR^2$		.102**			.097**	

\* $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ .

In the full model, the RQOs explained 10%, of the variance in respondents' self-reported alcohol use/misuse behaviors:  $R^2 = .100$ ,  $F(5, 141) = 3.140$ ,  $p = .01$ . The model conservatively explained 6.8%,  $\text{adj}R^2 = .068$ . (See Table 5.12 for more details.) A medium strength-effect size ( $F^2$ ) of .111 was found for the Full Model (Cohen, 1988). These findings suggested that these five indicators of student-institution relationship quality slightly explain students' alcohol use/misuse.

The regression line equation for the AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale scores was computed using all the RQOs together, and is seen below:

$$\text{AUDIT Alcohol Use} = 2.89 - .348 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .661 (\text{Relational Satisfaction}) - .238 (\text{Control Mutuality}) - .357 (\text{Trust}) + .216 (\text{General Mattering})$$

The standardized betas for this linear regression suggested that, for every positive standard deviation change in Relational Commitment, Control Mutuality, and Trust, the respondents' self-reported Alcohol Use/Misuse decreased, while positive changes in Satisfaction and General Mattering resulted in increased alcohol use/misuse. The small negative association between General Mattering and Alcohol Use/Misuse found in the zero-order correlation was also present in the regression line. At the same time, the change in Satisfaction's direction, noted in the Academic Dishonesty regression, also emerged in the Alcohol Use/Misuse regression, making the possibility of a relational interaction variable stronger. Significant independent predictors were Relational Commitment ( $\beta = -.348$ ;  $p = .039$ ), Relational Satisfaction ( $\beta = .661$ ;  $p = .005$ ), and General Mattering ( $\beta = .216$ ;  $p = .052$ ). Relational Satisfaction explained almost twice as

much of the variance when compared to Relational Commitment and three times as much as General Mattering. (See Table 5.12 for details.)

Table 5.12

## Alcohol Use/Misuse Regression

Variable	Full Model			Stepwise Model		
	B	SE B	$\beta$	B	SE B	$\beta$
Relational Commitment	-1.219	.584	-.348*	---	---	---
Relational Satisfaction	2.245	.787	.661**			
Control Mutuality	-.812	.841	-.238			
Trust	-.1.231	.840	-.357			
General Mattering	.755	.386	.216			
$R^2$		.100*			---	
adj $R^2$		.068*				

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

A review of the residuals graph was conducted to ensure that the assumptions of multiple regression analysis apply. This examination found an approximately rectangular pattern, indicating normalcy, with a positive skew and no indications of a violation of homoscedacity. Once again, the data in this study met the assumptions for multiple regression, with the exception of multicollinearity. The tolerance and VIF collinearity statistics, combined with the high correlations between predictors, are the same as those reported in the Academic Integrity

multiple regression. The Tolerance and VIF statistics for Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, and Trust scales were all less than .2 and greater than 5 respectively, outside the acceptable limits. These results continued to suggest that the variables were not moderately correlated, but overly so. (See Table 5.10 for RQO collinearity statistics.)

The small strength of the model's association (Cohen, 1988) provided limited support for the choice of the overall hypothesis of this study that relational quality is associated with personal and social responsibility behavior, specifically alcohol use/misuse. However, individually, the direction of two of the three variables (General Mattering and Satisfaction) found to be statistically significant were positively associated with Alcohol Use/Misuse. Collinearity of the predictor variables continued to be a concern. Despite these statistical points, the full model of the influence of hypothesized relational quality outcomes (RQOs) on alcohol use/misuse conservatively accounted for 6.8% of the variance in respondents' AUDIT Alcohol Use scores. Students who reported more positive SIR perceptions were, to a small extent, also more likely to report low levels of alcohol use and indications of misuse.

#### *Research Question Five*

*Which linear combination of perceived student–institution RQOs best predicts college students' demonstrated levels of alcohol use/misuse, a PSR behavior?*

The results of the multiple regression analysis provided information that also addressed Research Question Five. A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed on the RQO and AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale scores to identify which linear combination of perceived relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering best predicted college students' self-reported levels of alcohol use/misuse. The stepwise selection process failed to produce a reduced model. No one variable, much less more than one, predicted enough of the

variance in students' alcohol use/misuse to stand without the other RQOs. The full model, with all the RQOs entered and interacting with one another, explained 6.8% of the variance in respondents' Alcohol Use/Misuse Scale scores and could not be reduced while still sufficiently predicting the students' reported alcohol behaviors.

After completing the initial Alcohol Use/Misuse regression analysis, a review of the influential data points using the Mahalanobis, Cooks' D, Dfit, and Leverage values indicated two potential outliers. The two individual cases were removed, the analysis re-run, and the results compared with the original analysis. These outliers were not as influential on alcohol use/misuse as the others were on academic dishonesty. The loss of the removed data slightly decreased all standardized betas between RQOs and alcohol use/misuse, with greater statistical significance for each in the stepwise model ( $R^2 = .078$ ,  $F(3, 139) = 2.364$ ,  $p = .043$ ). Once again, stepwise multiple regression techniques using the data with outliers removed did not yield a reduced model able to predict the AUDIT Alcohol Use scores. These potentially outlying cases were not removed from the final analysis. As with the academic honesty cases, when individually examined, each case appeared to contain legitimate data, and removing this information would undermine the validity of the results.

The complete analysis of these data found that the full model:

$$\text{AUDIT Alcohol Use} = 2.89 - .348 (\text{Relational Commitment}) + .661 (\text{Relational Satisfaction}) - .238 (\text{Control Mutuality}) - .357 (\text{Trust}) + .216 (\text{General Mattering})$$

best predicted a participant's AUDIT Alcohol Use Scale score, accounting for as much as 10% of the variance and, conservatively, 6.8%:  $\text{adj}R^2 = .068$ ,  $F(5, 141) = 3.140$ ,  $p = .01$ . In this study, students who reported greater combined levels of relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering also reported lower levels of alcohol use and

abuse indicators. Although a small number of the alcohol use/misuse behaviors can be predicted by knowledge of the combination of students' perceptions of relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, trust, and general mattering, this research did not establish causality. It did suggest that students' affective responses to the quality of the student–institution relationship might influence students' alcohol use/misuse.

### Linkages and Causality

The analysis performed to answer this study's research questions gave indications that there are linkages between the RQOs and the PSR behaviors, and these linkages need further exploration. The positive relationships between General Mattering and Alcohol Use/Misuse, and between Relational Satisfaction and both the PSR behaviors, drew attention. These relationships were insignificant at the zero order and Relational Satisfaction changed direction at the first-order regression. Pedhazur (1997) argued that common variables can best be understood as confounding the results and, less so, as mutually explaining the variance. Therefore, the changing directionality of these emerging relationships was worthy of further consideration.

This difference, combined with the multicollinearity concerns raised earlier, gave strong indications of causality and distortion between variables. Variables that change direction from the zero to the first order are generally interacting in some way. Relationships that emerge as statistically significant at the first order are often responding to a distorter or suppressor variable. The Academic Dishonesty stepwise regression method provided the analysis needed to conclude that, for this sample of students, Relational Commitment technically was not a distorter variable to Relational Satisfaction because the zero-order relationship was not statistically significant. However, all the other criteria are present. Given these conditions, in conjunction with the



moderate effect size, the data did provide evidence that Relational Commitment could be a distorter variable to Relational Satisfaction in the general population.

### Perceptual Context Results

As stated earlier, perceptual context items collected information about (a) Institutional commitment to personal and social responsibility (PSR); (b) Facilitation of PSR in students; and (c) Participants' anthropomorphization of the relationship with the college. Prior studies (Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Geiger, 2000) hypothesized and found that these variables influenced students' *expected* personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors (Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Ki & Hon, 2007a, 2007b) without testing whether these variables influence *actual* PSR behavior. Although this study assumed these hypotheses to be true, independent sample *t*-tests were conducted to test the assumptions.

Groups were formed by recoding these variable responses into "high" and "low" groups. "Committed to" and "Facilitation of" PSR item responses were recoded from "A lot," "Somewhat," "A little," and "None" into two categories: "A lot" and "Not A lot" (the latter of which included all responses other than "A lot"). The "students like me have a relationship with Whichever University" item was recoded from "Strongly Disagree–Strongly Agree" into two groups: "Agree" and "Not Agree" (with "Not Agree" including the neutral response and all responses indicating disagreement). Independent-sample *t* tests were conducted to compare the difference of the means of Alcohol Use/Misuse Scale and Academic Dishonesty Scale scores for respondents giving "Agree"/"A lot" responses versus those giving "Not Agree"/"Not A lot" responses for each perceptual context question. (See Table 5.13.)

Table 5.13

## Perceptual Context Response Analysis with Recoded Items

## PSR Commitment

Scale	N	Percent	Recoded	N	Percent
Not at all	4	2.0			
A little	32	16.2			
Somewhat	79	40.1	Not a Lot	115	58.4
A lot	82	41.6	A Lot	82	41.6
Total	197	100.0	Total	197	100.0

## Facilitate PSR

Scale	N	Percent	Recoded	N	Percent
Not at all	5	2.5			
A little	36	18.1			
Somewhat	81	40.7	Not a Lot	122	61.3
A lot	77	38.7	A Lot	77	38.5
Total	199	100.0	Total	199	100.0

## 5.13 (cont.)

## Perceptual Context Response Analysis with Recoded Items

## Relationship

Scale	N	Percent	Recoded	N	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	1.5			
Disagree	8	4.0			
Slightly Disagree	9	4.5			
Neutral	37	18.7	Not Agree	57	28.8
Slightly Agree	51	25.8			
Agree	50	25.3			
Strongly Agree	40	20.2	Agree	141	71.2
Total	198	100.0	Total	198	100.0

*College Commitment to Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR)*

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the hypotheses that Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse Scales scores were different for students who rated that their college and its representatives had “a lot” of commitment “to being personally and socially responsible,” as compared to the scores of those who did not. The level of academic dishonesty reported by students who believed that Whichever University was highly committed to PSR were not significantly different from those that of students who reported that it was less committed:  $t(175.4) = 1.604$ ,  $p = .110$ . Because unequal variance was not assumed, the 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from - 0.196 to 1.903. Students reporting “A lot” of campus commitment to PSR on average also reported less academic dishonesty ( $M = 21.76$ ,  $SD$

= 2.59), as compared with those reporting “Not a lot” of campus commitment to PSR ( $M = 22.62$ ,  $SD = 4.66$ ). (See Table 5.14 for greater detail.)

Table 5.14

## t-Tests for College Commitment to PSR

Variable		N	M	SD	SE of Mean		
Academic	A lot of Commitment	80	21.76	2.586	.2891		
Integrity	Not a lot	109	22.62	4.661	.4464		
Alcohol	A lot of Commitment	82	2.83	3.106	.343		
Use	Not a lot	115	2.98	3.446	.321		
Levene's Test of							
Equality of Variances				t-Test for Equality of Means			
					Sig.(2-	Std	
	F	Sig.	T	Df	tailed)	Error	$\eta^2$
Academic							
Integrity	4.057	.045	1.604	175.398	.110	.53186	.0136
Alcohol							
Use	.682	.410	.321	195	.749	.478	.0005

The level of alcohol use/misuse indicators reported by students who believed that Whichever University was highly committed to PSR were not significantly different than that of students that perceived the college as being less committed,  $t(195) = .321$ ,  $\rho = .749$ . Students reporting “A lot” of campus commitment to PSR, on average, also reported slightly less problematic alcohol use/misuse ( $M = 2.83$ ,  $SD = 3.106$ ), when compared with those who

perceived Whichever University as less committed to PSR ( $M = 2.98$ ,  $SD = 3.446$ ). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -0.79 to 1.097.

### *College Facilitation of PSR*

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to evaluate the hypotheses that Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores are different for students who reported that their college has done a lot “to facilitate personal and social responsibility for students,” versus those who did not. The level of academic dishonesty reported by students who believed that Whichever University had extensively facilitated PSR in students were not significantly different than that of students who did not:  $t(182.864) = 1.625$ ,  $p = .106$ . Because equal variances could not be assumed, the 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -0.177 to 1.83. Students reporting “A lot” of campus facilitation of PSR, on average, also reported slightly less academic dishonesty ( $M = 21.73$ ,  $SD = 2.39$ ), when compared with those reporting “Not a lot” of campus facilitation of PSR ( $M = 22.56$ ,  $SD = 4.61$ ). (See Table 5.15.)

When comparing Alcohol Use/Misuse score means, the t-test was not significant:  $t(197) = 0.514$ ,  $p = .608$ . Though not statistically significant, students reporting “A lot” of campus PSR facilitation, on average, also reported less problematic use of alcohol ( $M = 2.75$ ,  $SD = 3.121$ ), when compared with those who did not ( $M = 3.00$ ,  $SD = 3.404$ ). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -0.700 to 1.193. The effect size of this difference was very small ( $\eta^2 = 0.001$ ), and of no significance.

Table 5.15

## t-Tests for College's Facilitation of PSR

Variable		N	M	SD	SE of Mean	
Academic	A lot of Facilitation	74	21.73	2.385	.277	
Integrity	Not a lot	117	22.56	4.613	.427	
Alcohol	A lot of Facilitation	77	2.75	3.121	.356	
Use	Not a lot	122	3.00	3.404	.308	
Levene's Test of						
Equality of Variances			t-Test for Equality of Means			
					Sig.(2-	Std
	F	Sig.	T	df	tailed)	Error
$\eta^2$						
Academic						
Integrity	4.881	.028	1.625	182.864	.106	.509
Alcohol						.0138
Use	.198	.657	.514	197	.608	.480
						.0013

*Students in Relationship with College*

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse score means of students who reported that they agreed that students like them “have a relationship with Whichever University, versus those who did not. The Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse score means were not significantly different between those who agreed that students were in relationship with the college and those who were not in complete agreement (i.e., neutral responses included):  $t(188) = 0.519$ ,  $p = .605$  and  $t(196) = -0.371$ ,  $p = .711$ .

Respondents who agreed that students like them “have a relationship with Whichever University,” on average, also reported less academic dishonesty ( $M = 22.145$ ,  $SD = 3.887$ ), when compared with those who did not agree ( $M = 22.474$ ,  $SD = 4.052$ ). The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means ranged from -0.920 to 1.577.

Unlike the responses on all the other items, respondents who agreed that students like them “have a relationship with Whichever University,” on average, also reported *more* problematic alcohol use/misuse ( $M = 2.96$ ,  $SD = 3.174$ ), when compared with those who did not agree ( $M = 2.77$ ,  $SD = 3.616$ ). This statistically insignificant finding was counter to the anticipated results, but echoed some of the relational quality outcome relationships described in the results for Research Questions 4 and 5. The 95% confidence interval for the difference in means was -1.216 to 0.831. (See Table 5.16 for more details.) As hypothesized, the personal context variables, for the most part, positively impacted the student participants’ demonstrated levels of personal and social responsibility, as measured by self-reported academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse indicators. As shown above, students who rated the college’s commitment to and facilitation of personal and social responsibility as “A lot,” and who agreed that students were in a relationship with the college, reported lower academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse than those who did not. Students who did not completely agree that students were in a relationship with the college reported higher alcohol use/misuse indicators than those who did. Despite these trends, the data analysis found no statistical difference between the means of either of the self-reported PSR behaviors, when compared by the groupings within each of the personal context variables. Nor were the effect sizes (i.e., the magnitude of the explained variance) statistically or meaningfully significant.

Table 5.16

t-Tests for In Relationship with Whichever University

Variable		N	M	SD	SE of Mean		
Academic	Agree	136	22.15	3.887	.333		
Integrity	Not Agree	54	22.47	4.052	.551		
Alcohol	Agree	141	2.96	3.174	.267		
Use	Not Agree	57	2.77	3.616	.479		
Levene's Test of							
Equality of Variances			t-Test for Equality of Means				
				Sig.(2-	Std		
	F	Sig.	T	df	tailed)	Error	$\eta^2$
Academic							
Integrity	.787	.378	.519	188	.605	.633	.0014
Alcohol							
Use	.159	.691	-.371	196	.711	.519	.0007

### Summary

This study focused on the SIR nature and what elements of that nature predicted and explained PSR behaviors, as opposed to constructs that predicted PSR behaviors. This data analysis began by evaluating the assumptions that the overall research design of the study was predicated on with the data provided by perceptual context questions. These results showed that there were no statistical differences in self-reported levels of Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse found between students reporting high and low institutional commitment to and



facilitation of PSR, nor in students reporting high and low perceptions of being in a relationship with the college. The open-ended question showed that students identified all members of the academic community as contributors to their SIR quality perceptions, with academically focused relationships significantly more prevalent.

Responding to the research questions, the correlational findings were initially presented. At  $p < .1$ , all RQOs but Satisfaction were correlated to Academic Dishonesty, though not to the statistical standard established by this study. Satisfaction and General Mattering were correlated to Alcohol Use/Misuse. All the relationships between RQO and PSR were in the hypothesized inverse direction, with the exception of the statistically insignificant Alcohol and General Mattering relationship. All RQOs were highly correlated with one another, as were the Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse variables. Multicollinearity issues were noted with all RQOs, but were most sizeable in the OPR-developed measures. The combined RQO full models were shown to explain the variance, at a statistical significance level of .01, both of the selected PSR behaviors. The full models approximately explained just over 13% and 7% and, conservatively, 11% and 6%.

Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction were statistically significant in both full models, and General Mattering was statistically significant in the Alcohol Use/Misuse model. Satisfaction was in a statistically significant positive relationship with both PSR behaviors, which, in addition to the sudden statistical significance, was also a directional change from the zero-order direction. A reduced model arrived at via the stepwise regression method found that a combination of Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction were the best and most efficient predictive model for Academic Dishonesty, and the full model was the best and most efficient predictor of Alcohol Use/Misuse. If the outliers had been removed, the

Academic Dishonesty stepwise reduced model would have explained 19.3% of the variance in Academic Dishonesty, and General Mattering would have been a statistically significant predictor.

## CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In *Reasonable Expectations*, NASPA charged Kuh, Lyons, Miller, and Trow (1994) with identifying the “form of educational compact between institutions and their students” that promoted “the highest levels of learning” (p. 2). The authors’ synthesis of the literature stipulated the significance of the impact of “the nature and quality of student, faculty, and staff relations” over that of institutional action or characteristics. Expanding on this charge, the current study’s purpose was to explore to what extent and how the nature or quality of the collegiate student–institution relationship (SIR) influenced student personal and social responsibility (PSR) education and behaviors. This final chapter now examines the current study’s findings in response to the expanded charge and places the results and conclusions within the context of the literature to date.

The current study historically, theoretically, and empirically situated the intersection of the SIR and PSR in the literature, solidified its tenets, and identified and examined the SIR as a PSR-producing organization–public relationship (OPR). This study’s design reflected two central tenets: (a) The SIR is an anthropomorphic educational relationship between the campus and the student and (b) Institutional PSR commitment to and facilitation of personal and social responsibility does not solely predict a student’s PSR behaviors. This study’s design relied on the OPR and relational quality outcomes (RQOs) as the theoretical framework guiding the exploration of the SIR construct and its nature. In addition to the four core RQOs, this study introduced General Mattering, a new relational quality outcome, to the study of OPRs in higher education.

Informed by these tenets, the research questions examined the overarching hypothesis of this study: that the nature of the SIR's relational quality is inversely related to changes in student self-reported instances of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse. . Lastly, the results of the study also provided evidence that, for these students, academic integrity and responsible use of alcohol were part of the same construct: PSR behavior.

Despite limited generalizability to students at large, the theoretically anticipated impact was found in this student population. Therefore the results of the data analysis provided insight into the viability of applying this relational paradigm to the SIR, and evidence of its potential for enhancing PSR in students. This final chapter now begins with an overview of the findings and discussion of these findings in relation to the study's tenets and research questions. The implications of these findings are presented next, followed by some projections for the future of SIR and PSR research ideas. The chapter then concludes with limitations of the study, and, because of the exploratory nature of the study design, considerations for improving ongoing study of the SIR as a PSR educational tool.

### Interpretation of Results

When considered in relation to the other RQOs, all RQOs contributed to the impact of the SIR on, and thus predicted and explained the variance in these students' PSR behaviors. Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction moderately predicted Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores. Relational Satisfaction and Relational Commitment, the strongest predictors of Whichever University student PSR behaviors, worked in different directions. Relational Commitment was a highly significant positive, and Relational Satisfaction an equally highly significant negative, predictor of these student PSR behaviors. When

considered in relation to the other RQOs, General Mattering also significantly and negatively influenced, students' Alcohol Use/Misuse, though to a lesser extent.

The data analysis findings demonstrated that Whichever University students' affective responses to the nature of the SIR did explain and predict students' PSR behaviors. There was minimally significant evidence that all RQOs, with the exception of Relational Satisfaction, were correlated with both PSR behaviors in this population. Relational Satisfaction was inversely correlated, with each behavior, though not significantly. General Mattering correlated *positively* with Alcohol Use/Misuse, although also not significantly. All RQOs were highly correlated with one another. Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse Scores were moderately correlated ( $r = .42$ ) with one another.

When considered independently of one another the association between Relational Satisfaction and both PSR behaviors was not present in the zero-order correlation analysis; it emerged and changed directions in the multiple regression analysis. The statistical significance of General Mattering's relationship with Alcohol Use/Misuse also emerged during the multiple regression analysis. The stepwise regression analysis revealed that for these students a reduced model with Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction was the best and most efficient predictive model for Academic Dishonesty, while the full model was the best and most efficient predictor of Alcohol Use/Misuse.

### *Tenets Evaluated*

The analysis of the perceptual context variables provided evidence to support the study's tenets and the hypotheses that they fortify. Given the exploratory nature of this study, the following discussion of assumptions was included to address alternative explanations for the study's overall results.

The foundational assumption of this study was that students were in an interpersonal relationship with the college itself, akin to their interpersonal relationships with individuals and groups of individuals at the college. Two-thirds of student participants agreed that they (or students like them) were engaged in a relationship with Whichever University. Disagreement or neutrality did not appear to indicate a rejection of the idea that students and organizations could be in a relationship, but was instead an evaluative statement. A response of “Not applicable,” selected often by participants across all RQO items, was the most likely choice of respondents rejecting the notion of being in relationship with Whichever University. Only one participant responded “Not applicable” to this item, suggesting that the students in this study concurred with the assumption that students can be in an anthropomorphic relationship with their college.

In response to open-ended questions, Whichever University students described the student–institution relationship as manifesting itself in student interactions with faculty, administrators, and staff, both in person and through institution-wide communications, policy, and decisions. Students’ repeatedly referenced the indirect interactions and e-mail communications with the president and the administrative leadership as influencing their responses. Academic institutional representatives and, to a lesser extent, student affairs or other institutional services, were cited by students as being influential relational contributors. A PSR climate study developed by the AAC&U Core Commitments Consortium (of which Whichever University was an inaugural member school) found a similar pattern when asking which offices most influenced PSR on campus (The Civic Engagement Gap, 2009).

This academic focus in the response pattern could be, in part, attributable to the attention paid to academic dishonesty in both studies. However, institutional representatives and mechanisms raised by the participants reiterated Colby, Erlich, Beuamont, & Stephens’ (2003)

catalog of institutional influences on campus-wide ethics education. Consistent with Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) meta-analysis of the literature, these perceptions highlight the importance students place on faculty interaction, and on the value of those interactions to ethical development. Nonetheless, students attributed their responses to a constellation of relational interactions with the organization and its representatives.

The design also assumed that the institutional PSR messaging/modeling and facilitation did not completely explain the institutional contribution to student's PSR. Institutional efforts to educate for PSR tout programs and campuses with clear ethical messaging and educational activities as the exemplar institutions (Colby et al., 2003). The prevailing research paradigm reflected a widely held notion that keys to student's developing PSR are committed campus values and cultures, along with institutional actions and programs that facilitate such behaviors (Boyd & Cooper, 2008).

The site of this current study was selected to control for the actual PSR climate. Most students at Core Commitment Consortium campuses were more likely to have an awareness of, or to have participated in, institutional initiatives and values than those at non-Consortium schools. No difference in self-reported Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores for these students was found between students who highly rated Whichever University's commitment to and facilitation of PSR and those who rated it less highly. This finding does not preclude the importance of institutional commitment to, or facilitation of, student PSR behavior. It does suggest that these strategies alone were not sufficient indicators of student behavioral integration of ethics education. For the participants in this study, their *perceptions* of commitment to and facilitation of PSR on the part of their institutions were not independently impactful factors in their Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse behavioral choices.

These findings validated the early philosophical model for the SIR maintained by U.S. colleges, which was a combination of values transmission and behavioral reinforcement with personal relationships (through coaching, mentoring, or guiding) to holistically educate for ethically competent graduates. At the close of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the SIR shifted from one of closeness, sometimes marked by overt control, to a distant rights- and rules-based transactional approach. A desire to avoid values inculcation, coupled with a conservative risk-averse approach to the legal climate, took hold in the 1960s. Higher education administrators and educators alike avoided close interpersonal relationships with students, along with policies that required intrusion into students' out-of-class life and ethical development.

If this current study's results hold true for the general college population, the shift described above may have been educationally counterproductive. The distance between the student and the college undermined the students' perceptions of colleges' Relational Commitment to the student. Simultaneously, the relational distance satisfied the desire of college students, newly away from home, for independent personal exploration (Kaufman, 1966). This study's findings suggest that these relational changes decreased the positive aspects of the SIR on students' PSR behaviors while increasing the negative. The alcohol and academic integrity crises experienced by colleges (Boyer, 1987; Carnegie Foundation, 1990; Wingspread Group, 1993) may have been exacerbated by this shift in relational quality.

The results of this study also showed that student perceptions of simply being in a relationship with the college did not account for the difference in students' PSR behaviors. Other OPR studies found that students who believed they were in a relationship with the school were more likely to persist (Bruning, 2002). However, this current study provided no evidence of a difference. These findings supported the study's central question, that the SIR nature not the SIR



itself, explained differences in PSR behaviors. Therefore, exploring whether, and in what combination, the relational nature was responsible for changes in reported levels of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse were the logical research questions to examine.

The research questions for this study asked for information that tested whether the construct measures were valid, measured the direct interrelationships between variables, and scrutinized the variables (and combination of variables) with explanatory and predictive ability over the PSR behaviors. This inquiry revealed some points, worth further consideration, that allow for a better understanding of the relationship between the nature of the SIR and PSR behaviors in this student population. These points align with six broad observations: (a) An indication of PSR-producing core nature of the SIR emerged; (b) When taken in total, the hypothesized RQOs are explanatory and predictive of PSR behaviors; (c) The impact of each OPR RQOs differed by PSR behaviors (d) General Mattering associated differently with Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse; (e) The best combinations of the RQOs were somewhat surprising, suggesting that there may be causal linkages that need to be examined; and (f) The selected variables appear to adequately represent each construct.

#### *The Hypothesized Nature of the PSR-Producing SIR*

Whichever University students' perceptions of Trust, Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, and General Mattering possessed moderately strong power – significance and magnitude - to predict these student's Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores. The similarities between these predictive models revealed a core nature shared across these PSR behaviors. Relational Commitment (inversely) and Relational Satisfaction (positively) were statistically significant predictors of each behavior. Also for both, Relational Satisfaction's association emerged during the multiple regression analysis, not at the

zero-order level analysis. It also changed direction from an inverse relationship at the zero order to a positive relationship. At the zero order, all RQOs, with the exception of General Mattering for Alcohol Use/Misuse and Relational Satisfaction for both, were correlated, though not significantly ( $p \leq .1$ ), in the hypothesized direction with both PSR behaviors. These findings suggested that to a small but meaningful extent, as hypothesized, the combined five-RQO model developed in Chapter 2 explained the differences in students' PSR actions and may represent an SIR nature that universally predicts student PSR behaviors.

For example, given these results, college administrators and educators that wish to reduce student academic dishonesty and alcohol abuse will continue to focus on programs and activities that encourage students to feel committed to the college, such as orientation and commuter student lounges and programming. The college will also expand these programs to communicate and demonstrate that the *college* is equally committed to the students and their best interests at a level that is similar to or greater than the college's own self-interests. This study's results made it clear that for these students satisfaction with the relationship was not a goal to be pursued. Relationally satisfied students were more likely to have cheated and to have drunk more. The suggested goal was to foster the belief in students that they were committed to the university and the university was equally committed to them.

These students responses suggested that colleges can feed these feelings by assessing, considering and giving student concerns equal consideration in institutional decisions, like scheduling courses at convenient times, allocating good seating for students at sporting events alongside boosters, and scheduling construction schedules to limit student inconvenience and academic interruption. An active assessment process that includes student-life concerns, coupled

with an institutional public relations plan that includes students as a core constituency, will also enhance the institution's relational contribution to student PSR behaviors.

### *RQOs and PSR*

The Organization–Public Relations (OPR) Relational Quality Outcomes (RQOs) performed as expected in relation to Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR), with one exception. Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction were the strongest predictors in both full-regression models, and were the only significant factors in the final Academic Dishonesty regression model. Relational Satisfaction, Relational Commitment, and General Mattering were significant factors in the final Alcohol Use/Misuse regression model. As in a number of the other OPR studies of college student populations, Trust did not reach significance in either behavioral model, though they were slightly correlated with PSR behaviors (Henning-Thurau, Langer, & Hansen, 2001; Ki & Hon, 2007a). Control Mutuality did not either, despite both Ki and Hon's (2007a) findings of Control Mutuality significance with a sample of predominantly upper-classman and Bortree's (2007) similar findings with a sample of older high school students.

### *Organization–Public Relations' Relational Quality Outcomes*

*Relational Commitment and PSR behaviors.* This research extends the known influence of Relational Commitment, as it is currently studied, to ethical and risk behaviors. Relational Commitment, a significant contributor to PSR behaviors, was consistently and inversely related to Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores. Students reporting high levels of Relational Commitment also reported low levels of PSR behavioral indicators. Almost all OPR studies with college populations found Relational Commitment to be highly significant (Bruning & Ralton, 2001; Brunner, 2005; Jo, Hon, & Brunner, 2004; Ki & Hon, 2007a). This expression

of Relational Commitment is slightly different than the line of research that has been so prevalent in higher education persistence and retention studies, in that it includes student perceptions of the campus' and the students' mutual commitment to one another.

The commitment paradigm, as it is currently understood in the higher education literature, was an extension of the persistence and retention line of research theory. OPR researchers distinguished the commitment measured by persistence and retention as a behavioral outcome that is influenced by the Relational Commitment RQO. The affective influences over Relational Commitment considered by this study were acknowledged and, in some instances, were integrated into persistence and retention theorists' models. Bean (Metz, 2002) included psychological components in his explication of persistence and retention. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) challenged Tinto to explore the impact of the quality of faculty, staff, and student interactions on persistence and involvement. In the Relational Commitment paradigm examined in this study, the students' perception of the university's commitment to them was as important to student PSR learning and behavior as was the students' commitment to the college. The finding that Relational Commitment was a predictor of PSR behaviors was not surprising in that this RQO appealed to the millennial's sense of importance and their specialness.

*Relational Satisfaction and PSR behaviors.* Relational Satisfaction was the strongest predictor of PSR behaviors in this study. Interestingly, students reporting high levels of Relational Satisfaction also reported high levels of Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse. Hon and Grunig (1999), the theoretical originators of the RQO construct scales used in this study, defined Relational Satisfaction as participants getting more from their relationship than the relationship requires in return. At the zero order, no statistically significant relationship was found between Relational Satisfaction and either PSR behavior. As hypothesized, Relational

Satisfaction was negatively related to both at the zero order. However, once entered into the multiple regression with the other RQOs, an association between the Relational Satisfaction and each PSR behavior emerged, and the direction of that association became positive.

Relational Satisfaction's inverse directional association with PSR behaviors was different than the hypothesized direction, though the discrepancy was not entirely without some theoretical warning. Student Relational Satisfaction with relational disengagement by authority was consistent with lower stages of identity, and with the tenets of ethical and moral development (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Perry, 1999). For example, Chickering and Reisser (1993) asserted that the need for autonomy comes before interdependence is possible. Additionally, Relational Satisfaction is not the likely affective response to Kohlberg's (1981, 1984) Plus One strategy for encouraging moral development by pushing students with arguments one level above their present level of development. Sanford (1967) posited that challenge, not support, creates growth, though challenge is not as likely to engender satisfaction.

Relational Satisfaction is a function of how well the college meets students' positive expectations (Hon & Grunig, 1999). Students come to college with alcohol consumption expectations and often set behavioral patterns (Ham & Hope, 2002; Oswalt, Shutt, & Cooper, 2006a, 2006b). High expectations were identified as a predictor of problem drinking in college students (Hope & Ham, 2002). If students' high expectations of alcohol use are met, then students who drink would be satisfied with their college—hence the inverse relationships.

Much of the same can be said for academic dishonesty (Whitley, 1998). Students come to college having cheated and, if so, are more likely to continue cheating. Being successful at cheating would lead to satisfaction. Satisfaction has been shown to differentiate between those who have academic integrity and those who have been academically dishonest (Pulvers &

Diekhoff, 1999). Cheating norms (or expectancies) and peer culture also play significant roles in students decisions to be academically dishonest (Whitley, 1998). As shown above for Alcohol Use/Misuse, the positive predictive relationship of Relational Satisfaction with Academic Dishonesty can be explained by these factors.

In an acknowledgement of the role of Relational Satisfaction in the compact between the student and the campus, the NASPA's *Reasonable Expectations* (Kuh et al., 1994) study group focused on identifying student expectations as the first step in answering their research question. However, Relational Satisfaction differs from satisfaction in much the same way as the Relational Commitment variable differs from commitment. More attention should be given to whether the students' perceptions of Relational Satisfaction are grounded in fulfillment of the expectations identified in the *Reasonable Expectations*' (Kuh et al., 1994). This study's findings provided another reason for practitioners and campuses to be cautious in their pursuit of student satisfaction and to recognize the potential for unintended consequences.

*Trust and Control Mutuality.* Trust and Control Mutuality were expected to have an influence on student behavior, but the only associations found were correlational (significant only in the most liberal interpretation, and disappearing in both behaviors' first-order regressions). In a few prior OPR studies, Control Mutuality was one of the stronger predictors. These studies' participants were generally involved with the organization for longer periods than the current study's respondents. Astin's (1984, 1996, 1999) Theory of Involvement suggested something similar in his discussions about quality and quantity as aspects of involvement. Because these philosophically and theoretically sound constructs did not strongly indicate a uniquely predictive or explanatory association with these PSR behaviors in this population (Clifford, 1996; Huang, 2001b; Ki and Hon, 2007a; Whitley & Kite, 1998), it might be tempting

for some to dismiss these constructs as unimportant. Some studies have identified Trust as an antecedent for Relational Satisfaction and/or Relational Commitment. The centrality of these concepts to the philosophy of higher education, and the possibility of alternative explanations for their absence of significance, warrant continued exploration.

*General Mattering and PSR behaviors.* General Mattering captured the “sense of belonging” elements of school connectedness and bonding (Libbey, 2004; McNeely & Falci, 2004). School connectedness and bonding inversely correlated with student risk behavior and substance abuse, and positively correlated with pro-social behaviors (Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Simons–Morton, Crump, Haynie, & Saylor, 1999). The zero-order negative correlation between General Mattering and Academic Dishonesty reflected these anticipated relational patterns but once included in the regression model, it did not.

The study’s results for General Mattering were also somewhat contradictory between PSR behaviors, but compelling support was found for its inclusion as an RQO, and also for continued study as an ethical behavioral indicator. These results indicated a strong predictive, yet unexpected positive directional relationship with Alcohol Use/Misuse, and no identified relationship with Academic Dishonesty. Though not significant, the directional relationship with Academic Dishonesty was positive.

This contrary Alcohol Use/Misuse finding could be a function of the need to feel a sense of belonging, a component of General Mattering and, therefore, the difference between high school and college students. The influence of mattering was dependent on the one to whom the students wanted to matter. In college, peers’ contribute to perceptions of General Mattering, more so than family (Elliott, 2009). Family mattering was often associated with school mattering’s impact on substance abuse in middle and high school (Elliott, 2009). In addition to

college students' expectations, conformity and social motives were also predictors of problem drinking (Ham & Hope, 2003). School connectedness research has suggested that a sense of belonging, also found in General Mattering, suppresses the benefits derived from the teacher support elements of school connectedness (McNeely & Falci, 2004). These factors combine to possibly explain the observed positive association between General Mattering and Alcohol Use/Misuse.

This study's design extended higher education's interest in mattering to include General Mattering, or mattering to the college at large (Marcus, 1991a, 1991b). The addition of this setting-specific RQO to the OPR RQOs provided evidence of the General Mattering construct's (a) validity as a collegiate RQO, (b) potential to influence behavioral outcomes, and (c) the possible applicability to the general student body. This study indicated that Whichever University students' feelings of General Mattering to the college were associated with these student behaviors and could exert an influence on ethical behavior, though that influence may differ by behavior.

Mattering has been shown to lead to greater student institutional commitment (Diamond, 1995). Students often express that they have a personal connection with one or two people at the college. Social and academic integration has been identified as an important element of students' commitment to college, as well as of their subsequent persistence in college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Tinto, 1975, 1993). Therefore, creating that connection has served as a central element of most college persistence and retention efforts. What this study added was an understanding that mattering to the *college*, more than simply to individuals at the college, was also associated with student behaviors. For this study those behaviors were PSR behaviors, but persistence has also been shown to respond to the OPR RQOs (Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Ki &



Hon, 2007a). College persistence and retention efforts might be even more productive if colleges considered how to improve their student body's feelings of General Mattering and OPR RQOs.

*Causality, Linkages, and Correlations*

When explored as a list of qualities with no hypothesized order, hierarchy, pathways, or linkages, the full model of proposed RQOs suggested that for these students "relation" at large explains a small (but meaningful) amount of the variance in Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse. A closer look at these findings raised the need to examine the horizontal relationships between these variables and their explanatory power over Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse. Despite representing a good fit with both behavioral outcomes, the factors reaching individual significance or inclusion in a reduced model were not consistent across regression models or prior OPR behavioral studies.

The Ki and Hon (2007a) study on attitudes toward the university and intention to act on those attitudes (student persistence and retention) used the same instrument as this current study. Ki and Hon (2007a) found Relational Satisfaction and Control Mutuality of statistical significance in a student population, including graduate students and skewed toward juniors and seniors. Control Mutuality and Relational Satisfaction impacted attitude and behavioral intention, whereas this study found Relational Satisfaction and Relational Commitment to have significant influence. Ki and Hon's (2007a) population was a different population than the current study, the latter of which included larger numbers of younger students. The age difference or time in the relationship could explain the importance of Control Mutuality versus that of Relational Commitment. The different configurations found across prior college OPR studies and this study's results indicate that, in addition to adding a setting-specific RQO, the

optimal mix of SIR RQOs may change, based on the preferred behavioral outcomes, length of the relationship, or student classification.

The combination of RQOs and the significance of each in differing OPRs seems to change as the relational participants' time in the relationship changes or the intended behavioral outcomes change. The results of the current study suggest that different RQOs configurations predict different behavioral outcomes. General Mattering may influence Alcohol Use/Misuse more significantly and at greater magnitude than it does Academic Dishonesty because of the psychological and social components of substance abuse that set it apart from purely ethical behaviors. These results support trends in the OPR literature suggesting that, in newly developing OPRs, Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction are fundamental to the relational quality; further, they support the observation that, as the relationships mature, Control Mutuality ascends (Bortree, 2007; Ki & Hon, 2007a).

OPR studies with other populations showed similar patterns (Bortree, 2007; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Bruning & Ralston, 2001; Jo, 2003; Ki & Hon, 2007b). Ki and Hon's (2007b) review of the literature theoretically proposed, and their study confirmed, that Relational Satisfaction predicts Trust and Trust predicts Relational Commitment in a non-college population. These horizontal relationships were similar to those found in the current study. These slight inconsistencies refine OPR theory-building efforts and were similar to the differences found in results from earlier relationship quality outcome studies.

Apart from Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, and General Mattering, the other RQOs must be extraneous variables or antecedents to Relational Commitment. Trust and Control Mutuality, and General Mattering with relation to Academic Dishonesty, meet the first two requirements for establishing an antecedent variable—theoretically or logically preceding

one another in time and correlated at the zero order (Rosenberg, 1968; Waldo, unpublished). The statistical decision to remove these variables from the prediction model did not mean that Trust and Control Mutuality were actually extraneous to understanding how to use the relational influence on student PSR behaviors. Student feelings of Control Mutuality and Trust may be a precursor to students' perceptions of Relational Commitment or Relational Satisfaction.

These results suggest that in this current economic climate, students who do not believe that a campus facing significant budget cuts will recognize and include their financial needs in deciding cuts, or will listen to their voice in tuition decisions, could easily be less likely to develop a feeling that the college is committed to them or that they are committed to the college. It is not a leap to say, then, that the loss of Relational Commitment caused by a college's inability to engender feelings of Trust and Control Mutuality in the budgetary decision-making process could be associated with a reduction in the college's ability to positively influence students' decisions to cheat or drink. If so, it would be important for practitioners and educators hoping to reduce Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse to cultivate and assess these emotions in students. Determining these causal directions and the value of relationships between RQOs needs further study.

#### Measurements of Constructs

Because this study was exploratory and these constructs have not been examined in student affairs or higher education studies in detail, this section includes a brief discussion of the selected measurements of the PSR and RQO constructs.

#### *OPR RQOs and General Matting as the Nature of SIR PSR*

The hypothesized RQOs appear to be valid, though highly correlated, measures of students' affective responses to the SIR nature. Jo (2003) identified Trust, Relational

Commitment, and Relational Satisfaction as global RQOs and proposed that researchers identify and test setting-specific RQOs. Student affairs theory, organization–public relationship scholarship, and the historical evolution of the PSR-focused SIR guided the addition of Control Mutuality and General Mattering (Astin, 1984, 1996, 1999; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Huang, 1997, 2001b; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Schlossberg, 1989; Williams, 1986). The OPR RQOs were highly correlated with one another, while General Mattering’s correlations with the other RQOs were slightly less so. These correlations suggest that the variables measure one construct: the nature of the SIR. In addition to providing more evidence that validates the traditional OPR RQOs, the General Mattering construct also appears to be a relational quality outcome applicable to the college setting. All the SIR RQOs were relevant for college administrators trying to structure effective programs, student interactions, and cultures that support institutional goals. However, Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, and General Mattering should be effective indicators for administrators assessing a college’s relational efforts.

*Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse as PSRs*

These findings appear to have established that Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse scores were, for these students, PSR behaviors, not behaviors related to PSR. The moderate correlation ( $r = .42$ ) between these behaviors could indicate some degree of convergent validity. The discovered similarities between the results for each predictive model, discussed earlier in this chapter, provided further evidence that these behaviors were measures of the same construct: PSR. Though this association between Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse has been noted by other studies, it is not so well established that the relationship can be assumed with all college populations (Mustaine & Tewksbury, 2005; Whitley, 1998). Additionally, this similarity could be attributable to an extraneous variable, such as time studied or organization

membership. Therefore, extrapolating these findings and conclusions to the PSR construct at large should be considered with a note of caution.

However, the relationship between the variables also suggests that institutional initiatives addressing one could have some influence over the other. Campus-wide initiatives that build communities of care encouraging students to address their peers' alcohol abuse could also find that the students' levels of academic dishonesty follow those of alcohol consumption. The effectiveness of such campus-wide education for personal and social responsibility initiatives could be assessed using pre- and post-initiative data from a matrix of CORE Survey questions about alcohol abuse and McCabe's Academic Dishonesty Survey questions about cheating behaviors.

#### *RQOs as a Measure of School Connectedness*

Libbey (2004) proposed that school connectedness was a measure of the institutional relationship with students. The study of RQOs was designed with the intent to also be a measure of school connectedness. With the inclusion of General Mattering, the present study's research design intentionally integrated key school connectedness concepts (a sense of belonging, Relational Commitment, and support) into the hypothesized core nature of the SIR. This researcher could not find any studies that explored the association between school connectedness and academic integrity in any academic setting. Studies set in the secondary schools provided strong empirical evidence that connection to school resulted in increased pro-social behaviors, including reduction of alcohol consumption. Few studies have examined collegiate school connectedness, and none have established a correlation between connectedness and the use of substances in the college population (Marshall, 2001). The overall model, including General Mattering and Relational Commitment, did establish a moderately strong, statistically significant

relationship with both PSR behaviors. These findings need more exploration; but school connectedness does seem to have influenced PSR behaviors at this college.

### An Applied Theoretical Framework

The finding that students' affective responses to the relational nature provided tentative support for the theoretical framework posited earlier in this study (See figure3.8). Practitioners seeking to shape college students' decisions about alcohol use or academic dishonesty could use this framework to understand the structure of the process students experience that brings them to the PSR behavioral outcome. An understanding of the process permits practitioners to identify or better shape interventions that could influence the behavioral outcome.

For example, a college considering creating a parental notification policy for student alcohol violations could use the model to gauge and shape the impact of the policy in the following way.

A student's response to the policy is filtered through the student's demographic characteristics, the psychosocial theoretical influences, and the developmental tasks in which the students are engaged. The portion of the campus affected by this policy would be underage millennial students. Most student violators of the alcohol policy are first-year students living in residence halls. Students at this stage are struggling to establish independence or move into interdependence. This policy needs to respect the need to establish independence while teaching the interdependence. However, this generation of college students is not averse to including parents in their decision-making; therefore a parental notification policy might not be as offensive to these students as it might have been to past generations.

Each new policy is shaped by the campus ecology or environment. As the student interacts with the environment, how the student experiences the college is influenced by each

policy, the organizational structure, the aggregate characteristics of the student body, etc., and each of these plays a role in pressing the student toward a behavioral and attitudinal predisposition. Each new policy fits into this milieu and contributes to the overall institutional message to students.

When creating the process and shaping a new policy, the practitioner should consider whether the policy under consideration is consistent with the culture, as well as how it might change that culture. Introducing a parental notification policy on a campus known for its close monitoring and support for students is a very different process than introducing such a policy on a campus where the relationship is characterized by autonomy. The more a policy might not conform to (or, at first glance, would transform) the culture, the more the process and rationale for implementation would need to reflect the current culture. An autonomous campus might need to gather and incorporate significant student input into the final policy, whereas a more engaged campus could use the traditional policy development process. Whether a parental notification policy reinforces the current campus culture or challenges it should inform the process and rationale for designing and implementing the policy.

The SIR is a product of the how the individual student and the campus environment interact. The relational quality of the SIR is a byproduct of that interaction. Each student develops an affective response to that relational quality, such as trust, relational commitment, relational satisfaction, control mutuality, and a sense of general mattering. These affective responses interact with a student's level of moral and cognitive development, resulting in student behaviors—although there is some evidence that the ethical processes influence alcohol use to a lesser degree than academic dishonesty. This study's findings suggest that RQOs, specifically

students' sense of Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction, exert some influence over future behavioral outcomes.

In this example, practitioners would need to include the impact of students' RQOs as a factor, intentionally shaping the relationships to encourage a sense of Relational Commitment without encouraging Relational Satisfaction. The affective responses to a parental notification policy of millennial students seeking to establish autonomy on a campus characterized by an autonomous institutional relationship with students would differ from those on a campus with a close care-taking relationship with students. This study's findings suggest that the successful process of developing and implementing any policy to some degree differs by how the environment's and the affected student population's interaction influences a students' perceptions of Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction. A student struggling to establish autonomy (or who has already embraced interdependence) might interpret as an institutional commitment to the student a final policy that only notifies parents once a student's behavior, if continued, threatens his or her enrollment; in return, such a policy might engender the student's commitment to the college. These findings suggest that those students are less likely to use and misuse alcohol. Similar students on a campus that decided not to engage in the policy development with students, however, and that chose not to implement the policy because of the established relationship, will have increased levels of Relational Satisfaction. This decision met students' expectations of the established autonomous relationship. Student may have felt as though they mattered because their relational expectations were met and respected, but this approach did not encourage feelings of institutional commitment to students. The results of this study suggest that those students were more likely to use and misuse alcohol.



This may provide a basis for a general theoretical framework of Student Development. If so, these insights could be used to inform the process the institution uses to develop and implement the policy and practice.

### Implications

This study provides a number of implications for the daily work of practitioners and administrators, although there are many institutions that already attend to and intentionally foster the nature of their relationship with their students.

First, the current approach to ethics education - institutional commitment to and facilitation of personal and social responsibility (PSR) behaviors - was not sufficient to make a difference in this study's student population. Ethics education initiatives, rules enforcement, and consortium activities aside, the quality of the student relationship created by the campus should be considered when attempting to understand and address, proactively and reactively, students' PSR behaviors. This study questioned, and these findings validate, the widely held belief in higher education that the quality of the student-institution relationship influences student learning, and student's personal and social responsibility learning in particular (Boyd & Cooper, 2008). These results suggest that, in addition to the current ethical development strategies, practitioners and educators should assess and consider student perceptions of student-institution relationship (SIR) quality and how the relational quality outcomes (RQOs) interact and influence student PSR as central factors in the educational process. Institutions should adopt processes and policies that go beyond expressing an institutional commitment to academic integrity by adopting an honor code and promoting activities that encourage academic honesty, such as plagiarism workshops. Recent trends in Academic honor systems, such as academic honesty process facilitators and an Academic Honesty Seminar in lieu of expulsion, if the paired with a

clear relational maintenance rationale and articulated commitment to the student, are good examples of these policies and processes.

Second, the findings indicate that the broader organization—public relationships (OPR) structure and RQOs, when combined with General Mattering, provided a valid framework for examining, cultivating, and managing the relational impact of the SIR on college student behavioral outcomes, specifically PSR behaviors. Practitioners should adopt relational strategies to compliment the cognitive, ethical development, and the health-oriented initiatives that may already be in place. Relational strategies should attempt to maximize Relational Commitment, Trust, and Control Mutuality, while ignoring Relational Satisfaction and General Mattering. This is not to say that relational dissatisfaction and marginality should be pursued. Positive change should be the goal of any relational intervention.

For example, a core group of administrators, faculty, and students appointed to assess, address, and evolve the relational nature of the SIR could audit all policies that impact students, with an eye toward the relational message and impact of each and launch programs such as Welcome Home Week. Students should be a key target population for the college's Department of Public Relations' messaging and partner with Student Affairs offices and academic leadership to build and manage the current institutional relationship with students.

The predictive configuration of the SIR RQOs may change, depending on the students' time in the relationship or the nature of the behavior. Before attempting to shape the SIR to achieve institutional goals, administrators and practitioners will need to assess the population or the behavior that they are hoping to influence. In the same way that a practitioner balances challenge and support (Sanford, 1966) based on the student and the task, in order to encourage

student growth, practitioners will need to make adjustments as needed to interventions using the targeted RQOs.

Third, college administrators and educators wishing to strategically attend to and measure only one element of the relational quality should focus their energies on student feelings of mutual commitment. Given that students' perceptions of the institution's relational commitment to the student most positively impacted students' PSR behaviors, administrator, faculty, and institutional philosophies founded on student empowerment/collegial mutuality or care might need to be reconsidered. Trust and Control Mutuality may be antecedents of Relational Commitment, so initiatives that also engender these affective responses might prove useful. Currently, most campuses' persistence and retention programs actively work to encourage student commitment to the college and by the program's presence imply institutional commitment to the student. These programs should be retooled to also explicitly communicate the college's commitment to the student.

This can be accomplished if colleges intentionally focus on relationship-building strategies that foster students' Relational Commitment while communicating and demonstrating the institution's Relational Commitment. Faculty, staff, and administrators can be coached on how to create personal interactions that foster the desired sense of mutual commitment by growing an authentic culture of responsiveness, openness, equality, and competence. In addition to personal interactions, institutional policies, processes, programs, and resource allocation should also be revised to reflect the college's commitment to students. . For example, initiatives aimed at addressing a social Greek system's culture of hazing in an environment of strained relationships with social Greek chapters could infuse all communication and actions with a demonstrated commitment to student safety and the success of the chapter as the institutional

goals. These communications and actions could take the form of substantive change in the sanctioning process to reward proactive partnering with the university to break the hazing cycle, chapter meetings explaining the college's commitment to partnering with students, and an open letter to the student body explaining the rationale for sanctions as necessary for student safety, along with public expressions of appreciation to Greek chapter members who model the desired relational commitment to the university.

Many institution-wide assessment instruments include measures of student satisfaction and pursue satisfaction and mattering as institutional goals. Because of their inverse relationships, creating initiatives targeted at reducing Relational Satisfaction's and General Mattering's influence would be counterproductive to building Relational Commitment and, therefore, should be avoided. These findings were one more message to practitioners that transactionally attempting to improve student satisfaction misses the influential (and possibly detrimental) elements of Relational Satisfaction (Gallant, 2008). If these findings are true for student populations at large, campuses should study the impact of the satisfaction of their student body and possibly rethink the current attention paid to student satisfaction.

Administrators and governing bodies pursuing retention and persistence, and assessing excellence, through student satisfaction scores would do well to remember that, in this study, students reporting high Relational Satisfaction scores also reported high levels of Academic Dishonesty and Alcohol Use/Misuse. Decisions and programmatic initiatives should balance the benefits and impacts of the pursuit of student Relational Satisfaction on the objectives of institutions of higher education.

Fourth, the quality of the faculty and other academics' exchanges particularly academic leadership with students was even more integral to students' PSR behaviors than previously

thought. Students most often identified academics and academic leadership as the influential institutional representatives in their perceptions of the SIR as often, or more so, than any other category of representative within the university community. PSR education is not something that can be delegated to out-of-the-classroom university personnel. For instance, a presidential message denouncing a physically dangerous campus tradition or a recent hate crime would be most effective if a commitment to the students, their safety and learning experiences was cited as the impetus for the message and any subsequent institutional action or policy change.

Faculty and academic administrators should be encouraged and coached on how to attend to relational matters in the classroom, responding to classroom disruption and academic misconduct. Colleges that create opportunities, training, support, and incentives for all institutional representatives, but particularly faculty, to engage in mentoring and apprentice relationships will likely see spikes in student PSR.

Fifth, the SIR has broader implications for the administration of higher education than the legal boundaries articulated by the courts. Failing to balance the relational elements of the SIR with the business goals and/or legal recommendations influencing that relationship in institutional decision-making may result in unintended student behavioral consequences. For example, the 1970s' legal risk management perspective that the university was ethically a bystander to the students' actions abdicated the institution's influence and may have actually undermined the overarching goal of reducing the university's exposure to risk. Campuses should, at times, choose to embrace more risk if that risk permits the development of relationships that convey and feed relational commitment. For example, institutions should continue to provide and expand venues for students to get help when needed, without punitive measures (i.e., amnesty

policies), communicating to students that the university is committed to them even when it is not convenient.

Lastly, a primary implication derived from these findings is that the SIR construct and PSR behavior deserve further study and consideration in educational policy, and in program and initiative development. A comprehensive model for predicting PSR behaviors that includes the relational and affective aspects of ethical development needs to be developed and tested both on current student behavior and on the long-term impact on learning. This study provided the building blocks needed to advance that line of research in a college setting. Suggested research topics that could make significant contributions, along with considerations for improving on this study research design, are outlined below.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

This analysis was performed not to develop a model that fully explained what contributed to the selected PSR behaviors, but instead to explore the student–institution relationship (SIR), PSR, and their inter-relatedness as constructs worthy of continued examination. The study fulfilled its purpose of providing an initial consideration of the SIR as an educational tool and the contribution the SIR’s perceived relational quality made to students’ PSR behaviors in one college population. A primary implication of these findings is the need for continued exploration of these concepts. This study introduced a number of constructs to the student affairs literature. Identifying the potential associations between school connectedness, General Mattering, PSR behaviors, and OPR/RQOs as a measure of the SIR’s nature opened promising lines of research.

#### *The Student–Institution Relationship as an Organization–Public Relationship*

This discussion of results suggests venues to continue to study the student–institution relationship, its impact on relational quality, and personal and social responsibility behavioral

outcomes. Research opportunities relying on the OPR framework as a theoretical base to examine the structure and processes affecting the SIR abound. Theory-building will be aided by continued research that identifies institutional representatives, settings, venues, interactions, and activities which most contribute to, and OPR-identified mechanisms which shape, students' perceptions of relational quality.

The results of this study also call for a causal exploration of the relationship variables. Determining which variables are exerting influence is very difficult in multiple regression because it masks the true relationships between variables that share variability (Rosenberg, 1968; Waldo, unpublished). Therefore, the directional linkages and causal relationships between these variables should be explored by entering each interaction into simple regression models with two predictor variables and one response variable, then adding and removing additional variables until all combinations are explored to examine the effects of each variable interaction on the overall relationship (Rosenberg, 1968; Waldo, unpublished).

#### *The Student–Institution Relationship and Personal and Social Responsibility*

The study of the SIR and PSR going forward could be enhanced in two ways: (a) testing the influence of SIR on other potential PSR behaviors and dimensions and (b) controlling for additional predictors of PSR and exploring factors influencing the SIR and PSR. Empirical evidence has been found to link the SIR RQOs with a number of PSR dimensions, including openness to institutional diversity (Brunner, 2000; 2005), personal excellence measured by retention and persistence (Ki and Hon, 2007a; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Bruning & Ralston, 2001), and (in this study) academic integrity and responsible alcohol use. A study comparing changes in students' reported RQO scores and changes in DIT-2 scores at the program, classroom, or institutional level would validate another PSR dimensions and measure.

Establishing the study as a pre- and post-test experimental design would examine the SIR's influence over student PSR education, examine whether the SIR influences student learning, and explore causality. Additional studies might expand the types of behavioral response variables to include additional PSR behaviors (e.g., hazing, protest rioting), learning-related activities and attitudes (e.g., study hours, NSSE scores), or institutional goal-specific actions (e.g., persistence, institutional service, annual giving).

Additional research is needed to compare the influence of the RQOs on hypothesized PSR behaviors to the findings at other institutional types and with specific student populations. Studies could compare campuses by institutional differences, with immediate attention given to comparisons by size and research versus teaching institutional classification, Core Commitments consortium membership versus non-consortium membership, and level of overt institutional priority placed on PSR commitment and facilitation. Additional studies should incorporate different student sub-populations and sub-cultures through demographic analysis. Particular attention should be paid to those populations known to engage in differing levels of PSR behaviors.

Lastly, ethical development is a slow learning process that is hard to measure with immediate behaviors. Future research should examine the associations between alumni perceptions of their SIR and their current ethical behaviors or abilities. Additionally, this study raised the question of whether time in the relationship or amount of interaction changes the configuration of relevant and significant RQOs. Studies attempting to replicate these findings with non-traditional students, athletes, student leaders, social fraternities and sororities, ethnically diverse student populations, and alumni participants would extend and clarify the results of this current study.



### Additional Limitations: Design and Analysis Considerations

Researchers' design and analysis decisions can influence findings that, in retrospect, might be stronger if approached differently. This was true for this study. The following section outlines issues and limitations that arose during the data collection and analysis stages of this research, which should be considered when interpreting these results.

First, this study's findings cannot be generalized to students at-large. This research studied one campus and findings could not be generalized to that school by race/ethnicity or year in school. More first-year students responded and more Caucasians responded than any other category in each classification. The study was generalizeable by sex and age (expected maturity) to this one school, which are big predictors of PSR. Therefore, this study's sample may be representative of this school's population, but not representative of all students. This study's findings provide insight into the SIR and the influence exerted by its nature on student's PSR, but conclusions should be limited to the Whichever University student body.

Second, the sample size limits the confidence in and strength of the study's findings. Some of the difficulties experienced in analyzing the data in this study would be resolved if a greater sample size had been collected. Slightly skewed distributions and other slightly non-normal distributions threatened the statistical assumptions of normalcy for statistical inference. A larger sample size would address most normality issues, raise confidence in the reliability of the findings, and permit the data to be analyzed with Structural Equation Modeling techniques. The sample size and demographic diversity of respondents were sufficient to conduct and interpret the statistical analysis needed to answer the posed research questions. However, as with most studies, strength and confidence in the findings could have been improved if an even greater number of participants had responded.

The sample size could have been increased if the response rate had been greater or the invited sample size larger. A 13% response rate was limiting, despite being consistent with McCabe's Academic Dishonesty survey response rates (McCabe, Personal Communication). The timing of data collection may have detracted from the response rate; but the information gathered was arguably richer and more valid because students had the entire academic year on which to reflect when responding. Future researchers will need to decide how best to balance these two competing interests: an optimal student response rate and the validity of the information gathered.

Third, being exploratory, this study relied on relatively conservative data analysis decisions so as not to inaccurately assert the significance of any found relationships. This approach to analysis avoided a Type I error (a false positive), intentionally accepting the greater risk of a Type II error (a false negative). Increasing the chances of a Type II error in hypothesis testing could cause variables that may be influential to be overlooked in the models. Somewhat less conservative observations were reported to allow future researchers to determine the relevance of the research design and findings, accuracy of conclusions, and potential for continued discovery.

The decision to not remove outliers was an example of the cautious approach to testing the study's overarching hypotheses. If the outliers would have been removed, then an additional 6 % (19% total) of the variance was attributable to the RQOs, and the General Mattering construct would have also been statistically significant for Academic Dishonesty. This example demonstrates the potential for even more substantial results if, after further study, these judgment calls are deemed too cautious. Even with this conservative approach to data analysis, ample

evidence was discovered to continue pursuing this line of research and begin to create interventions with the students' perception of the relational quality in mind.

Fourth, this research investigated correlational relationships, so causal inferences could not be made. Discussion of correlational findings is limited to strength, direction, and magnitude. Additionally, multicollinearity was observed in the regression modeling, making it difficult to accurately represent the relationships between variables. There was no evidence to suggest that students cheated or drank heavily because of their perceptions of the relationship. The only inference that can be made from these data was that students, who are not overly satisfied with their relationship with the university, but feel that they and the university are committed to one another, were also less likely to have cheated or reported significant alcohol consumption.

Fifth, this research examined the students' perceptions of the relational quality. OPR research posits that an accurate measurement and assessment of the relationship quality requires a co-orientational approach, that is, one that involves all parties to the relationship included in a study (Broom & Dozier, 1990; Seltzer, 2005). Subsequent research could replicate these studies using all relational parties.

Finally, interpretation of this study's results is limited by the measured constructs. The variables measured the immediate impact of student affective responses to the SIR relational quality on student behaviors. Those behaviors are considered by some to be PSR behaviors. Alcohol use is not universally an indicator of ethical decision-making, but rather it is so only for those who consider it an ethical decision. (Berkowitz, Guerra, & Nucci, 1991). Also, ethical development does not always translate into ethical behavior. Therefore, the college's PSR education programs may be effective in the long-run, but fail to show immediate impact on students' PSR behaviors in college.

## Conclusions

The presented study examined the nature of a college's relationship with its students and the effect that relationship had on student PSR behaviors while in college. In May of 2009, 201 students from Whichever University responded to an online survey that collected their perceptions of the relational quality of their college's student-institution relationship and self-reports of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse. The ideas questioned by the study considered long-held, though virtually unexamined, assumptions of higher education—that students are engaged in an interpersonal relationship with their college and that this relationship influences students' behavior and learning. The key findings of this exploratory study provided empirical insight into the SIR and its impact on student PSR behavior.

Students at Whichever University anthropomorphized their SIR, and their generally positive perceptions of that relationship were associated with self-reported PSR behaviors. The examined qualities of the relationship—Trust, Relational Commitment, Relational Satisfaction, Control Mutuality, and General Mattering—when considered together, were predictive of PSR behaviors, though more so academic dishonesty than alcohol use/misuse. The confirmation of these beliefs suggests that PSR education activities would be more effective if college administrators and educators intentionally included relationship management as a consideration when structuring organizational communications, institutional policy, interpersonal interactions, programmatic interventions, and organizational activities for PSR education.

A closer look at the moderately predictive relational nature (using the organization-public relationship framework) revealed that Relational Commitment and Relational Satisfaction most significantly contributed to both personal and social responsibility behaviors, though working in opposite directions. Surprisingly, Relational Satisfaction was

negatively associated with both personal and social responsibility behaviors in these students, while Relational Commitment was positively related. General Mattering was also negatively associated with Alcohol Use/Misuse. The more students believed they were in a mutually committed relationship with their college, the more likely their behaviors reflected personal and social responsibility. Conversely, the more highly students rated their Relational Satisfaction and General Mattering in their interactions with and perceptions of Whichever University, the more likely they were to report high levels of academic dishonesty and alcohol use/misuse. These unexpected results highlight the potential for unintended consequences if the relationship is changed without an understanding of the underlying processes or without recognizing the impact of those processes on the student and the educational mission of the institution.

Pascarella (2006) encouraged higher education researchers to challenge the presumptions of what he called “rational myths of higher education” (p.513) so as to ground our work in knowledge-based practices, not simply rhetoric and unexamined philosophical and anecdotal truths. The findings of this study validated this call for greater scrutiny. The core principles of the assumptions were found to be accurate in this population: Students *are* in an interpersonal relationship with Whichever University and that relationship *is* interrelated with these students’ PSR behaviors. However, this exploration uncovered small, though impactful, aspects of the relational quality, and the interplay of students’ reactions to that quality, that were not self-evident without investigation. These unexpected revelations inform and, if used to amend our approach, should improve the effectiveness of the natural application of those assumptions.

The presented study findings encourage higher education administrators and scholars, in our pursuit of excellence, to further study our presumed realities about all of our relationships with students. The influence of the relational quality of the SIR between these students and

Whichever University suggested a core relational nature that may or may not be replicated on other campuses. As educators, we need to gain a better understanding of the nuances of the SIR and its impact on the student and the students' behaviors. Only with this knowledge, gained through empirical inquiry, can we intentionally cultivate meaningful SIRs and make evidence-based decisions that will distinguish good student learning experiences from great student learning experiences.

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## APPENDIXES

## Appendix A Assumptions and Tenets of Boyd's Model

The following assumptions and tenets supported the theoretical model used by this study. These summarized points were gleaned from the review of the literature providing a succinct articulation of the empirical and scholarly foundation for this model. Combining these strains of research into one process provided a theoretical framework that explains the influence of the SIR's relational quality on students' behavior.

### Assumptions

Assumptions the researcher holds that underlie the approach to and interpretation of the literature base supporting this model include the beliefs that:

1. Student–institution relationships (SIR) in higher education are malleable and can be shaped to fulfill institutional goals;
2. Personal and social responsibility (PSR) is an appropriate student learning objective;
3. The entire institution (i.e., every aspect of the institution and all members of the community) educates students, while in college, for PSR;
4. Educating for PSR, an essential learning outcome of college attendance, includes a focus on ethical decision-making and moral development processes (AAC&U, n.d.a., n.d.b., 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008); and
5. Levels of alcohol use/misuse and academic honesty are indicators of student PSR and impact personal excellence and others' abilities to maximize their learning (AAC&U, 2004b; Hersch & Schneider, 2005; Swaner, 2004).

Tenets of a Process Model Addressing the Association Between the Student–Institution  
Relationship (SIR) and Personal and Social Responsibility (PSR) Behaviors

1. Organization relationships are anthropomorphic in that organizations can be engaged in relationships with individuals, groups of individuals, or other organizations. Human interrelational properties can be translated to organization and human relations. (Broom, Casey, & Ritchey, 1997; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Ledingham, 2003; Moos, 1974, 1976, 1979).
2. An organization has a perpetual community of publics which emerge as issues galvanize those publics (Hallahan, 2004).
3. The college's or university's relationship with the student, the SIR, is an organization–public relationship (Bruning, 2002; Bruning & Lambe, 2002; Bruning & Ralston, 2001; Brunner, 2000; Hon & Brunner, 2001; Ki & Hon, 2007).
4. The interaction of the person and the environment is the SIR (Banning, 1978; Boyd & Cooper, 2008; Miller, Bender, & Schuh, 2005; Walsh, 1978; Williams, 1986).
5. Five identified categories of SIR-generating interactions include teaching and learning, the curriculum, institutional integrity, the quality of institutional life, and educational services (Kuh, Lyons, Miller, & Trow, 1995).
6. Interaction variables, one aspect of the interaction between the person and the environment, encourage specific outcomes from persons engaging with environments (Moos, 1974, 1976, 1979; Stern, 1974). Press, exerted by the social climate and the individual, is the nature of the environment and exerts a pressure toward a specific behavior or attitude (Murray, 1938). Fit or congruence (Holland, 1973) filters students' cognitive and affective processes and can be shaped by intentional intervention by amending the student choice, environmental factors, or the quality of the interaction (Williams, 1986).

7. Ethical and moral development has a relational dimension (Bandura, 1989; Baxter–Magolda, 1992, 2001; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Kuhmerker, 1991; Narveaz, 2006; Noddings, 1984, 1995, 2002; Perry, 1999; Whitley & Kite, 1998) and depends on both affective and cognitive processes (Baxter–Magolda, 1992, 2001; Gilligan, 1982; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984).
8. The Person (P), the Environment (E), and the decision-making process, both general (Moos, 1979) and ethical (ED) (Wittmer, 2005), impact the individuals' behavior (B).
9. The relational nature and configuration of the interaction between the person and the environment (P x E) impact the individuals' ethical or moral development (MD) and behavior (B) (Narveaz & Rest, 1995; Rest, 1986, 1986; Rest, Narveaz, Bebeau, & Thomas, 1999).
10. Relational quality outcomes (RQOs) are the students' perceptions of and affective response to their collective interactions with all aspects of the college environment (Brunner, 2000; Brunner & Hon, 2001; Ki & Hon, 2007).
11. School climate and school connectedness—that is, students' relationship with the school (Libbey, 2004) and feeling that the school cares for students and students' learning (Blum, 2005)—are two unique measures of a student's affective appraisal and responses to the environment (Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006; Seltzer, 2005; Wilson, 2004).
12. The relational quality of the students' school-related interactions influences the processes underlying a student's moral action (Narveaz, 2006). Relational quality positively associates with participants' behavior, including learning and academic success (Blum, 2005; Dewey, 1938; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; Narveaz, 2006; Wingspread, 2004); moral action (Narveaz, 2006); mental health and wellbeing (Frey, Beesley, & Miller, 2006;

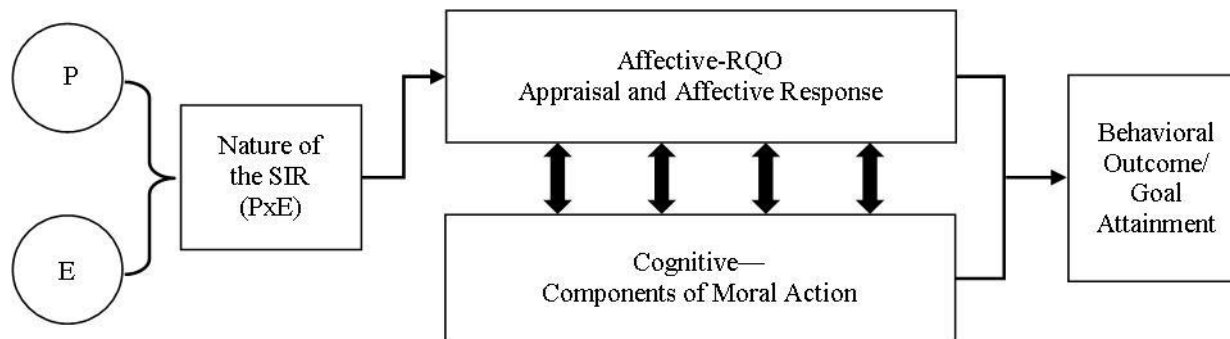


Frey, Tobin, & Beesley, 2004; Lee, Keough, & Sexton, 2002; Liang, Williams, Tracy, Taylor, Williams, Jordan, & Miller, 2002; Loukas, Suzuki, & Horton, 2006; Townsend & McWhirter, 2005; Wingspread, 2004); and healthy behaviors as opposed to risky behavior and violence (Blum, 2005; Maddox & Prinz, 2003; McNeely & Falci, 2004; Resnick, Bearman, & Blum, 1997; Wilson, 2004; Wingspread, 2004).

13. Trust, relational commitment, and relational satisfaction are global (i.e., independent of cultural norms, nationality, or industry setting) RQOs of organization–public relationships (Grunig & Huang, 2000; Hon & Grunig, 1999; Huang, 2001b; Hung, 2005; Ki, 2006).
14. Mattering (Schlossberg, 1989), control mutuality, trust, relational satisfaction, and relational commitment (Brunner, 2000; Hon & Brunner, 2001; Jo, Hon, & Brunner, 2004; Ki & Hon, 2007) describe relational qualities found in the interaction between the student and the college and have an impact on students' behaviors.
15. Interaction variables are experienced and influential at the molecular (i.e., individual, student) and molar (i.e., communal, system) levels, meaning the individual versus the climate or student-body level (Stern, 1974; Moos, 1974, 1976).
16. Persons, environments, and their interactions are interrelated and mutually influencing one another (i.e., reciprocal) (Kurtines & Gewirtz, 1995; Moos, 1974, 1976, 1979; Pelaez–Nogueras & Gewirtz, 1995; Swaner, 2004).
17. The impact and influence of the interaction between a person and the environment is cumulative, multidirectional, and consistently evolving (Coombs, 2000; Dewey, 1938; Pelaez–Nogueras & Gewirtz, 1995).

Appendix B  
Theoretical Basis for Boyd's Model and Hypothetical Relationships

Relationship	Decision Process	Behavior	Literature Base
Human and Campus Ecology, Psychosocial & Identity Theory	Cognitive and Moral Development	Human and Campus Ecology	Student Development Theory
$\left. \begin{matrix} P \\ \times \\ E \end{matrix} \right\} \begin{matrix} \text{Press/Fit} \\ (Px E) \end{matrix}$	Appraisal and Response	Adaptation	Moos
Organization–Public Relationship Measured by Relational Types	Relational Quality Outcomes (RQOs)	Behavioral Outcome	Public Relations' Organization— Public Relationship
Press/Fit, Challenge & Support	Process: Press/Fit Affective: Involvement (Quality), Mattering, Congruence	Involvement (Quantity), Persistence	Interaction Theorists
Phase I	Phase II	Phase III	



**Boyd's  
SIR-PSR  
Model**

Created by K. D. Boyd (2009)

Appendix C  
Initial Invitation to Participate (1<sup>st</sup> E-Mail)

Dear Student:

You are invited to participate in a multi-campus study of college students conducted by Karen D. Boyd, a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Professor Diane L. Cooper, PhD of the University of Georgia. Whichever University randomly selected your name to receive this invitation to participate and provided your contact information to the researchers.

This research explores the association between students' perceptions of their interactions and experiences with the university they attend and students' behaviors while in college. This exploratory study is the first known study of its kind. Your participation will be valuable and greatly appreciated. After completing the questionnaire, which should take approximately 20 minutes, you will be given the opportunity to enter your name into a separate database to receive a chance of winning a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate. Although participation in the study is encouraged, it is not required to be entered in the drawing.<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire is confidential; students who are invited to participate in the questionnaire will log into a computer server independent of your university using the password provided. No unique, personal identifier will be requested or captured by the researcher or the technical equipment used. Your name and/or identifying information do not appear anywhere on the questionnaire itself. Minimal, if any, risk, harm, or discomfort is anticipated to you from participating in this study.

To respond, go to the Web site below (simple click on the URL or copy it and paste it into your Web browser). In order to ensure confidentiality, you will need to enter "whichever" in the space for password. This will take you to a full consent page, which describes your full rights as a participant. After reading the consent page, you can proceed and participate in the questionnaire by selecting the responses that follow each question.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE PASSWORD is: **whichever**  
(enter password as all lowercase)

Click on the URL below or copy it and paste it into your web browser. [Best viewed using Internet Explorer]. <http://vpsa4.vpsa.uga.edu/surveys/kbdwhichever/consent.asp>

The URL will remain available until **Midnight May 23, 2009**. Only a limited number of students have been invited to participate in this project so we hope that you will take the time to complete a questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Karen D. Boyd  
Name of the Researcher  
Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx  
Email: kdboyd@uga.edu

### Attachment: Consent Form

<sup>1</sup>To be entered for a chance of winning a \$50 gift certificate without completing a questionnaire, forward your name and email address to [kdboyd@uga.edu](mailto:kdboyd@uga.edu). Two respondents from your university will be selected to receive a gift certificate. Names will be drawn and the winner notified by May 30, 2009.

## Appendix D

### Second Invitation to Participate (2<sup>nd</sup> E-Mail)

Dear Student:

Several days ago you were sent an email requesting your participation in a research project related to students' interactions and experiences with their university. This email is a reminder to please share your insights by completing the online questionnaire; if you have not done so already (the link is provided below). I apologize for the inconvenience if you have already completed the questionnaire. To protect the confidentiality of your responses and identity, I have no means of tracking your participation. This is the second of three invitations to participate you will be receiving.

You are invited to participate in a multi-campus study of college students conducted by Karen D. Boyd, a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Professor Diane L. Cooper, PhD of the University of Georgia. Whichever University randomly selected your name to receive this invitation to participate and provided your contact information to the researchers.

This research explores the association between students' perceptions of their interactions and experiences with the university they attend and students' behaviors while in college. This exploratory study is the first known study of its kind. Your participation will be valuable and greatly appreciated. After completing the questionnaire, which should take approximately 20 minutes, you will be given the opportunity to enter your name into a separate database to receive a chance of winning a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate. Although participation in the study is encouraged, it is not required to be entered in the drawing.<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire is confidential; students who are invited to participate in the questionnaire will log into a computer server independent of your university using the password provided. No unique, personal identifier will be requested or captured by the researcher or the technical equipment used. Your name and/or identifying information do not appear anywhere on the questionnaire itself. Minimal, if any, risk, harm, or discomfort is anticipated to you from participating in this study.

To respond, go to the Web site below (simple click on the URL or copy it and paste it into your Web browser). In order to ensure confidentiality, you will need to enter "whichever" in the space for password. This will take you to a full consent page, which describes your full rights as a participant. After reading the consent page, you can proceed and participate in the questionnaire by selecting the responses that follow each question.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE PASSWORD is: **whichever**  
(enter password as all lowercase)

Click on the URL below or copy it and paste it into your web browser. [Best viewed using Internet Explorer]. <http://vpsa4.vpsa.uga.edu/surveys/kbdwhichever/consent.asp>

The URL will remain available until **MIDNIGHT May 23, 2009**. Only a limited number of students have been invited to participate in this project so we hope that you will take the time to complete a questionnaire.

Sincerely,

**Karen D. Boyd**

Name of the Researcher

Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Email: kdboyd@uga.edu

Attachment: Consent Form

<sup>1</sup>To be entered for a chance of winning a \$50 gift certificate without completing a questionnaire, forward your name and email address to kdboyd@uga.edu. Two respondents from your university will be selected to receive a gift certificate. Names will be drawn and the winner notified by May 30, 2009.

Appendix E  
Third Invitation to Participate (3<sup>rd</sup> E-Mail)

Dear Student:

A week ago you were sent an email requesting your participation in a research project related to students' interactions and experiences with their university. This email is a reminder to please share your insights by completing the online questionnaire; if you have not done so already (the link is provided below). I apologize for the inconvenience if you have already completed the questionnaire. To protect the confidentiality of your responses and identity, I have no means of tracking your participation. This is the second of three invitations to participate you will be receiving.

You are invited to participate in a multi-campus study of college students conducted by Karen D. Boyd, a doctoral candidate under the supervision of Professor Diane L. Cooper, PhD of the University of Georgia. Whichever University randomly selected your name to receive this invitation to participate and provided your contact information to the researchers.

This research explores the association between students' perceptions of their interactions and experiences with the university they attend and students' behaviors while in college. This exploratory study is the first known study of its kind. Your participation will be valuable and greatly appreciated. After completing the questionnaire, which should take approximately 20 minutes, you will be given the opportunity to enter your name into a separate database to receive a chance of winning a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate. Although participation in the study is encouraged, it is not required to be entered in the drawing.<sup>1</sup>

The questionnaire is confidential; students who are invited to participate in the questionnaire will log into a computer server independent of your university using the password provided. No unique, personal identifier will be requested or captured by the researcher or the technical equipment used. Your name and/or identifying information do not appear anywhere on the questionnaire itself. Minimal, if any, risk, harm, or discomfort is anticipated to you from participating in this study.

To respond, go to the Web site below (simple click on the URL or copy it and paste it into your Web browser). In order to ensure confidentiality, you will need to enter "whichever" in the space for password. This will take you to a full consent page, which describes your full rights as a participant. After reading the consent page, you can proceed and participate in the questionnaire by selecting the responses that follow each question.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE PASSWORD is: **Whichever**  
(enter password as all lowercase)

Click on the URL below or copy it and paste it into your web browser. [Best viewed using Internet Explorer]. <http://vpsa4.vpsa.uga.edu/surveys/kbdwhichever/consent.asp>

The URL will remain available until **MIDNIGHT May 23, 2009**. Only a limited number of students have been invited to participate in this project so we hope that you will take the time to complete a questionnaire.

Sincerely,

**Karen D. Boyd**

Name of the Researcher

Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Email: kdboyd@uga.edu

Attachment: Consent Form

<sup>1</sup>To be entered for a chance of winning a \$50 gift certificate without completing a questionnaire, forward your name and email address to kdboyd@uga.edu. Two respondents from your university will be selected to receive a gift certificate. Names will be drawn and the winner notified by May 30, 2009.



Appendix F  
Consent Screen: First Screen of Questionnaire  
And Attachment to E-Mail Invitation

You and Whichever University  
CONSENT SCREEN

Please review the following information. Responding to the questionnaire indicates that you understand the nature of the research and freely consent to participating in the study.

I agree to take part in the multi-campus research study of college students titled: 'The Nature of the Student-Institution Relationship and Behavioral Indicators of Personal and Social Responsibility: An Exploration of the Association Between Relational Quality Outcomes, Alcohol Use and Academic Honesty'. This study is being conducted by Karen D. Boyd, a doctoral candidate in the Counseling and Human Development Services Department of the University of Georgia's College of Education, 706-546-5891, under the supervision of Professor Diane L. Cooper, PhD of the Counseling and Human Development Services Department of the University of Georgia's College of Education, 706-542-4120.

My participation in this study is voluntary and confidential. I may refuse to participate, skip or decline to answer any question, or end my participation in the study at any time without giving any reason, and without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled. I may ask to have information related to me, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this research is to explore the association between students' perceptions of their interactions and experiences with the university they attend and students' behaviors while in college (i.e. levels of alcohol use and academic honesty). I will not benefit directly from this research. However, my responses could help Whichever University and other colleges and universities better understand how to work effectively with students to promote personal and social responsibility.

As a participant, I understand I will be asked to fill out the following 66-item questionnaire, which should take approximately 20 minutes. To protect me from possible psychological, social, legal, economic stress or harm that could occur if my responses were known to Whichever University; no identifiable student contact information is being collected. My answers will remain confidential and my identity will not be shared with the University. The Web site and its associated server have been secured for privacy and are independent of Whichever University. In addition, the instrument and collected data will be retained on a secure server at the University of Georgia. My specific answers will remain confidential and my identity will not be shared with Whichever University. Therefore, there are no identified or expected discomforts, stresses or risks for participation in this study.

However, Internet communications are insecure and there is a limit to the confidentiality that can be guaranteed due to the Internet technology itself. Once the researcher receives electronic data

from completed questionnaires, standard confidentiality procedures will be employed. For instance, my identity will not be coded, and all the data will be kept in a secured location. I can be assured that my responses will be treated confidentially and will be anonymous to the Whichever University administration. The researcher will analyze my information as part of her dissertation and provide the final results to Whichever University without individual responses.

I understand that after completing the questionnaire I will be given the opportunity to enter my name into a separate database to receive a chance of winning a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate. Although participation in the study is encouraged, it is not required to be entered in the drawing. Additionally, to be entered without completing a questionnaire, I should forward my name and email address to [kdboyd@uga.edu](mailto:kdboyd@uga.edu).

If I have questions about the questionnaire or this study, or if I wish to complete a hard copy of this questionnaire, I may call Ms. Boyd at (706)546-5891 or email her at [kdboyd@uga.edu](mailto:kdboyd@uga.edu).

For further information or questions about this research I can contact:

Name of the Researcher: Karen D. Boyd

Telephone: xxx-xxx-xxxx

Email: [kdboyd@uga.edu](mailto:kdboyd@uga.edu)

Additional questions or problems regarding your rights as a research participant should be addressed to The Chairperson, Institutional Review Board, University of Georgia, 612 Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; E-Mail Address: [IRB@uga.edu](mailto:IRB@uga.edu).

By clicking on the 'I Agree to Participate' button below, I affirm that I understand and consent to the terms of this form.

Appendix G  
Second Screen: Survey

## You and Whichever University

This study is interested in learning about your perceptions of your interactions and experiences with Whichever University from the past academic year (i.e. Fall 2008 to the present). As you complete this questionnaire, limit your answers to how you generally think and feel about those interactions and experiences with the university as a whole.

NOTE: The terms 'Whichever University' or 'university' refers to all interactions with the institution and persons representing the institution (i.e. policies, procedures, written, verbal and electronic communications, offices, faculty, staff, administrators and volunteer or paid student staff). Do not include any perceptions you may have about the town or other non-university entities.

The following questions ask for information about you, your perceptions of your interactions and experiences with Whichever University from the past academic year. Your answers will be kept confidential. Any results shared with the University will be reported as a group without any personal identifying information. Thank you again for participating.

This is my (choose below) year (ex. first, second, third, etc.) as a student at Whichever University.

- |                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First | <input type="checkbox"/> Second |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Third | <input type="checkbox"/> Fourth |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fifth | <input type="checkbox"/> Other  |

Since leaving high school, I have not taken a course, whether for credit or not for credit, at any other institution (university, 4- or 2-year college, technical, vocational, or business school).

- ☐ True  
☐ False

My primary academic major (i.e., history, chemistry, business, undecided, etc.) is:

\_\_\_\_\_

Sex:

- ☐ Male                      ☐ Female                      ☐ Transgender

My race or ethnicity is:

- ☐ African-American  
☐ Asian/Pacific Islander  
☐ Causcasian  
☐ Hispanic/Latino/Latina  
☐ Native American  
☐ Multiracial

As you answer the following questions (four sections), reflect on your experiences and perceptions this past academic year (i.e., Fall 2008 to the present) at the university. Limit your answers to how you generally think and feel about those experiences with the university as a whole. The term university refers to all interactions with the institution and persons representing the institution (i.e. policies, procedures, written, verbal and electronic communications, offices, faculty, staff, administrators and volunteer or paid student staff). Please chose the corresponding number to indicate how strongly you disagree or agree with the following statements. Indicate N/A if you believe the question is 'not applicable' to you.

Q1. Generally speaking, based on your interactions and experiences over the past academic year with the university, respond to the following statements.

*Scale: 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree*

- 1.1 My university is trying to maintain a long term commitment to student like me
- 1.2 Whichever University treats students fairly and justly
- 1.3 Whichever University believes the opinions of students like me are legitimate
- 1.4 My university neglects students like me
- 1.5 Whenever Whichever University makes an important decision, students like me know my university will consider the decision's impact on students
- 1.6 Both my university and students like me benefit from their relationship
- 1.7 Whichever University wants to maintain a positive relationship with students like me
- 1.8 When dealing with students like me, my university has a tendency to throw its weight around
- 1.9 Whichever University can be relied on to keep its promises to students like me
- 1.10 Students like me are dissatisfied with their interactions with my university
- 1.11 Whichever University really listens to what students like me have to say
- 1.12 Students like me are happy with my university
- 1.13 Whichever University takes the opinions of students like me into account when making decisions
- 1.14 Generally speaking students like me are unhappy with the relationship my university has established with them
- 1.15 Whichever University seems to ignore the opinions of students like me in the decisions that affect students
- 1.16 Students like me feel very confident about my university's abilities
- 1.17 Compared to other colleges and universities, students like me value their relationship with Whichever University the most

- 1.18 Students like me enjoy dealing with my university
- 1.19 Students like me would rather work with Whichever University than without it
- 1.20 When students like me interact with the university, students feel that they have some sense of control
- 1.21 Whichever University cooperates with students like me
- 1.22 Sound principles guide my university's behavior
- 1.23 Whichever University fails to satisfy the needs of students like me
- 1.24 Students like me feel they are important to my university
- 1.25 Students like me have influence with the decision makers at Whichever University
- 1.26 My university misleads students
- 1.27 Students like me feel a sense of loyalty to Whichever University
- 1.28 In general, nothing of value has been accomplished by my university for students like me
- 1.29 In general, students like me have a relationship with Whichever University

Q2 In general, based on your interactions and experiences over the past academic year with the university, respond to the following questions.

*Scale: 1 = not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = somewhat, 4 = a lot*

- 2.1 How important are students, like you, to Whichever University?
- 2.2 How much does your university pay attention to students like you?
- 2.3 How much would students like you be missed if they went away?
- 2.4 How interested is Whichever University in what students like you have to say
- 2.5 How much does your university depend on students like you?
- 2.6 How committed to being personally and socially responsible is your university and its representatives?
- 2.7 How much has Whichever University done to facilitate personal and social responsibility in students like you?

Q3 Students have different views of what constitutes cheating and what is acceptable behavior. We would like to ask you some questions about specific behaviors that some students might consider cheating. Please mark how often, if ever, in the past academic year you have engaged in any of the following behaviors.

*Scale: 1 = never, 2 = once, 3 = More than once, 4 = not relevant*

- 3.1 Getting questions or answers from someone who has already taken a test
- 3.2 In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing your own
- 3.3 Helping someone else cheat on a test
- 3.4 Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography
- 3.5 Fabricating or falsifying lab data
- 3.6 Fabricating or falsifying research data
- 3.7 Copying from another student during a test with his or her knowledge
- 3.8 Copying from another student during a test without his or her knowledge
- 3.9 Cheating in a class taught by an instructor you do not like
- 3.10 Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment
- 3.11 Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from a written source without footnoting or referencing it in a paper
- 3.12 Turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper 'mill' or website
- 3.13 Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from an electronic source - (e.g., the Internet - without footnoting it in a paper)
- 3.14 Using unpermitted crib notes (or cheat sheets) during a test
- 3.15 Copying material, almost word for word, from any written source and turning it in as your own work
- 3.16 Turning in a paper copied, at least in part, from another student's paper, whether or not that student is currently taking the same course
- 3.17 Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or delay writing an exam
- 3.18 Cheating in a class taught by an instructor you like
- 3.19 Turning in work done by someone else
- 3.20 Cheating on a test in any other way

FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, ONE DRINK IS DEFINED AS: 12 ounce beer OR 1 ounce of 100 proof distilled spirits/liquor OR 4-5 ounce glass of wine

3.21 How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?

- Never
- Monthly or less
- 2-4 times a month
- 2-3 times a week
- 4 or more times a week

3.22 How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?

- 1 or 2
- 3 or 4
- 5 or 6
- 7 to 9
- 10 or more

FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, ONE DRINK IS DEFINED AS: 12 ounce beer OR 1 ounce of 100 proof distilled spirits/liquor OR 4-5 ounce glass of wine

Scale:

- Never
- Less than monthly
- Monthly
- Weekly
- Daily or almost daily

3.23 How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?

3.24 How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?

3.25 How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?

3.26 How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?

3.27 How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?

3.28 How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?

3.29 Have you or someone else been injured because of your drinking?

3.30 Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?

**Your Perceptions of and Experiences at Whichever University**

4. What types of interactions were you most often thinking of when answering the questions about your perceptions of your interactions and experiences with the university in sections one and two (i.e., what contributed most to your perceptions)? Please share in the space below.

5. Which institutional representatives were you most often thinking of when answering the questions about your perceptions of your interactions and experiences with the university in sections one and two (i.e., what contributed most to your perceptions)? Please share in the space below.

Thank You for Your Time and Participation



**Entry Form—A Chance to Win a \$50 Gift Certificate**

This data collected in this form is separate from the prior questionnaire and your responses will not be connected with this information. Please provide the following information to be given the chance to win a \$50 Amazon.com gift certificate. Only one entry per respondent will be included in the drawing. Two respondents from your university will be selected to receive a gift certificate. Names will be drawn and the winner notified on May 30, 2009. Thank you for your time and participation.

Name:

Email Address:

Appendix H  
Trust RQO Item Descriptives

<b>Relationship Quality Outcomes Scale Adapted OPRAScale Ki and Hon (2007b)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Trust</b>			
Q1.26 My university misleads students (R)	195	5.47	1.52
Q1.2 Whichever University treats students fairly and justly	194	5.47	1.42
Q1.22 Sound principles guide my university's behavior	196	5.21	1.38
Q1.16 Students like me feel very confident about my university's abilities	197	5.15	1.46
Q1.9 Whichever University can be relied on to keep its promises to students like me	189	4.96	1.45
Q1.5 Whenever Whichever University makes an important decision, students like me know my university will consider the decision's impact on students	200	4.85	1.60
Q1.13 Whichever University takes the opinions of students like me into account when making decisions	193	4.58	1.45
Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree Relational Quality			

Appendix I  
Relational Commitment RQO Item Descriptives

<b>Relationship Quality Outcomes Scale Adapted OPRA Scale Ki and Hon (2007b)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Relational Commitment</b>			
Q1.7 Whichever University wants to maintain a positive relationship with students like me	195	5.61	1.26
Q1.1 My university is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to student like me	199	5.42	1.40
Q1.19 Students like me would rather work with Whichever University than without it	194	5.20	1.48
Q1.27 Students like me feel a sense of loyalty to Whichever University	199	5.07	1.53
Q1.17 Compared to other colleges and universities, students like me value their relationship with Whichever University the most	188	4.82	1.52
Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree			

Appendix J  
Relational Satisfaction RQO Item Descriptives

<b>Relationship Quality Outcomes Scale Adapted OPRAScale Ki and Hon (2007b)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Relational Satisfaction</b>			
Q1.28 In general, nothing of value has been accomplished by my university for students like me (R)	195	5.60	1.50
Q1.6 Both my university and students like me benefit from their relationship	195	5.29	1.39
Q1.12 Students like me are happy with my university	199	5.26	1.39
Q1.23 Whichever University fails to satisfy the needs of students like me (R)	194	5.14	1.71
Q1.14 Generally speaking, students like me are unhappy with the relationship my university has established with them (R)	198	5.14	1.59
Q1.10 Students like me are dissatisfied with their interactions with my university (R)	198	5.03	1.74
Q1.24 Students like me feel they are important to my university	194	4.84	1.52
Q1.18 Students like me enjoy dealing with my university	195	4.64	1.55
Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree			

Appendix K  
Control Mutuality RQO Item Descriptives

<b>Relationship Quality Outcomes Scale Adapted OPRAScale Ki and Hon (2007b)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>Control Mutuality</b>			
Q1.4 My university neglects students like me (R)	188	5.71	1.49
Q1.3 Whichever University believes the opinions of students like me are legitimate	195	5.14	1.59
Q1.21 Whichever University cooperates with students like me	196	5.13	1.38
Q1.15 Whichever University seems to ignore the opinions of students like me in the decisions that affect students (R)	194	4.97	1.63
Q1.20 When students like me interact with the university, students feel that they have some sense of control	194	4.74	1.49
Q1.11 Whichever University really listens to what students like me have to say	197	4.74	1.37
Q1.8 When dealing with students like me, my university has a tendency to throw its weight around (R)	181	4.58	1.64
Q1.25 Students like me have influence with the decision makers at Whichever University	192	4.20	1.55
Response Options: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 7 = Strongly Agree			

Appendix L  
General Mattering RQO Item Descriptives

<b>Relationship Quality Outcomes</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
<b>General Mattering Scale</b>			
Marcus (1991a, 1991b)			
<b>General Mattering</b>			
Q2.1 How important are students, like you, to Whichever University?	199	3.40	0.74
Q2.2 How much does your university pay attention to students like you?	199	3.09	0.78
Q2.5 How much does your university depend on students like you?	198	2.98	0.92
Q2.3 How much would students like you be missed if they went away?	199	2.97	1.06
Q2.4 How interested is Whichever University in what students like you have to say	199	2.84	0.92
Response Options: 1 = Not at All, 2 = A little, 3 = Somewhat, 4 = A lot			

Appendix M  
Academic Dishonesty Scale Item Descriptives

<b>Academic Dishonesty Scale</b> Lovett–Hooper, et al. (2007)	N	M	SD
Q3.12 Getting questions or answers from someone who has already taken a test	192	1.35	0.67
Q3.17 Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from an electronic source (e.g., the Internet) without footnoting it in a paper	196	1.30	0.59
Q3.15 Paraphrasing or copying a few sentences of material from a written source without footnoting or referencing it in a paper	196	1.27	0.57
Q3.20 Receiving unpermitted help on an assignment	192	1.20	0.52
Q3.19 Using a false or forged excuse to obtain an extension on a due date or delay writing an exam	195	1.13	0.42
Q3.2 Cheating in a class taught by an instructor you do not like	193	1.10	0.39
Q3.5 Fabricating or falsifying a bibliography	192	1.10	0.38
Q3.9 Fabricating or falsifying lab data	173	1.10	0.38
Q3.11 Helping someone else cheat on a test	193	1.10	0.35
Q3.1 Copying from another student during a test with his or her knowledge	195	1.09	0.32
Q3.3 Cheating on a test in any other way	195	1.08	0.34
Q3.14 In a course requiring computer work, copying another student's program rather than writing your own	163	1.07	0.30
Q3.10 Fabricating or falsifying research data	184	1.05	0.27

<b>Academic Dishonesty Scale</b> Lovett–Hooper, et al. (2007)	N	M	SD
Q3.4 Copying from another student during a test without his or her knowledge	195	1.05	0.26
Q3.8 Cheating in a class taught by an instructor you like	196	1.04	0.25
Q3.7 Using unpermitted crib notes (or cheat sheets) during a test	195	1.04	0.25
Q3.18 Copying material, almost word for word, from any written source and turning it in as your own work	196	1.04	0.22
Q3.6 Turning in a paper copied, at least in part, from another student's paper, whether or not that student is currently taking the same course	196	1.04	0.22
Q3.13 Turning in work done by someone else	194	1.03	0.20
Q3.16 Turning in a paper obtained in large part from a term paper 'mill' or website	193	1.02	0.16
Response Options: 1 = Never, 2 = Once, 3 = More Than Once			



Appendix N  
AUDIT Scale Item Descriptives

<b>10-item Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT), World Health Organization (WHO)</b> (Babor et al., 2001)	N	M	SD
Q4.1 How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	200	1.29	1.08
Response Options: 0 = Never 1 = Monthly or less 2 = 2–4 times a month 3 = 2–3 times a week 4 = 4 or more times a week			
10-item Alcohol Use Disorder Identification Test (AUDIT), World Health Organization (WHO)	N	M	SD
Q4.2 How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	153	0.59	0.83
Response Options: 0 = 1 or 2 1 = 3 or 4 2 = 5 or 6 3 = 7 to 9 4 = 10 or more			

Alcohol	N	M	SD
Q4.3 How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?	200	0.56	0.81
Q4.7 How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?	199	0.16	0.42
Q4.8 How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?	198	0.14	0.42
Q4.5 How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?	200	0.09	0.36
Q4.4 How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?	199	0.08	0.32
Q4.9 Have you or someone else been injured because of your drinking?	200	0.07	0.42
Q4.10 Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?	199	0.05	0.37
Q4.6 How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?	200	0.00	0.00
Response Options:			
0 = Never			
1 = Less than monthly			
2 = Monthly			
3 = Weekly			
4 = Daily or almost daily			

Appendix O  
Perceptual Context Item Descriptives

<b>Perceptual Context Researcher-Generated Questions</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
In general, students like me have a relationship with Whichever University <sup>1</sup>	198	5.20	1.42
How committed to being personally and socially responsible is your university and its representatives? <sup>2</sup>	197	3.21	0.79
How much has Whichever University done to facilitate personal and social responsibility in students like you? <sup>2</sup>	199	3.16	0.81

<sup>1</sup> 7-point scale

<sup>2</sup> 5-point scale

Appendix P  
RQO Scale Factor Analysis Loadings

Outcome Scale Factor Loadings		
Scale	Item	Factor Loading
Relational Commitment	Value Relationship	0.85
	Loyalty	0.78
	Positive Relationship	0.76
	Rather Work With	0.73
	Long-Term Commitment	0.62
Relational Satisfaction	Dissatisfied	0.85
	Enjoy	0.84
	Mutual Benefit	0.83
	Important	0.83
	Happy	0.81
	Fails to Satisfy	0.79
	Unhappy	0.77
	Nothing Accomplished	0.67
Control Mutuality	Listens to Students	0.91
	Cooperate	0.83
	Legitimate Opinion	0.82
	Influence	0.76
	Control	0.74
	Neglect	0.71
	Ignore Opinion	0.65
	Throws Weight	0.57
Trust	Consider Opinion	0.84
	Fair and Just	0.78
	Keep Promises	0.78
	Principles Guide Behavior	0.77
	Confident in University	0.73
	Mislead	0.69
	Consider Impact	0.67
General Mattering	Interested in St Perspective	0.84
	Attention	0.84
	Important	0.75
	Missed	0.74
	Depend on Students	0.60