

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

by

TRACEY DELOIS FORD

(Under the direction of Libby Morris)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of African American students at a traditionally white university regarding their academic and social experiences in the context of the current legal challenges to affirmative action and racial and ethnic diversity. Since African Americans were at the center of these and earlier legal challenges to educational access, it was important to know how the current legal and social climate affected their experiences and perceptions of life at the university. African American students were asked their perceptions about the campus climate, racial climate, racial incidents, and academic and social experiences. Specifically, they were asked to consider their experiences in light of the current racial and legal issues involving the University of Georgia. Data from this study show that participants encounter racism in their social and academic experiences. Participants were disengaged from primary social activities such as the downtown scene and greek life, were often uncomfortable in classes because they are a small minority, and were generally dissatisfied with administrative efforts to address diversity and equity. Overall, however, students believed they were receiving a good education and were pleased that they came to The University of Georgia to pursue their education.

INDEX WORDS: African American, Campus Climate, Racial Climate, University of Georgia, Diversity, Persistence

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

by

TRACEY DELOIS FORD

B.S., Norfolk State University, 1991

M.S., Howard University, 1995

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2002

© 2002

Tracey Delois Ford

All Rights Reserved

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN
STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

by

TRACEY DELOIS FORD

Approved:

Major Professor: Libby Morris

Committee: Maurice Daniels
Cameron Fincher
Patricia Kalivoda
Ronald Simpson

Electronic Version Approved:

Gordhan L. Patel
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2002

DEDICATION

To my ancestors who withstood the middle passage, slavery, and injustice so that I could become the woman I am today. I am forever grateful.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I praise God for loving me so much that he sent his only begotten son, Jesus, to die so that I might live. I praise God for providing me with the necessary resources and opportunities to complete this dissertation. Thank you God for allowing me to recognize and use the gifts that you have blessed me with so that I might carry out Your will for my life.

Special thanks to Dr. Libby Morris, my major professor for working so closely with me to achieve this goal. Without your commitment and gentle nudging, this work would not have been completed. Thanks to my committee members Drs. Maurice Daniels, Cameron Fincher, Patricia Kalivoda and Ronald Simpson for all of your support and helpful suggestions.

Thanks to my family and friends who assisted me in so many ways during this process. Special thanks to aunties Pat and Nancy, uncles Gordon, Don and Tony my brother Michael, and my nephew Michael. Thanks to my family members who are here with me in Spirit, my mother, Naomi Sellers, my sister Stacy, my grandparents, Willie and Inez Sellers and my uncle Frank.

Thank you to Danny Davenport for reminding that my life is not my own. I belong to my creator and my community.

God blessed me with wonderful sister-friends such as Yolanda, Valerie, Tasha, Jennifer, Lesley, Chantel, Kremmel, Jessica, Rachel and Loretta and all my sisters I

forgot to name. Thank you for putting up with me. Valerie (with the help of her mom) kept me fed (both physically and spiritually). Much love to my sister Yolanda who pushed me to achieve at my highest level. You never stop believing and for that I am forever grateful.

Thanks to the faculty and staff of The Institute of Higher Education who have always been supportive of my work. Special thanks to Alisa Howen and Delores Wallace.

Thanks to Dean Louis Castenell and the entire staff of the Office of Institutional Diversity. You guys did a great job putting up with my frustrations as I neared the completion of the dissertation.

Special Thanks to the Graduate and Professional Scholars and the Black Faculty and Staff Organization.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Gaining Access to Higher Education	1
Legal and Racial Issues for the State of Georgia and UGA	5
Nature of the Study	8
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	11
African American Access to Higher Education	11
Affirmative Action	19
Barriers to Access	22
Experiences of African Americans at TWIs	25
Hurtado’s Theoretical Framework	34
3 METHODOLOGY	37
Research Design	38
Researcher Subjectivity	48
Summary	50
4 RESULTS	51
Overview of Participants	51
Profile of Participants	53

Racial Issues at The University of Georgia	61
Social Experiences at The University of Georgia.....	79
Administrative Commitment to Diversity	94
Academic Experiences at The University of Georgia.....	109
Summary	122
5 FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS.....	123
Summary of Findings.....	124
Improving the Social and Academic Experiences of African American Students.....	135
Suggestions and Issues for Further Research.....	141
Closing Comments.....	142
REFERENCES	143
APPENDICIES	
A INFORMATION CARD	148
B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	149
C CITED COURT CASES	151
D CHRONOLOGY OF UGA LAWSUIT.....	152

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The experiences of African American students at historically white colleges and universities have been documented in the literature of higher education and the social sciences during the past decade (Allen, 1992; Nettles, 1991). These studies generally described black students' perceptions of their experiences at traditionally white institutions (TWIs) and the persistence, attrition, and academic success of black students in these settings. While such studies have contributed to our understanding of how black students navigate traditionally white institutions, they often overlooked the political and social contexts in which these students matriculate.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of African American students at a traditionally white university regarding their academic and social experiences in the context of the current legal challenges to affirmative action and racial and ethnic diversity. Since Africans Americans are at the center of these and earlier legal challenges to educational access, it is important to know how the current legal and social climate affect their experiences and perceptions of life at the university.

Gaining Access to Higher Education

Since the late 1960s, blacks have enrolled in predominantly white colleges in significant numbers. In 1997, approximately 85% of all black college students were enrolled in predominantly white institutions (Harvey, 2001). Affirmative action programs were the driving forces behind these high numbers. Increasing numbers of

African American students opted to attend the majority institutions as a result of increased access and financial aid programs (Allen, 1988). After institutions of higher education began to admit blacks in large numbers, they created programs focusing on recruitment and retention. Very few, if any, institutions focused on the campus climate and the psychological impact it would have on African American students' social interaction and academic achievement.

As educators, students, and policy makers soon learned, access was not enough to insure academic success. Black students found themselves in unfamiliar territory as they forged onto America's traditionally white campuses. Despite having adequate academic skills, many African Americans found it difficult to adjust to an often hostile and unfamiliar environment (Astin, 1968). In the 1980s, racially motivated incidents were commonplace and discrimination was rampant (Farrell & Jones, 1988; Fossett & Kiecott, 1989). In the 1990's data showed that the attrition rate of African American students at traditionally white campuses was extremely high, and African American students were several times more likely to leave college than white students (Jackson & Swan, 1991). Moreover, African American students on white campuses progressed slower academically than did whites, had more financial difficulties, and experienced strong feelings of isolation (Jackson & Swan, 1991).

The challenges black students faced in institutions of higher education mirrored the struggles African Americans have encountered in striving for educational, financial, and social gains in the United States. From slavery to the present, blacks were forced to operate in a system where they are the minority, often less educated, and financially behind the majority. Education is supposed to be the "great equalizer" in America, and

children are constantly taught that getting a good education is the key to financial stability and improved quality of life. Unfortunately, many blacks never attain these goals.

Many blacks never achieve the fulfillment of the American dream because of limited educational opportunities. Until the late 19th century, it was illegal for blacks to attend school or learn to read or write (J. Anderson, 1988). Consequently, a major hurdle for blacks was gaining access to schools. Reform efforts such as the Second Morrill Land Grant Act, which established black-only institutions of higher education, were key victories for blacks in the fight for equal access to education (Thomas, 1981). Legal cases such as *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), *Pearson et al. v. Murray* (1936), *Gaines v. Canada* (1938), and others set the stage for a legal battle to dismantle segregated educational facilities (Eastland & Bennett, 1979).

The African American struggle to gain access to higher education has led to some of the worst expressions of prejudice and racial intolerance in U.S. history. From the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision to Alabama Governor George Wallace's infamous stance in the schoolhouse doors to the Little Rock Nine incident, America has been engaged in a tense time surrounding equal access to education. After *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) the Supreme Court ordered states to dismantle segregation in the schools. Many states, including Georgia, were slow to comply with the mandate. Despite the court decision in 1954, the University of Georgia did not admit its first black students until 1961 amid a vicious court battle. UGA commemorated the 40th anniversary of its desegregation in January 2001 and at that time was embroiled in a legal battle over its race sensitive admissions policy. Since this research was conducted, UGA

was ordered by the courts to discontinue its use of race in admissions (*Wooden v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia*, 2001). Although much has changed since UGA desegregated, the issue of equal access to higher education for African Americans remains a major issue.

Although numerous studies have examined black students' experiences at traditionally white institutions (TWIs), most have not placed the analysis in the context of the contemporary negative reaction to affirmative action, diversity, and equity in higher education. Walter Allen's (1988) study examining the experiences of blacks on predominantly white campuses found that African American students suffer from feelings of racial discrimination and social isolation. An earlier study by Tinto (1975) found that minority students must socially integrate into the campus to increase their chances of being academically successful. He found that if students were engaged socially, their academic experiences would be enhanced. Moreover, if students were socially fulfilled they were less likely to suffer from alienation and stress and were more likely to be satisfied with the college experience.

With the influx of African American students onto majority campuses, administrators grappled with how to respond to this surge and how to meet the needs of these students. African Americans brought with them a different perspective and uniqueness from the majority population. Soon, researchers began to address the experiences and perceptions of blacks on white campuses in order to understand what types of issues they face while pursuing an education. The major areas of research on African Americans at traditionally white institutions focused on the campus climate, social experiences and academic achievement. The hope was that by documenting these

experiences, administrators would develop programs and services aimed at assisting African Americans in adjusting to their new environments. Researchers (Allen, 1985; T. Anderson, 1988; Farrell & Jones, 1988) discovered that the campus climate at TWIs was often cold and uncaring and that blacks were engaging in psychological warfare in order to cope with this situation. Black students on white campuses felt shut out of the main stream and were left feeling frustrated and helpless. The stress of dealing with being a minority led many students to drop out (Smedley, 1993).

High attrition among blacks at TWIs was thought to be a result of inadequate academic preparedness. However, Astin, (1968) and others suggested that blacks suffered from alienation and isolation at TWIs which led to low persistence. More recent studies such as those by Allen (1985), Nettles (1991) and Feagin and Sikes (1995) revealed that black students at traditionally white institutions (TWIs) continued to have higher attrition rates than other students. The high attrition rate for African Americans at TWIs prompted administrators at universities to focus on retaining these students by implementing programs such as multicultural programs, tutoring, and counseling targeted specifically toward blacks. Still other programs centered on the social needs of students including African American cultural events. Although campus climate has been shown to significantly influence retention, it is rarely examined when addressing attrition.

Legal and Racial Issues for the State of Georgia and UGA

In order to compensate for 400 years of slavery and discrimination, universities implemented affirmative action programs to remedy current vestiges of past wrongs. UGA's plan included dual admissions policies that had different requirements for blacks

and whites. Since 1990, the state of Georgia, along with the rest of the country, has experienced a reversal in its position concerning issues of diversity and equity in higher education.

Hopwood v. State of Texas (1996) served as an impetus for the modern anti-affirmative action movement. Cases such as *Hopwood v. State of Texas (1996)* (Jaschik & Lederman, 1996) and legislation such as Proposition 209 in California (Schmidt, 1996) helped set the tone for how Georgia and other states are reacting to affirmative action, diversity initiatives, and race sensitive admissions policies. For instance, in 2000 the Circuit Court in Savannah ruled that it was unconstitutional for universities in its district to use race as a criterion for admissions (Hebel, 2000). This decision was reflective of the tone and attitude that the state has been developing during the last ten years.

In 1996, amid concerns over the constitutionality of race-based admissions plans, UGA dismantled its dual standards and implemented the Total Student Index (TSI), which is a combination of SAT scores and high school grade point average to admit 80-85% of the incoming class. In order to at least achieve a minimal level of diversity, the admissions officials saw the need to include other factors which would diversify the student body and took into account the student's race, legacy status, gender, etc. (Hannon, 2000). This decision brought on new legal challenges from opponents who argued that the desire to diversify the student body is not a valid reason to consider race when admitting students. Opponents of race-based admissions argue that the policy is unconstitutional in that it unfairly discriminates against white applicants. After several years of legal wrangling, the courts ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, who had argued that

they were denied admission to UGA because they were white and that blacks were given extra points simply because they were black.

Given this new political climate, the University of Georgia also has witnessed a minimal increase in enrollment of undergraduate African American students in the last decade. In 1990, for instance, the black student population at UGA was 5.6%, and in 1999 it was 5.9%. Increases in SAT and other admission standards and the posture of the courts, no doubt, have played a role in this limited gain. The issue that remains, however, is how black students who choose to attend University of Georgia are faring in the current political and social climate that is, at best, lukewarm toward affirmative action programs, race-based admissions, and diversity initiatives. The state of Georgia is becoming increasingly diverse; currently approximately 30% of the state's residents are African American. However, only 5.6% of the student body at UGA, the state's flagship institution is African American (University of Georgia, Institutional Research and Planning, 2001).

During the 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 academic years, the campus grappled with two major issues related to racial diversity. First, the 11th Circuit Court ruled that UGA's admissions policy, which gives points for being a minority, was unconstitutional (*Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia*, 2001). Second, an all-white sorority was charged with denying an African American student admittance because of her race. These two incidents prompted the entire campus to engage in a public debate on affirmative action, race-based admissions, and racial discrimination.

Only 40 years have passed since Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter stepped onto the University of Georgia campus and changed the landscape forever. Since that

time, African Americans have been enrolling, matriculating and graduating from UGA. The question remains, however; what price do they pay, socially, psychologically and academically? Although African Americans have made strides on the campus, it is important to ask whether students still experience racism, segregation, and other inequities as a result of attending a large, public, traditionally white university. There are good reasons to believe, given the reversals of law and institutional policy, that the campus climate for black students might have become less welcoming in the current climate of backlash against affirmative action.

Nature of the Study

This study examines the impact of the recent controversy surrounding race-based admissions on the campus climate at UGA and explores the ways in which this climate affects the perceptions and experiences of the undergraduate African American population. This investigation used a qualitative research design to examine the academic and social experiences of African American students at a large southern university. This study will provide insight into the experiences and perspectives of these African American students and the factors that lead to their choices to persist at a traditionally white institution. This study extends the work of scholars such as Allen, Nettles and Feagin and Sikes and contributes to the literature by examining the black student's perceptions of their experiences at TWIs in the current anti-affirmative action climate.

This research addresses three compelling and pertinent questions which are significant to the University of Georgia and its black students: 1) How do African

American students perceive the current racial and social climate at the University of Georgia? 2) How do African American students interpret their academic and social experiences in light of the current legal and social climate at the University of Georgia? 3) How do African American students perceive the university's commitment to issues of diversity and equity? Specifically the research will focus on African American students' social involvement in campus related activities, academic experiences, and incidents of racism.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of African American students at a traditionally white institution regarding their academic and social experiences in the context of the current racial, political and legal climate, and to explore the perceptions of African American students regarding the University's commitment to increasing diversity and promoting equity. This investigation will extend the insight gained from the findings of previous quantitative studies by qualitatively examining the experiences of African American persisters at the University of Georgia.

Significance of Study

This study is significant because it takes a qualitative approach to assessing the experiences of African American students at traditionally white institutions and takes into account the current institutional climate surrounding race and affirmative action. Campus climate has been shown to significantly affect the persistence and social integration of African American students on predominantly white campuses. Students who feel a high

level of racial discrimination are less likely to persist (Hurtado, 1992). This study seeks to provide insight into how African Americans view their experiences at a traditionally white campus. Currently white institutions enroll the overwhelming majority of black college students in the state of Georgia; consequently, it is important to know more about the experiences of black students on majority white campuses so we can make the system fair and help minority students be more successful.

The next chapter reviews the literature on the history of the struggle for blacks to gain access to higher education. Additionally, studies on social, academic and campus climate experiences of blacks at traditionally white institutions are presented.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature that is relevant to this study is both broad and diverse. The literature on judicial decisions and legal actions taken to secure access for blacks to public education is rich and voluminous. This chapter begins with a summary of that extensive body of literature. Similarly, much has been written about affirmative action and its impact on education and on other institutions. The affirmative action literature is complicated by the variety of conclusions, assumptions and assertions that are put forth depending on the viewpoint of the researcher and/or the sponsoring agency. Across the states, the very meaning and existence of affirmative action policies in college admissions are under legal challenge. Because of its tangential, yet important, relationship to this research, only a brief review of affirmative action is undertaken herein. The literature review continues with barriers to access to higher education and concludes with a summary of research on the experiences of African American students at traditionally white institutions (TWIs). This chapter concludes with Hurtado's 1998 theoretical framework for implementing diversity in higher education.

African American Access to Higher Education

The issue of access to higher education for African American has been a prominent one since the inception of slavery. Before the civil war, the prevailing policy

in the South was prohibition of educational opportunities for blacks. Blacks were not allowed to learn to read or write nor were they allowed to attend school (J. Anderson, 1988). “The motivations for the enactment of such restrictive legislation were undoubtedly traceable to fears of slave uprisings and the desire to stifle yearnings for freedom and to keep slaves subjugated to work on menial, unpleasant tasks” (Myers, 1989, p. 1). In the mid-western and northern parts of the country, freed blacks had opportunities, although limited, to attend secondary school and even, more rarely institutions of higher education. Prior to the Civil War, slaves developed their own schools to educate themselves despite facing legal action (J. Anderson, 1988).

After the civil war and the emancipation proclamation, freedmen continued to struggle for educational freedom. In some regions blacks were allowed to pursue higher education freely. Unfortunately there were not many schools in the south that would serve blacks. Philanthropists and blacks joined forces to develop normal schools for the newly freed slaves (J. Anderson, 1988). During this time, separate but equal was the prevailing public policy. Several decades of litigation, spearheaded by the NAACP, eventually led to the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case. The court ruled that separate but equal violated the constitution and ordered institutions to end segregation (J. Anderson 1988; Adair, 1984).

The 1960s brought such legislation as the Higher Education Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Affirmative action programs were created under the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and special financial aid programs were created under the 1972 amendments of the Higher Education Act. These policies and laws were implemented to facilitate equal

access to higher education for African Americans and access to higher education for blacks did increase during the years immediately following the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The late 1960s and 1970s witnessed the beginning of dramatic increases in the number of African American students attending predominantly white colleges and universities (Allen, 1985).

Prohibition and Segregation

African Americans have been fighting a never-ending battle in trying to obtain the basic rights of citizens of the United States. When Africans arrived in this country as slaves, they were forced to relinquish any sign of intellectualism for fear of retaliation from their masters. The slave owners believed that if the Africans were educated, they would become inquisitive and begin to question their circumstances. Therefore, slave owners prohibited slaves from learning to read and write. This was a shrewd policy that enabled slave owners to keep the slaves in mental as well as physical bondage.

Although it was prohibited for slaves to read and write, some slaves did learn and passed on the knowledge they acquired to other slaves. Freed blacks in the north were also being educated at very prestigious institutions (J. Anderson, 1988). Oberlin College was the first institution of higher education to admit blacks, offering elementary classes up to advanced study (Woodson, 2000). After Oberlin College's bold move to admit blacks, many of the private institutions in the mid-west and northeast began to admit African Americans. Although blacks were admitted, they were still treated as second class citizens as demonstrated by segregated living quarters and dining halls.

Colleges and universities specifically for blacks were created following the Civil War in response to the growing need to educate blacks. The majority of these institutions, now called Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), were established after 1865 in response to the need to establish institutions to educate the newly freed slaves and to combat the segregationist sentiments of southern educators who opposed integrating blacks into already-existing white schools and colleges (Myers, 1989). The Freedmen's Bureau was established to assist the newly freed slaves in conjunction with northern church missionaries and philanthropic organizations. They worked to establish primary schools and some colleges under the constraints of the Jim Crow laws (Thomas, 1981).

Immediately after the civil war, the issue of what kind of education for the newly freed slaves became paramount. The overall view was to provide blacks with technical training so they might acquire worthwhile skills. The founder of Hampton Institute, General S.C. Armstrong, believed that blacks should be educated even though they were less competent than whites (Pease, 1974). The view that blacks should be educated was supported by the Second Morrill Act which called for states to create institutions for the education of blacks.

Judicial Decisions

Separate but equal education practices for African Americans were upheld by the Supreme Court decision in the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case (Pease, 1974). W. E. B. DuBois became concerned that the separate but equal policy was inhibiting educational access and success for blacks (Dubois, 1973). Subsequently, the NAACP devised a legal

strategy to attack the separate but equal policy of the Supreme Court. Seeking to rectify past wrongs perpetrated against blacks, NAACP leaders methodically chose cases which exposed injustice.

Several legal cases had an impact on equal opportunity for blacks in higher education. For decades, prior to these landmark cases, the assistance to blacks began and ended with the Emancipation Proclamation. The signing of this document freed the slaves, but did not include laws which would provide ex-slaves with equal opportunities to advance in the free world. There were few provisions by the federal or state governments to assist blacks in obtaining an education.

The historic “separate but equal” case, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), was the legal precedence justifying segregation for several decades to follow. This case involved a black man, Homer Adolph Plessy, who boarded the East Louisiana Railroad and sat in the white’s only coach. When asked to move, he refused and was arrested and charged with violating the law. Plessy’s attorneys argued that segregation laws violated his rights under the fourteenth amendment. The lower court in Louisiana upheld the segregationist philosophy and the case was eventually heard by the U.S. Supreme Court which upheld the lower court’s decision. The court ruled that as long as separate quarters were available for black passengers, the Jim Crow laws did not violate the constitution. Separate but equal was officially the law for the next several decades giving segregationists a solid leg to stand on in every facet of life including education (Eastland & Bennett, 1979).

The next major case was *Pearson v. Murray* (1936). Donald Murray was denied admission to the University of Maryland Law School based on race. Several years

earlier, to this, future Supreme Court justice Thurgood Marshall was also denied admission to the University of Maryland's Law School on the same grounds. Marshall, who would become a U.S. Supreme Court justice, served as co-counsel in the Pearson case. Murray along with others filed a class action suit charging the University of Maryland with violation of the fourteenth amendment. In 1936 the court ordered the University of Maryland to admit Murray to its law school. This case marked the beginning of the end for legal segregation. The NAACP legal defense group was hoping that a precedent was being set to challenge these laws nationwide (Adair, 1984).

The *Gaines v. Canada* (1938) case involved Lloyd Gaines, a black man and resident of Missouri. Mr. Gaines was denied admission to the University of Missouri law school. Based on Missouri law, blacks could attend professional school "at the university of any adjacent state and the state of Missouri would pay the reasonable tuition and fees for such attendance" (Eastland & Bennett, 1979, p. 97) while a law school for Missouri blacks was being built. The state contended that they were providing "separate but equal" accommodations for blacks, however, the Supreme Court found the Missouri law unconstitutional and ordered that Gaines be admitted to the Missouri law school (Eastland & Bennett, 1979).

The NAACP gained momentum with each favorable decision by the courts. Other cases such as the *Sipuel v. Board of Regents of University of Oklahoma* (1948), *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) and the *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education* (1950), each had a major impact on the down fall of legal separation. In the Sipuel case, the Supreme court ruled that Ada Sipuel be admitted to the law school in her home state Oklahoma. University of Oklahoma officials complied by roping off a section

of the state capital for Ms. Sipuel. She was provided three law instructors and had to take courses alone. This arrangement was not acceptable to the NAACP, but the courts refused to take the case any further (Eastland & Bennett, 1979).

The court's ruling in *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) marked the first time that a black student was admitted to a state institution because the one for blacks was found inferior: separate but unequal. In the McLaurin case, a black student was admitted to the University of Oklahoma graduate school, but was forced to eat and sit apart from his white classmates. The Supreme Court ruled that McLaurin's constitutional rights were violated and that he should be granted the same treatment as his classmates (Adair, 1984).

In 1950, the parents of a black female sought to have her admitted to the all-white Summer Elementary School in Topeka, Kansas. She was denied admission because of her race. In 1951, her father Reverend Oliver Brown filed suit against the Topeka School Board, which resulted in the 1954 landmark decision of the Supreme court (Adair, 1984). Brown actually refers to four cases decided as one; similar cases had been filed in Kansas, South Carolina, Virginia, and Delaware (Eastland & Bennett, 1979). Each case challenged the constitutionality of segregation. Each state had separate dual school systems. The NAACP challenged the court to decide on the "true equality" of the black and white schools and whether or not a dual system of education meant equal protection of the law. The Supreme court, in a unanimous decision, written by Chief Justice Earl Warren ruled that "the doctrine of separate but equal has no place in the field of education" (Eastland & Bennett, 1979, p. 10). Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal; consequently, the end of Jim Crow was approaching. The Supreme

Court ruled that legal segregation was unconstitutional. This marked the start of the social battle to end discrimination. The court had spoken, but they could not legislate the hearts and ideals of segregationists (Eastland & Bennett, 1979). “Despite the increase in desegregation efforts after Brown, only 17 percent of public institutions in the deep south had admitted blacks by 1961. The desegregation of these white schools had little impact on the total number of blacks attending white institutions in the south” (Thomas, 1981, p. 19).

Seven years after Brown, in 1961 at the University of Georgia (UGA), Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter were the first blacks admitted to the state’s largest public university. A decade earlier, Horace Ward attempted to enter the UGA law school but was unsuccessful in his attempt. In order to side step desegregation, many schools imposed impossible admissions requirements. Prospective UGA students were “required to submit a certificate from two Georgia citizens, alumni of the institution in which the applicant desired to enroll, who would certify that they were personally acquainted with the applicant and that they were of the opinion that the applicant was morally fit for admission” (Wilson & Wilson, 1979, p. 203). This posed a serious problem for blacks since there were no black alumni and white alumni refused to serve as references.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 called for the desegregation of public higher education systems. In 1969 the Department of Education found ten states in violation of the act (Williams, 1988). The NAACP filed suit to force these states into compliance. In the case of *Adams v. Richardson* (1973), the court found in favor of the NAACP and ordered the Department of Education to require 10 states to implement plans to

desegregate their higher education systems or they would have their federal funds withheld.

The quest to end legal segregation in education was long and tedious. Key players such as NAACP counselors Thurgood Marshall and Charles Hamilton Houston fought continuous legal battles nationwide. They strategically mapped out a course of action that began with *Pearson et al. v. Murray* (1936) and culminated in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The judicial struggle to achieve a semblance of equality netted significant gains in minority access to higher education.

Affirmative Action

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 created affirmative action programs designed to redress the past wrongs of discrimination suffered by minorities and women (Williams 1988). In the case of *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978), these affirmative action laws were challenged. Mr. Allan Bakke applied to the University of California at Davis (UC-Davis) Medical School. He was denied admission despite exemplary grades and high Medical College Admissions Test (MCAT) scores. Mr. Bakke later learned of a special admissions set aside program specifically for minority students who did not meet regular admissions criteria. He filed suit charging UC-Davis with reverse discrimination. The case went to the Supreme Court where the justices ruled that “universities may continue affirmative action programs, so long as they consider candidates on an individual basis and don’t set aside a rigid number of places for which whites could not compete” (Eastland & Bennett, 1979, p. 172).

The most devastating blow to affirmative action came in the recent case of *Hopwood v. State of Texas* (1996). Cheryl Hopwood, a white woman and three other applicants sued the University of Texas Law School for reverse discrimination. Hopwood argued that she had been denied admission to the law school unfairly because she was more qualified than minority applicants who had been admitted. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled in March 1996 that the law school's policy was illegal. The U.S. Supreme court refused to hear the case and thus the decision by the Fifth Circuit stands and is the law throughout Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas (Jaschik & Lederman, 1996).

The assault on affirmative action continued in other states. Californians passed an amendment to its constitution that would eliminate affirmative action in state agencies. Proposition 209, also known as the California Civil Rights Initiative, prohibits state and local agencies including public colleges and universities from using racial and gender preferences in decisions about hiring, contracting, admissions, and financial aid. The measure was appealed unsuccessfully as the court concluded that the amendment's provisions mirrored the equal-protection rights guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment (Schmidt, 1996). At the time of this research the University of Georgia was involved in a reverse discrimination suit. *Wooden v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia* (2001) was a reverse discrimination case in which the plaintiffs argued that they were denied admissions to Georgia colleges and universities because of their race. This litigation stretched over several years and involved various plaintiffs over time. A summary of this case can be found in Appendix D. Near the completion of this research,

the suit was settled by court order that required UGA to change its admissions policies such that race would no longer be considered in admissions.

Federal Policies

The federal government has also played a key role in facilitating equal access to higher education for blacks. Since 1890, the legislative branch has passed three key acts that have had a major impact on blacks in Higher Education. The Second Morrill Land Grant Act of 1890, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Higher Education Act Amendments of 1972 all served to improve access for blacks (Howard University, 1976).

The Second Morrill Land Grant Act of 1890 provided states with money to build colleges specifically designated for the education of blacks. This marked the first federal appropriations to states in which race discrimination played a factor. The Second Morrill act was passed to create institutions to educate blacks only. The act stipulated that states could not deny blacks an education. In order to comply with the Morrill act, states established separate institutions to educate blacks (Thomas, 1981). From the Second Morrill Act there was a huge growth in historically black colleges and universities (Howard University, 1976). Fort Valley State University in Georgia is an example of one such institution. “The colleges that were developed for blacks were of poor quality with inadequately trained teachers and teaching facilities. Moreover, these institutions were initially non-degree granting institutions,” (Thomas, 1981, p. 13).

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires that public colleges operated by the state or with the public funds properly desegregate. It provides technical assistance to state and local school boards, funds to higher educational institutions to run training

institutes, and grants to school boards for staff development to resolve desegregation problems. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 requires nondiscrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin by contractor under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance (Howard University, 1976). This act, along with federal student financial aid policies outlined in the Higher Education Act of 1965 and 1972, partially opened the door for blacks to attend predominantly white colleges in significant numbers, (Howard University, 1976).

The Higher Education Act Amendments of 1972 included financial aid programs geared to helping financially disadvantaged students as well as calling an end to discriminatory practices of any public agency receiving federal funds. The major programs established under the 1972 amendments are financial aid programs. Included are the Guaranteed Student Loan, Basic Educational Opportunity Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, National Direct Student Loan, and College Work Study.

Barriers to Access

All students regardless of race may face barriers to educational access. These obstacles are especially significant for blacks. As cited earlier, in the 1800s blacks were prohibited from learning to read or write. As a result, illiteracy spanned several generations. Prior to *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the majority of blacks in higher education attended public and private HBCUs, which were inadequately funded. At HBCUs students often received a substandard education.

According to a 1976 report by the Howard University Institute for Educational Policy, equal educational opportunity has three major components.

1. Access: the opportunity to enroll in college;
2. Distribution: the type of institution attended and field of study; and
3. Persistence: the opportunity to remain in college and complete training in a timely fashion.

Many barriers to equal educational opportunity were present before black students even became eligible for college. Other barriers were deeply rooted in the racial and economic structure of this society (Howard University, 1976). Barriers to equal educational opportunity are defined as categorical, educational and psycho-social.

- C **Categorical:** Categorical barriers arise when two groups are treated differently to the detriment of one group. These barriers include such things as quotas that limit college admission and eligibility requirements that limit the availability of financial aid to blacks.
- C **Educational:** Educational barriers include the policies and practices of institutions and individuals that seem neutral, but have an adverse impact on blacks. Examples of educational barriers include the use of standardized exams for admissions or scholarships.
- C **Psycho-social:** Psycho-social barriers arise from negative aspects of the lifestyles individuals adopt voluntarily or through coercion. Such barriers include students' concepts of self-identity, major choice, and college choice (Howard University, 1976).

Educational limitations for blacks continue to be problematic. Orfield and Paul (1988) found four major issues affecting minority access to higher education: segregated schools, increasing college costs, academic preparedness, and lack of commitment to access programs. Many blacks still attend largely segregated schools which tend to be overcrowded and lack adequate resources. These schools have teachers with fewer advanced degrees and less counseling services. Students at predominantly black inner

city schools also score lower on achievement tests than their white counterparts. “The gap between the learning experiences of these students and their non-minority counterparts widens with each additional year of schooling” (Orfield & Paul, 1988, p.60). When these students graduate from high school, their grade point averages and admissions test scores are not competitive for admission to selective institutions.

Besides academic woes, many black students had to overcome financial hardship to pursue college. College costs rose dramatically over the last decade. This increase can have an adverse affect on low income black students. The 1980s also brought financial aid policy changes shifting from grants to loans. The financial aid package was changed from 80% outright grants in 1975-1976 to 50% loans in 1985-1986. Increasing costs and financial aid reduction has a negative impact on blacks since a high proportion of black students come from low income families (Carnoy, 1994).

Many students come to higher education under-prepared and in need of remedial assistance. “Programs on campuses for prospective and current students offer some help but fall short of meeting the needs of those minority students who would like to or need to develop their capacities” (Orfield & Paul, 1988, p.61). Recently, there has been an increase in the number of institutions that are eliminating remedial education. City University of New York system will cease to offer remedial education in the near future. The University System of Georgia is gradually eliminating developmental studies at 4-year colleges and universities, while assigning this responsibility to 2-year colleges in the system.

Orfield and Paul (1988) also contend that there is a lack of commitment to equal opportunity. “When the federal government exercised its authority under the civil rights

act of 1964 there was a commitment and action” (Orfield & Paul, 1988, p. 61). Recently, that commitment has been wavering. During the 1998 re-authorization of the Higher Education Act, a California senator sponsored legislation that would ban the use of racial preferences in college admissions. The amendment would prohibit colleges from granting preferential treatment to any person or group based on race, sex, color, or national origin in admissions decisions (Burd, 1998). The amendment was defeated by a large margin.

Access to higher education for blacks continues to be a major issue for the courts and state and federal legislators. The effect of these policies has been studied extensively and the results vary. Many Americans believe programs such as affirmative action and race-based admission policies are outdated and unnecessary. Despite, significant legislative and judicial policies, blacks have not experienced the anticipated gains in educational access and opportunity that was thought to be a sure thing as numerous reform efforts were implemented. As politicians and educators seek to improve African American access to higher education it is important to account for all barriers that may hinder access such as financial aid and campus climate. The issues of access and equal opportunity have not been solved by symbolically implementing policies and laws.

Experiences of African American Students at TWIs.

The purpose of this study was to examine the social and academic experiences of African American college students at a traditionally white institution. While a number of studies report on the demographics of college attendance by blacks and are quantitative in nature, fewer studies focus on the academic and social experiences of black students, especially as those experiences are understood and told by African American participants.

The literature on blacks at traditionally white institutions has centered on access, academic achievement, and social involvement (Allen, 1988, 1984; Nettles, 1991; Feagin & Sikes, 1995). More recently, campus climate environment and institutional characteristics have been studied.

A number of quantitative studies have been done on the academic performance of blacks at traditionally white institutions. Smith (1991) examined black student academic performance in college. The purpose of the study was to determine if there are similarities between HBCUs and predominantly white 4-year public institutions regarding the impact of institutional characteristics on educational outcomes. He found that traditional models of retention and academic success do not fully apply to African Americans. African Americans have a unique history that warrants an alternative way of researching their experiences. Segregation, racism, and poverty are just a few of the reasons that traditional paradigms do not fully apply to African Americans. Smith looked at personal and institutional characteristics to determine if these variables were related to the academic achievement of black students at HBCUs and traditionally white institutions. The data were gathered from an existing National Study of Black College Students (NSBCS) database (Allen & Haniff 1991). The database was established by Walter Allen and others to gain information about the experiences of black college students. In-depth statistical analysis was done to analyze the data. Student variables included gender, mother's education and occupation, high school grade point average, racial composition of high school, and years of attending desegregated schools. Institutional variables included academic prestige, geographical location of the institution, and size. Outcome variables included grades and occupational aspirations.

The findings suggest that the most important predictors of educational outcomes for blacks on white campuses are region and gender. Black male students attending non-southern white institutions have higher grade point averages than black males and females attending southern institutions. The predictors for good educational outcomes for blacks at HBCUs include being married, mother's occupation, and perceptions of racism. The relationship between demographic characteristics and almost all educational outcomes are different for blacks at white schools than for those attending black institutions. For the most part, the measures of previous educational performance are not strongly associated with black students' educational outcomes at either type of school. The institutional characteristics of traditionally black universities affect black students' educational outcomes differently than do the characteristics of predominantly white schools.

More black college students attend traditionally white institutions rather than Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) (Harvey, 2001). Unlike the findings in the Harvey (2001) study Jackson and Swan (1991) discovered that blacks on white campuses do not obtain comparable academic outcomes to blacks who attend HBCUs. Studies suggest that HBCUs offer students social development not found at predominantly white colleges and that this, not rigorous academics of white schools, is the reason for lower educational attainment of blacks at TWIs, (Jackson & Swan, 1991).

Jackson and Swann (1991) conducted research to determine if there are differences between the educational attainment of blacks at HBCUs and blacks at predominantly white institutions. A survey was conducted on 1580 black respondents; 885 attended an HBCU and 695 attended traditionally white institutions. Jackson and Swann (1991)

suggest that the gap in academic achievement is a function of family background, secondary school experience and/or characteristics, attitudes and post secondary experiences, and or characteristics. Family background variables refer to the age of respondent, mother's and father's education and occupation, and family income. Secondary school variables refer to high school grade point average and percent of blacks attending the high school. Racial and self-perception attitude scales were used. Post-secondary variables include financial, social, and academic experiences. A regression analysis was used. Black males who attended predominantly white institutions had parents slightly better educated than black males attending HBCUs. Racial attitudes were comparable. Black males at predominantly white institutions had higher grade point averages than black males at HBCUs. Black males at traditionally white institutions perceived academic competition as extremely intense compared to those attending historically black institutions. Three predictors were significantly related to black males' college grades across both campus environments: respondents' age, self-confidence, and high school grade point average.

Nettles (1991) explains that attrition of black students at predominantly white colleges is a complex issue that needs to be addressed from different perspectives and with great detail. Black students at white colleges are several times more likely to drop out of college than white students (Nettles, 1991). The reason for this high attrition rate can be partially attributed to pre-college factors such as high school preparedness and socioeconomic status. However, this does not fully explain the disparity in college performance and success between black and white college students. Nettles' (1991) study was undertaken to discover whether there are differences in the college

performance of black and white college students; to identify the factors related to performance of black and white students; and to determine if there are key differences between black and white students on the significant factors.

The Student Opinion Survey (SOS) and the Faculty Opinion Survey (FOS) provided data for the Nettles' study. The data set consisted of 4,094 students and 706 faculty from 30 colleges in 10 states; there were 2,218 black students and 1,876 white students. The SOS measured student performance, behaviors, and attitudes. The FOS measured faculty behaviors and attitudes toward students and their institutions.

Nettles (1991) found that white students progress through college faster than black students. Overall progression was fastest for students who are younger, attend large universities far from home, have high high school grade point averages, are in the racial majority, and have low financial need. Factors significantly related to fast progression of black students included being a native student (i.e. persisting at college of initial enrollment; not a transfer student), having faculty with nontraditional teaching styles, being married, having a high motivation level, working very limited hours, living on campus, and feeling low rates of discrimination. Factors significantly related to white student progression are social integration, high SAT scores, a low number of interfering problems, and high degree goals (Nettles, 1991).

Thomas (1991) took a different approach when examining the academic experiences of blacks on white campuses. Thomas studied the influence of selected variables on the enrollment of African American students in the natural and technical sciences versus other majors. The large income disparity between black and white college graduates is due largely to major choice. Whites are more likely to major in science and

technical fields than are blacks. Blacks have higher career aspirations than their actual majors indicate.

In Thomas' study (1991) data were collected from black and white juniors and seniors attending 4-year colleges and universities located in the south. Of the 2,046 students surveyed, blacks represented 44% of the sample and females, 64%. A questionnaire was used to elicit information on socioeconomic status, parents' educational background, high school preparation; high school math and science grades; educational and occupational expectations; college characteristics; and major choice. Multiple regression analysis was used to examine the data.

Thomas (1991) found that factors significantly affecting black students' major choice included high school preparation, academic performance, educational, and occupational expectations. Blacks attending traditionally white institutions were less likely to major in science. The most significant factors influencing black males' major choice were high occupational and educational expectations. Factors influencing black females' major choice included high school grades in math and science and high educational and occupational expectations.

In another study, Globetti (1993) found that African American students with strong parental influence, low perceptions of discrimination, and encouragement had positive academic experiences with faculty and staff. Perceptions of discrimination had no effect on grade point average. While discrimination may not have effected GPA, it did influence the experiences of African American students. Black students were more likely to be taught by faculty of a different ethnic background compared to whites who rarely received instruction from persons not of their race (Globetti, 1993).

Allen and Hanniff (1991) explored the extent to which black students on white campuses have experiences that are qualitatively different from those of black students at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Social involvement and academic experiences were examined. Data were analyzed from the National Study of Black College Students, an existing study that collected data on the attitudes, backgrounds and experiences of black college students. The National Study of Black College Students (NSBCS) data were gathered from students at sixteen colleges and universities. Scales measured student satisfaction with college and racial attitudes. Academic performance was measured by college grade point average. Background factors included campus race, student sex, mother's education, and high-school grade point average. Campus experience factors included feelings of involvement in campus life, level of academic competition at the university, whether the student considered leaving or not, and relations with whites at the university. Social-psychological factors consisted of respondent self-concept, racial attitudes, and occupational aspirations.

Allen and Hanniff (1991) found that a significantly higher number of blacks (75%) at white campuses reported having a GPA less than 3.0 compared to 66% of blacks at HBCUs. Academic performance was found to be significantly related to student satisfaction with and involvement in college life. Family income and mothers' education were not found to be significantly related to academic performance. The results also showed that social involvement was lower for blacks on white campuses.

Studies show that the perception of the campus climate varies by race. African Americans are more likely to report a discriminatory environment than white students (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson & Allen, 1998). White students, because of their

majority status, may be unaware of racist acts because they do not happen to them and/or they do not interact with blacks enough to hear about racial problems on campus. When whites are unaware of racist issues, they believe that the campus climate is fine. Blacks view this perspective as being insensitive to racial issues. White students with low social interaction with other minority groups show low levels of comfort with persons from other races along with an insensitive nature toward racism inflicted upon African Americans. They impose a social distance that keeps them away from other minorities. Whites with low interaction are less likely to empathize or sympathize with minority groups. They are also less likely to support target efforts to recruit and retain minorities and to support mandatory multicultural courses (Hurtado, 1992).

“Racial conflict arises out of a sense of threat to group position when the dominant group perceives the risk of losing power,” (Hurtado, 1992, p. 545). Increasing numbers of minority groups may produce more tension because the majority group begins to feel threatened and becomes less supportive of programs, resources and services geared toward helping minorities. Once a critical mass of minorities are present on the campus, whites feel like enough has been done.

Institutions of higher education vary in many ways, including their racial composition and history. Hurtado (1992) conducted a study where she compared institutional characteristics to determine if the campus climate varied based on institutional type. She sought to identify data that may help identify contexts for racial conflict. The study was quantitative using a student cohort (1985-1989). A questionnaire was administered to freshman in 1985 and again four years later in 1989. The questionnaire elicited background information, perceptions of campus racial tension, and

institutional commitment to diversity. Students were also asked about the reputation and resources of the institution. Hurtado et al. (1998) found that 88% of students across all institutions believe racial discrimination is still a problem. One in four students at four-year institutions perceived considerable racial conflict compared with one in three at universities. Students at public and private institutions reported a lack of trust between minorities and administrators. Private four-year schools were found to have a better racial climate than public institutions. Students at public institutions were more likely to perceive minority faculty and student recruitment as a high priority. Black students perceived higher racial tension and lower institutional commitment to diversity than white students. Overall, students perceived low racial tension at institutions that made students a top priority. A strong institutional commitment to diversity was found to improve perceptions of campus race relations.

Allen (1992) studied how black student college success is influenced by campus context and student background. Three student outcomes were assessed: academic achievement, social involvement and occupational aspirations. Students in the study were black and attended both HBCUs and TWIs. Overall blacks at traditionally white institutions experienced lower academic achievement, negative relationships with faculty and social isolation compared to black students at HBCUs. The results of the survey also showed that blacks at TWIs had higher SAT scores and high school grade point averages and came from families with higher incomes compared to students from HBCUs. Although blacks attending TWIs were better prepared academically, they were outperformed by seemingly less prepared students. Allen suggests that there may be other factors such as campus climate and institutional characteristics that are responsible

for the significant difference. Allen proposed that it is the racial climate and institutional culture that adversely affect the academic experiences of blacks at traditionally white institutions.

In summary the studies reviewed in this section document the difficulty that African American students have at traditionally white institutions. Campus climate has emerged as the primary reason for many of the academic, social and racial problems on predominantly white campuses.

Hurtado's Theoretical Framework

Hurtado et al. (1998) developed a framework by which higher education leaders can understand the campus racial climate and form policy based on this understanding. Hurtado et al. (1998) found that there is “no common framework for understanding the campus racial climate in a way that helps develop policies and practices that can be used to enhance campus climate” (p. 283). Explanations for this neglect are that higher education leaders have taken a hands off approach by allowing people to interact naturally instead of facilitating interaction, and higher education leaders are undecided on whether institutions should function as change agents by actively resocializing students.

Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson and Allen, (1999) introduced a four part framework for understanding campus climate. The first piece of the framework is labeled the “Historical legacy of Inclusion and Exclusion” of an institution. “A colleges’ historical legacy of exclusion can determine the prevailing climate and influence current practices” (p. 9). Peterson, Blackburn, Gamson, Arce, Davenport and Mingle (1978)

research found that a supportive campus environment depends on the initial reaction of an institution to desegregation.

The second part of Hurtado's framework is "structural diversity" and its impact on students. Structural diversity focuses solely on increasing the numbers of underrepresented groups on a campus. Increasing the numbers can have a positive impact on the campus climate. More minorities on campus translate into greater interaction across racial lines and increasing numbers insure minority students are not victims of tokenism, which leads to heightened visibility of the underrepresented group and increased stereotyping (Kanter, 1977). Hurtado et al. (1999) notes that institutions must not focus on structural diversity alone. Efforts must be made to create a comfortable campus climate in order for African Americans to thrive.

The "psychological dimension of climate" and its impact on students is the third piece of Hurtado's framework. "The psychological dimension of the campus racial climate involves individual's views of group relations; institutional responses to diversity; perceptions of discrimination on racial conflict and attitudes toward those from other racial/ethnic backgrounds than one's own" (Hurtado et al., 1998, p. 289). Who and where an individual is positioned in an institution affect how they view the campus climate.

The final part of the framework is the "behavioral dimension of climate" and its impact on students. The behavioral dimension of the institutional climate consists of (a) actual reports of general social interaction, (b) interaction between and among individuals from different racial/ethnic backgrounds, and (c) the nature of inter-group relations on campus. Campuses must examine if and how students interact with members of their

own and other racial groups. Minorities tend to cluster for support but whites view clustering negatively and accuse groups of self segregating (Hurtado, et al., 1999).

The research by Hurtado et al., (1998, 1999) on inclusion/exclusion, structural diversity, and the psychological and behavioral dimensions of climate provided a useful theoretical framework for this research. Many of the research questions grew out of the consideration of these categories. The next chapter will explain the methodology used for this research. Site and sample selection, data collection and analysis, and a discussion on consistency and dependability will be presented.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions and experiences of African American students at a large, public, land grant university in the southeast. Eight African American students were interviewed about their academic and social experiences in the context of the current political and legal climate in education. Moreover, the researcher sought to obtain African American students' perceptions of the institution's commitment to promoting diversity and equity within the student body. In order to obtain this information a qualitative methodology was used that allowed the researcher to hear and give meaning to the stories and experiences of African American students.

Three major research questions guided this study:

1. How do African American students perceive the current racial and social climate at the University of Georgia?
2. How do African American students interpret their academic and social experiences in light of the current legal and social climate at the University of Georgia?
3. How do African American students perceive the university's commitment to issues of diversity and equity?

In order to understand how the institutional climate has affected African American students, an understanding of their experiences was necessary.

This chapter outlines the research methodology, site and sample selection, data collection method, and process of data analysis. A discussion of reliability and dependability will also be provided.

Research Design

A qualitative design consisting of in-depth interviews was chosen for this investigation. Interviews allow the researcher to gain a thorough understanding and examination of contemporary events and behaviors that cannot be quantified (Yin, 1994). The goal of this research was to obtain an understanding and description of the experiences and perceptions of African American persisters. A persister is a student who enrolled at UGA as a freshman and has remained through the sophomore, junior or senior year. “Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world” (Merriam, 1998, p.6). In-depth interviews were selected as the data collection method because the researcher was interested in the stories and experiences that African American students would relate regarding the current racial and social climate on campus. This method was also chosen because it allowed the voices of African American students to be heard, giving expression to experiences and meanings that are too often overlooked.

An overwhelming majority of the studies done in this area have been quantitative (Allen, 1992, 1988, 1985; Nettles, 1991; Jackson & Swan, 1991). While quantifying experiences and perceptions provides data that may be generalized, these stories do not take into account the voices of African American students. Several quantitative studies (Allen, 1992, 1988, 1985; Nettles, 1991) have isolated the main issues facing African

American students on white campuses. Social isolation, racial discrimination and financial problems are just some of the issues highlighted in these studies. However, the gap in the literature lies in the unheard voices of African American students attending traditionally white colleges and universities. Consequently, we need to hear the voices of African American students to foster a greater understanding of the issues and to provide a description of their experiences. The investigator was interested in finding meaning in the experiences of African American students attending the University of Georgia.

Site Selection

The University of Georgia (UGA) was chosen as the research site because of its long history of desegregation and discrimination against African Americans. Additionally, enrollment at the University of Georgia of African American students is declining, and affirmative action is being challenged legally in Georgia and across the nation.

According to the UGA website, the institutional mission states, “through its programs and practices, it seeks to foster the understanding of and respect for cultural differences necessary for an enlightened and educated citizenry. It further provides for cultural, ethnic, gender, and racial diversity in the faculty, staff, and student body,” (University of Georgia, 2002).

The University of Georgia, a land and sea grant institution, is the state’s oldest and most comprehensive public institution. A Research I institution, the university is a member of the State University System of Georgia, and it has the largest enrollment in the system with over 31,000 students. The campus is approximately 85% white and 6% black. The remaining 9% consists of other American ethnic minorities and foreign

students. Native Georgians account for 83% of the student population followed by 12% out-of-state students and 5% international students. Females make up 56.5 % of the student population, (University of Georgia, 2002). Because of its academic reputation, UGA is consistently ranked as one of the nation's top public institutions. For example, U.S. News and World Report magazine selected UGA as 20th on its list of the 50 best public institutions (University of Georgia, 2002). Based on its history, institutional size, and limited presence of African American students in the undergraduate population, the University of Georgia was deemed a suitable site to explore the experiences of African American students at a large, public and traditionally white institution.

Throughout its first 176 years, UGA was a segregated institution. Segregation represents a time in our country when African Americans were considered "second class citizens." During this time, African Americans could not attend schools or colleges with whites. During the 1950s and 1960s, Georgia's resistance to integration was so intense that politicians threatened to close the University of Georgia if blacks were allowed to enter. The desegregation of UGA proved to be a tumultuous time for the citizens of Georgia reflecting a similar upheaval throughout the nation (Dyer, 1985).

In 1961, the first black students, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes, were admitted to the university. Prior to this historic decision, many battles were waged in the courts to force integration. Hunter and Holmes were first denied admission because of "limited facilities." After months of legal battles, the judge ruled in favor of Hunter and Holmes and ordered the University to admit them. Finally in 1961, after a long and bitter battle to maintain segregation, Holmes and Hunter became the first African Americans admitted to UGA (Dyer, 1985).

The battle for equal access and equity at UGA continues 40 years after Holmes and Hunter arrived on the campus as evidenced by racial discrimination lawsuits and race related incidents. Since African American students at UGA are at the center of the allegations cited in the lawsuits, it was of interest to know how the current legal climate affects their experiences and perceptions of life at UGA. Also, other events, particularly the Alpha Gamma Delta sorority incident in 2000, in which the sorority was charged with racial discrimination, provides evidence that race is still an issue on the campus. The sorority was accused of not admitting a Black female into the organization because of her race. This incident set off a rash of letters to the student newspaper and prompted a campus debate surrounding the issue (Herrington, 2000).

Another reason for choosing UGA is the disproportionate number of African Americans attending UGA. The state of Georgia is nearly 30% African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000), yet only 6.4% of the student body at UGA is African American. Although segregation officially ended decades ago, the number of African Americans enrolling at UGA has remained numerically and percentage wise quite low. For example, in 1990, Black undergraduates represented 5.2% of the undergraduate student body compared with 5.3% in 2001 (University of Georgia, Institutional Research and Planning, 1990, 2001).

The University of Georgia has benefited from the Helping Outstanding Pupils Excel (HOPE) program established by Governor Zell Miller in 1993; approximately 96% of the fall 2000 entering freshman class received the HOPE Scholarship which is awarded to high school graduates who have a B or higher grade point average (Georgia Student Finance Commission, 2002). The scholarship covers tuition, books, and fees for students

who maintain a B or better average in college. The implementation of the HOPE scholarship program has encouraged Georgia's best students to remain in the state for college. As a result, admission to UGA has become very competitive; the average SAT score for entering freshmen in 2000 was 1203 and the average grade point average was 3.7 (University of Georgia, 2002). This increase in SAT scores has been suggested as a contributing factor to the decrease in enrollment among African American students.

Participant Selection

Selection of participants was done using a criterion-based method. Purposive selection is "based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned" (Chein as cited in Merriam, 1998, p.61). The criterion-based selection process for this study was a two-fold process. First, a list was created of attributes essential to the study, and then students were selected based on the attributes.

African Americans were chosen as the sample population for this study because of their low representation at UGA, declining enrollment at UGA (Table 1) and because quantitative studies report that African American students at traditionally white campuses are experiencing low academic achievement, financial difficulties, and social isolation (Allen, 1992).

The investigator was interested in the experiences and perceptions of students who were successfully retained at UGA; therefore, sophomore, junior, and senior persisters were used for this study. A persister is a student who enrolled at UGA as a freshman and has remained through the sophomore, junior or senior year.

Table 1**Enrollment of Black undergraduates at UGA, 1990-2001**

Year	Total Undergraduate Enrollment	Number Black Undergraduates	Percent Black Undergraduates
1990	20,396	1,178	5.77
1991	20,450	1,252	6.12
1992	20,082	1,286	6.40
1993	20,600	1,313	6.37
1994	21,162	1,373	6.49
1995	21,877	1,523	6.96
1996	21,270	1,483	6.97
1997	22,913	1,476	6.44
1998	23,212	1,455	6.27
1999	23,711	1,372	5.79
2000	23,808	1,368	5.75
2001	24,420	1,298	5.32

Source: UGA Fact Books, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001

Sophomore persisters were chosen because their first year at UGA was still fresh in their minds, allowing for sharp and vivid memories of their first year experiences and perceptions. The investigator was interested in the factors that led to the student's decision to attend UGA and how expectations were interpreted in view of actual social

and academic experiences. The researcher wanted to document first-year experiences such as attending large classes, making friends, and getting involved with extra-curricular activities. The investigator wanted fresh accounts of the experience of being a minority on campus.

Junior and senior persisters were chosen to obtain an overview of their life at UGA from freshman year to present. They presented information on how their experiences and perceptions have or have not changed and evolved over the past few years. Seniors were chosen mainly to provide their experiences from an evolutionary perspective. The researcher wanted them to reflect on their initial encounter as freshmen with the culture of UGA and how that initial experience shaped their future experiences. The investigator wanted to know what factors led to their persistence to the senior year and if their perceptions had changed over time.

Students were recruited for this study through two university programs: the Black Affairs Council (BAC) and the student chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). The purpose of BAC is to assist the University in meeting the needs of African-American students, to ensure cultural diversity, to increase racial awareness and equality, and to maintain a relationship with the Athens' community (University of Georgia Minority Services and Programs, 2001). The NAACP, a national organization founded in 1909, seeks to serve all minorities in ensuring political, educational, social and economic equality.

In August and September of 2000, the investigator met on campus with both groups to solicit participation and to explain the research. Students were informed that they would receive \$10.00 or two movie passes for their participation in the study.

Following the research presentation, students completed information cards which were used for the purpose of selecting students with the criteria established for participation in this study. Information cards were separated into two main categories: 1) students willing to participate in an interview, and 2) students not willing to participate in an interview. Cards of students in category two were destroyed. Next, cards were sorted by classification: freshman, sophomore, junior and senior. African American sophomores, juniors, and seniors were selected for the interviews.

In November of 2000, students were contacted by e-mail to schedule an interview. A follow-up telephone call was made to confirm interview dates and times. During the phone call, students were asked to choose between the movie passes or the \$10.00. Students also were asked to allot 60-90 minutes for the interview. The interviews took place in the researcher's office to allow for privacy. All of the interviews were completed by December 2000.

Data Collection

The data for this study were collected by interviews over a period of three weeks. Ten students were selected for interviews. Two of the interviews served as pilot interviews. The pilot interviews provided the researcher with the opportunity to practice and fine tune the questions and interview skills. The remaining eight interviews were used to collect data for this study. One of the eight students was a transfer student who had been at the university for two years. He was allowed to participate in the study because he had significant experiences related to the study.

The interviews focused on the academic and social experiences and perceptions of African American students. For accurate data analysis, interviews were audio-taped. The researcher recorded field notes during the interviews to account for non-verbal communication and to develop subsequent probing questions. Post-interview notations were written to reflect on the interview experience and to record such information as respondent's degree of openness and interviewer's feelings and perceptions.

The interview guide was semi-structured and divided into two categories: less structured questions that were designed to elicit personal, unique data from each respondent; and probing, open-ended and spontaneous questions based on what the respondent was saying.

Data Analysis

The investigator transcribed each interview and then attached the field notes, post-interview reflection and information card to the transcription. After the data were matched, pseudonyms were assigned to each set of data. Audio tapes were placed in a locked cabinet to be destroyed after the research was completed.

The constant comparative method was used for data analysis. Respondents' remarks and reported incidents were compared with each other and placed into categories. Glaser and Strauss' study (as cited in Bogdan & Bilken, 1992), described the constant comparative method of data analysis as a process involving comparing units of data with one another and placing them into emerging, tentative categories. The categories are tentative because the researcher has the flexibility to regroup units until all data are collected. Units are isolated pieces of information that "reveal information relevant to

the study...and are the smallest piece of information about something that can stand by itself,” (Merriam, 1998, p.179-180). Categories were established to represent units of information that repeatedly emerged throughout the data. Categories reflect the purpose of the research and are comprised of basic units of information which emerge from the data. Categories should be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, sensitive and conceptually congruent (Merriam, 1998).

A unique feature of this process is that data collection and data analysis occur simultaneously. The 1978 Glaser study (as cited in Bogdan & Bilken, 1992, p. 74) described the six steps in the constant comparative method as follows:

1. Begin collecting data.
2. Look for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that become categories of focus.
3. Collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus with an eye to seeing the diversity of the dimensions under the categories.
4. Write about the categories you are exploring, attempting to describe and account for all the incidents you have in your data while continually searching for new incidents.
5. Work with the data and emerging model to discover basic social processes and relationships
6. Engage in sampling, coding and writing as the analysis focuses on the core categories.

The constant comparative method was used to manage the large amounts of interview data collected during the study. One of the features of the constant

comparative method is to collect and analyze data simultaneously; consequently, after conducting every two interviews, the researcher immediately transcribed and read the interview transcripts several times to extract preliminary categories before conducting subsequent interviews. The interviewer continued to collect data, transcribe, identify units and place them into categories until saturation was achieved. Saturation occurs when no new information emerges from the data. Finally, permanent categories were established by the researcher to explain and describe the experiences of African American students at University of Georgia.

Reliability and validity in the traditional sense are not practical or appropriate for qualitative studies (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). The traditional research paradigm involves a study, often using samples of one population, being replicated and producing the same results as well as using the results to make generalizations about the larger population. Qualitative inquiry does not lend itself to such characteristics. Merriam (1998) suggests checking for dependability and consistency. To best achieve consistency and dependability the research must state his position as it relates to the group being studied, use multiple data collection methods when possible and describe in detail how data are collected and analyzed. Dependability is achieved by providing rich, thick descriptions so that “readers will be able to determine how closely their situations match the research situation, and hence, whether findings can be transferred,” (Merriam, 1998, p. 211).

Researcher Subjectivity

During this research it was important to recognize and rectify subjectivity (Peshkin, 1988). If left unattended, subjectivity can lead the researcher to “shape, block,

transform, construct and misconstrue what transpires from the outset of a research project” (Peshkin, 1988, p.17). Subjectivity, however, can be a strength because it allows the researcher to acknowledge their connection to the research.

My experience as an African American graduate student at UGA and my decision not to attend UGA for my undergraduate work were experiences that I brought to the research. By identifying personal assumptions, I was made more aware of my connection to my research participants. As a graduate student I experienced feelings of isolation within my academic department and the campus as a whole. When I entered the doctoral program, there was only one other African American student and no black faculty or staff. I felt isolated, alone and different. My campus experiences were amplified versions of my departmental experiences. Frequently, I found myself the lone African American on buses, in the library, at the gym and when walking on campus. I eventually joined a graduate student organization for historically underrepresented students on campus. There, I met African American faculty, staff and students who helped me transition into my new environment.

These experiences were helpful in that they assisted me in understanding the participants’ experiences. Other experiences that I brought to the research included my extensive knowledge of the current legal and racial issues facing UGA; and, my personal relationship as a friend with one of the participants. To monitor my biases, I continually forced myself to step back and allow participants to describe their own experiences. I did not mention my experiences as a graduate student during the interviews. However, my experiences and knowledge in this area allowed me to gain a thorough understanding of my participants’ experiences. I used silence to assist me with subjectivity as well.

Although, I was anxious to jump in and help a student along with their thought process and lead them into a specific area of discussion, I exercised silence so as not to influence their story. There were times during the interviews that I remained silent so the students could gather and verbalize their thoughts without me urging them in a particular direction.

Summary

A qualitative case study was used for this investigation. Eight African American students were interviewed to gain insight on their perceptions of academic and social experiences at UGA in light of the current racial and social climate at the institution. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using the constant comparative method. The results of the study and descriptions of each participant are reported in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the study are presented. First, an overview of the participants is presented followed by a profile of each individual participant. Participants were profiled to provide demographic information, as well as information on educational backgrounds and unique participants' characteristics. Second, four themes that emerged from the data analysis are described. These themes are presented using narrative from the researcher and quotes from the participants. The four themes that emerged from the data include race, social experiences, administrative commitment, and academic experiences. The overarching theme of race is presented first, since questions about social, academic, and administrative commitment were all framed in the context of race. Finally, issues of subjectivity, validity, and limitations of the study will be presented.

Overview of Participants

African American students currently attending the University of Georgia were interviewed for this study. The students were recruited from the Black Affairs Council (BAC) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). These organizations serve as advocates for African American and other minority students.

There were eight participants, four men and four women. The participants were comprised of two sophomores, two juniors, and four seniors. The ages of participants

ranged from 19 to 22. Among the male students, there were two sophomores, one junior, and one senior. One male was a member of an African American fraternity. Only one male came from a home in which both parents are present. One male student was from outside the state of Georgia.

Among the female students, one was a junior and three were seniors. All were from the state of Georgia. Two were from the metro Atlanta area while the other two were from middle Georgia. One female was a member of a Greek organization, an African American sorority. All of the females came from homes where the mother and father were married and living together.

The majors of the participants included pre-pharmacy, finance, political science, management information systems, psychology, journalism, accounting, and speech communication. There was one transfer student who came to UGA from an HBCU after his freshman year.

All of the participants received the HOPE scholarship when they enrolled as freshmen with the exception of the out-of-state student. Four of the seven had maintained the scholarship by achieving a 3.0 average or better in college. The Helping Outstanding Pupils Excel (HOPE) program awards full-tuition scholarships, book allowance and fee payment to Georgia residents who graduate from high school with at least a "B" average and who attend any in state college or university (Department of Technical and Adult Education, 2002).

Profile of Participants

Malik

Malik is a 19-year old sophomore from metropolitan Atlanta, majoring in business. His career goal is to become a high-level executive of a company. He participates in Student Government Association and Community Council.

Malik attended a public elementary school in a predominantly black area. His family moved to a predominantly white Atlanta suburb after he completed fifth grade. There he attended public middle and high schools. He describes his high school as 50% white and 50% minority. When asked about the difference between the predominantly black school and the more diverse one, he states “that the academic level was higher in the diverse environment.”

Malik lives with both of his parents, who are natives of Africa. His parents are both college graduates. His father, a graduate of a large state school in the North, is an entrepreneur. Malik’s mother graduated from a small, religious institution. She is a school teacher. Malik’s parents are a commanding presence in his life, as indicated by his numerous references to his parents’ influence in his life. He also has a strong religious foundation. He has an older sister who completed an undergraduate degree at a prestigious southern college. His younger brother attends a university in north Georgia.

Malik’s dad was the driving force behind his decision to come to UGA. He states, “there was a push from my dad, not really a push, but he knew where he wanted me to go. He really likes UGA.” Originally Malik’s father wanted him to attend college out of state. Malik then stressed to his father that he wanted to stay in Georgia, partly

because of the HOPE scholarship program. He narrowed his choices to the Georgia Institute of Technology, Emory University and UGA. He made his final decision after visiting the campuses. Malik said, "I liked UGA the best. I looked at the surroundings and thought I might enjoy it the most."

Kenneth

Kenneth is a 20-year-old junior from a large city in the southwestern United States. He is majoring in political science. He participates in Student Government Association and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Kenneth transferred to UGA as a sophomore from a Historically Black College. He went to a predominantly black high school where he was in the magnet program. As part of the magnet program, his classes were racially diverse, consisting of Asians, Indians, Caucasians and African Americans. Kenneth describes his hometown as predominantly white, mostly Republican, culturally homogenous and politically conservative. He says, "The local government leadership is predominantly white. The only black representatives are from black neighborhoods."

Kenneth's parents divorced when he was a freshman in high school. He continued to live with his mother and has limited contact with his father. His mother was the only one of her five siblings to attend college immediately following high school. However, she became pregnant and had to leave college. She eventually finished her associate's degree and now works for the city government. Kenneth's father completed his B.S. degree. Kenneth doesn't know what his father does since he rarely speaks to

him. Kenneth has one older sister who went to college for a semester. She dropped out and currently attends technical school and works in retail.

Kenneth's decision to come to UGA was a combination of location, financial aid and his personal preference to attend a large state university. He applied to 13 schools and was accepted to all but one. Most of the schools were near family. As he approached graduation, he decided he wanted to attend a large public school, so he chose UGA. Kenneth states, "I came to visit the campus and liked what I saw." UGA did not offer any financial aid but because he wanted to attend so badly, he decided that he was going to pay for everything. During the summer before college, an HBCU in Georgia offered him a full scholarship, so he went there for a year. Despite receiving a full scholarship, Kenneth desperately wanted to be at UGA, so he transferred to UGA at the beginning of his sophomore year. He received a scholarship and work study to cover all his expenses.

Bernard

Bernard is a 21-year-old senior majoring in business. He aspires to become a print and television journalist. He is a member of a historically black fraternity. He was born in the midwest and moved to Georgia when he was in middle school. He attended high school in metropolitan Atlanta. Bernard attended all-white schools until he moved to Georgia. When he started high school, it was 70% black; now it is 95% black. Bernard's parents are divorced and he has a younger brother and an older sister. Neither of his parents went to college.

Bernard chose to come to UGA after visiting the campus. He liked the setting and it was not too far from home. The HOPE scholarship also played a major part in his decision to attend UGA. He says, “UGA wasn’t a thought until November of my senior year. I came up here to visit and fell in love.” He looked at five schools, which included a private HBCU, three Georgia universities and one out-of-state institution. Bernard wanted to attend a school with a good reputation in his major field. He is a member of a fraternity, campus ambassadors, and is active in several campus activities.

Rachel

Rachel is a 21-year-old senior business major from northeast Georgia. Her career goal is to become a financial executive and business owner. While at Georgia she participated in a historically black sorority. The town in which she grew up is also predominantly white. All of her schooling took place at predominantly white schools. She was the first black student to attend her elementary school, at the urging of the principal who said “that many of the white students had never seen a black person.” The principal thought it would be good to diversify the school. While in elementary school, a teacher was reprimanded for telling Rachel that her face was dirty and asking another kid to “get a tissue and clean her face.” Middle and high school were a little more diverse. Rachel describes the students at her first high school as “a bunch of hicks who demonstrated hidden racism.” She transferred to a new school and says that although there were only about 30 blacks in the entire school, the people were less ignorant.

Both of Rachel’s parents went to college and are working professionals. Her father has a graduate degree in business. She has an older sister who started college but

never finished. Rachel credits her mother with increasing her ethnic awareness by enrolling her in activities such as summer programs at HBCUs and Jamaican dance classes. Rachel's father was a strong influence on her college choice.

Rachel originally wanted to attend an HBCU because she felt like she had missed out on so much by attending a predominantly white high school. She had decided on an HBCU with a well-respected business school. Her father insisted that she go and visit UGA because of their top-notch accounting program. She enjoyed her visit and realized that the HOPE scholarship would cover more than her scholarship at the HBCU so she decided to come to UGA.

Tasha

Tasha is a senior communications major from south Georgia. She grew up in a predominantly black area. Her schooling was conducted in a majority black atmosphere. Tasha is currently a peer mentor for African American freshman. She was very active in extracurricular activities at UGA until she moved off campus her junior year.

Both of Tasha's parents went to college. Her father has an associate's degree and her mother is a few credits shy of her bachelor's degree. Her mother works in a professional setting while her father has a blue-collar job. Tasha has a younger sister who is in middle school.

It was always understood that Tasha would go to college. She just did not know where. She has family members that attended HBCUs but she was not urged to attend a specific school. She decided on UGA while sitting with her girlfriends in high school and discussing where they wanted to go to college. One friend said she wanted to attend

UGA. Tasha had no idea where UGA was so she started asking questions about the school and the people. As senior year approached, Tasha was courted by a prestigious HBCU and was going to attend “just because they wanted her.” She remarks that on her visit, “I walked around and I did not like it.” UGA came to her school to recruit and she ended up applying. The HBCU put her on the waiting list and UGA accepted her so she decided to come to Athens.

Melody

Melody is a 21-year-old from metropolitan Atlanta senior majoring in communications. She is a peer mentor to African American freshmen. Her career goal is to work in media law and establish a magazine for black youth.

She grew up in a predominantly black neighborhood. Her parents recently moved to a majority white area that she describes as “country.” Melody went to a predominantly white, private school for most of her elementary and middle school years. She went on to attend a predominantly black public high school. Her parents put her in public school for a couple of years during middle school so she could experience a different perspective. She says, “It was total culture shock because of all the black people there.” She returned to private school for the remainder of the middle grades and found a different setting. The students were divided along lines of race and gender.

When I was growing up it was like it did not matter what color you are. We all just played together. When I went back [to private school], it seemed liked people had divided. The black girls ate over here and the white girls ate over there.

Melody's parents are married. She has a younger brother who attends college and a younger sister. Her parents have always stressed the importance of education. Her father is a school principal and her mother is a former teacher. Melody reports having a great relationship with her family

The University of Georgia was Melody's second choice. Her first choice was to attend a prestigious school in the Midwest and major in journalism. Melody thought that her parents would support her decision if she was accepted. Much to her dismay, she was accepted but her parents could not pay the cost for her to attend. Her parents urged her to think about UGA because of the HOPE scholarship, and they encouraged her to major in pre-med instead of journalism. She initially declared pre-med but switched to journalism shortly before her first semester of college.

Charles

Charles is a 20 year-old, sophomore pre-med major from northeast Georgia. He hopes to become a health care professional. He stays involved at UGA by participating in NAACP and the pre-med club. He grew up in a "mixed" neighborhood and went to school in a predominantly black area. He chose to attend a predominantly black high school instead of a couple of highly-ranked predominantly white high schools in his area. He wanted to be in the band, and his love of music was the deciding factor in where he would attend high school. He participated in several extracurricular activities in high school.

Charles' parents were never married. Although his mother and father never attended college, they both work in professional positions. He has a brother and two

sisters. His sister went to college but did not finish. His brother had an athletic scholarship but never enrolled because his girlfriend became pregnant. Because of his siblings' shortfalls, Charles feels pressure to excel. He remarks, "It is expected of me to do so much of what my siblings did not do."

The University of Georgia was not on his extensive list of colleges he wanted to attend. He initially wanted to go to an HBCU. He later shifted his focus from attaining a band scholarship to getting an academic scholarship. He decided on a prestigious HBCU in the northeast, but subsequently decided not to go because a relative became gravely ill. He then decided to attend an HBCU closer to home but did not receive a scholarship. He was then accepted to UGA and because of cost and location, decided to enroll. His white advance placement teachers wanted him to attend a white college and his black teachers wanted him to attend an HBCU.

Tonya

Tonya is a junior from South Georgia majoring in psychology. She is 20 years old and is active in several campus organizations, such as the NAACP and several honor societies. She continues to receive the HOPE scholarship and aspires to be a school counselor.

Tonya attended a predominantly white magnet school and attributes her smooth adjustment to UGA to having been in a majority white setting for most of her life. She describes her high school as "where all the rich white people went." Tonya feels she missed out on a lot in high school because "the things in this school weren't catered to us [black people]."

Tonya's parents are married and she has two younger siblings in high school. Both of her parents attended college and received bachelor's degrees. Her mother is currently a middle school teacher. Her father, retired from the military, recently completed his master's degree, and is working as an elementary school teacher.

Since Tonya attended a predominantly white high school, she wanted to attend an HBCU. Tonya's mom "made me apply to UGA." Her mom and dad were against the idea of an HBCU so they strongly encouraged her to attend the Minority Preview Day at UGA. Tonya was very resistant to the idea; however, upon visiting the campus she changed her mind. She says, "I got here and loved it. I stopped thinking about going to an HBCU."

In summary, the participants for this study varied by major, classification and demographics. Their backgrounds and perspectives provided revealing data which will be presented in the next section.

Racial Issues at The University of Georgia

The overarching theme extracted from the data was the description of the racial climate at UGA. This is not surprising given that the research questions were framed from a racial perspective. Students were asked to provide information about their academic and social experiences at UGA in the current racial climate. This study was contextualized from a race angle because of recent racially charged issues on the campus, including, race-based admissions, reverse discrimination lawsuits, and the Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority "incident." The racial climate at UGA had been tense for the past several years as a result of a handful of lawsuits alleging reverse discrimination and other race-

related events. The campus debate over affirmative action has been very public and often bitter. Moreover, the dwindling number of African American students continues to plague the administration as they grapple with ways to improve the situation.

Several lawsuits have been filed against UGA alleging “reverse discrimination.” Despite settling several of the cases, UGA continued to battle a key case involving the admissions policy. Critics challenged the process because UGA used race as one of 12 factors in determining admission for the freshman class. Proponents of the system argued that this race-sensitive process was necessary to diversify the campus, compensate for past inequities, and make the UGA student body more reflective of population demographics of the state of Georgia.

The Alpha Gamma Delta Sorority was accused by one of its own members of racial discrimination when they voted not to admit an African American woman into their sorority. This event garnered national attention and sparked a racially charged campus debate about race and race relations at the University of Georgia.

The racial climate at UGA has been tense for the past several years as a result of a handful of lawsuits alleging reverse discrimination and other race-related events. The campus debate over affirmative action has been very public and often bitter. Moreover, the dwindling number of African American students continues to plague the administration as they grapple with ways to improve the situation.

Perceptions of Racial Climate

Participants in this study were asked to describe the racial climate at UGA. The responses were mostly negative. However, despite the negative perceptions, participants

were very hopeful that UGA would improve its climate toward minority students, faculty, and staff. Charles describes the campus as divided along racial lines. Other participants also weighed in on the racial climate.

Rachel:

Basically the climate is tolerant. That's not entirely true because you still have people on a daily basis writing in opinions to the *Red and Black* about how racism is a problem or not a problem. Some people say we shouldn't talk about it; others say we talk about it too much. It's obviously still a problem, and obviously the climate hasn't reached a level to where everyone is okay with talking about it or discussing it or whatever. It's not entirely hostile. At times it could be. I think it's more hostile when people actually talk about it. You reach a point of contentment and you get comfortable and don't want to step on anyone's toes so you are just going to take it and go on. That tends to happen a lot with everyone. The climate overall could be improved in that we talk about things more, and that we try and be a lot more open than we are so we can make some changes in the future.

Kenneth:

I would say the climate is content. If you look at the Greek system, for instance, no one is making a big push to try and enhance the diversity of their organizations. If you look at mainstream organizations period. No one is making a big push to diversify the organizations. I would just say content-- everyone

seems to be content. With this whole admissions thing, I am glad the university is appealing this decision; beyond that they haven't done anything substantial to bring a more diverse group of students here. I view contentment as negativity. I have a problem within my own people and other minorities here. It's like we have made it to the University of Georgia and yeah, we did not need the little boost to get in, we came in strictly on academics and joined this organization and that organization and that is all we want to do. Problems are here but let's not bring them up; let's just go on. I bring up the thing with admissions again too, because I had a conversation today with another student and there is supposedly an affirmative action policy. However, the minority enrollment has been the same since that policy has been in place. It's just like we are going to do this one little thing and just stay right here until someone complains or something like that.

Rachel describes the climate as "business as usual." She goes on to explain,

Things are just going on until something happens. The thing is campus groups were fighting for a VP for Institutional Equity and we suggested that and now they have dropped it down to an associate provost, under the provost. That was a big issue.

Students were asked to describe the racial climate at UGA, their feelings about being a minority on campus and any racial incidents they may have encountered at UGA.

Malik grew up in a very diverse environment and functioned very well. He says that he did not notice the racial issue until arriving at UGA where African American students make up only 6.0% of the population. "It seems like it was never an issue growing up and

now all of a sudden coming to college it became an issue.” Malik realized that race was a major issue on the campus because of the publicity the lawsuits were receiving from the national and local media.

Malik:

It had been in the paper for a number of months. It’s something that administrators had discussed. So, affirmative action doesn’t have that big of an effect. But nonetheless, that became an issue for all these lawsuits that the university has faced. That’s when I felt it [race] became an issue. I don’t think it’s all of sudden. I just became aware of it when I came to this campus.

Malik is a member of the Continuing the Legacy of African American Student Success (CLASS) program at UGA. He has responsibility for about 60 residents. He makes sure they are doing well academically and adjusting well socially. Malik says when students arrive on the campus as freshmen, they are bombarded with adjusting to the racial climate. He encourages them to give UGA a chance because it gets better the longer they are here.

Malik:

The racial climate is an issue with freshmen. I have mostly upperclassmen. They have adjusted and are doing well or else they would have left by now. But I have a couple of freshmen and we talk about this all the time and they feel a little out of place. I talk to them and tell them to get involved in things and they are doing better.

Kenneth is extremely determined to achieve at UGA. He says he does not let the racial climate significantly affect his academic and social life. He says what affects him most is how other students are hurt by the racial climate.

My personal perspective is different than when I put my feet in the shoes of someone else. I think that I'm different in that sometimes I don't care. Because I'm here to get an education and I'm not going to let anyone stand in the way of me getting what I should get or what I deserve to get, what I'm capable of getting. Most of the times when I do experience some act of racism or what I perceive to be racism I just laugh at it.

Students were asked to characterize what it is like to be a minority on campus and how they deal with their situation.

Bernard:

Overall, I think at this point I'm comfortable with it. It hasn't always been an easy road. I notice minority students still have a lot of hurdles to overcome, stuff like perceptions from white folks. People assume you are only here because you are African American. I can have the assumption that they are only here because they are a legacy. You have those kinds of things. Just being in the city [of Athens] you don't want to be accused of being a local because I think the local residents don't get much respect from the community. That's obvious when you go into the store downtown with a hat on backwards and two earrings. You look like a local so you don't expect to get [good service].

There are a few minority students that really try and go out and reach out in white organizations and try and run them. If you are trying to do that, you feel like you

are the only black male in an organization, the only black person period; now how am I going to get into this. It's like a challenge to even step out to do far beyond what you are expected. The whole environment set up here is not what black students are accustomed to.

Participants were very aware of their minority status. No matter how much they adjusted to the environment or established good relationships with white faculty and students, they were still consciously aware of their blackness.

Melody:

I am very aware of my minority status. It is hard not to be aware unless you are blind. I think some people feel like they can blend and have predominantly white friends. But, I'm sorry, when it comes down to it you are still another black girl or boy. I think until you prove yourself that you are smarter and good at this then you are just another black person, affirmative action child who came here because of that.

Melody acknowledges that she has good white friends but is still cautious about what she says around them. She feels limited in how far the friendship can go and feels that she must be on guard with her white friends. Melody watches what she says to whites with whom she unfamiliar.

If I don't know you like that it is like I'm very formal. I'm nice and polite but I can't be informal. It's just certain things you can't get away with or be slack in class because it is you being lazy or you not being up to par with the other

students. Not that you are tired or any other thing they might assume about another student. It's kind of like that. You say, I'm a minority student and there are certain things that come along with it. I have pride about my culture and about where I came from and I love being here but on the same token you realize that there are not a lot of people like you here and you are like why is that. Why aren't black males as involved in college and university things as black females? Why don't you have a lot of them here? I think you tend to dissect things more. If something happens to you, it may be race or something else or is it because that person is black or that person. It is an identifier. I think some things are racist and others see it as whatever. It depends on what setting I'm in. I think it can be a burden in that you are so consciously aware of your own skin color. You can't set it to the side and say I'm just a person. This person doesn't want me for a friend because I'm black so they can have a black friend. They like me because I'm Melody. They like me for what I have to bring to the table. Or when somebody addresses you a certain way, it is not because I'm black it is because of what I did.

Charles expressed the following about being a minority at UGA.

Coming to UGA was really a shock to me. I am the exception at my high school. I was the student, even though the school was in the ghetto, I knew how to get along with everyone so I did not mind going to an all-white [college] where it would be "ooh, look at him." At least that is what I thought. But when I got here and I went to my classes and I was the only black student. Then, when I would talk to some of the black people I did meet and they found out I went to a

predominantly black school, I felt like I had something to prove to them. If they made a 90 on the test, I felt like I needed to make a 95 so I can prove that I'm here and that I deserve to be here.

Charles uses his minority status as a motivator. He takes pride in surprising his white peers and faculty with good grades. He is trying to prove that black students, males in particular, can do just as well as or better than whites.

I like being the underdog. In high school, I wasn't the underdog so now I'm getting a taste of the other side. I like sneaking up from behind and making them say my paper is better than theirs. At first it was a burden, thinking I had to do so much more, but now what makes me so much better than someone else that I don't have to prove myself. Why can't I do the best? I need to be doing the best anyway. I always put pressure on myself. I don't look at it like them putting pressure on me. I put pressure on myself. In my English class, I was never called on. My grades were low. When I asked him why, he could not explain. He would end up giving me the points I should have got in the beginning. I'm not as conscious of it [minority status] as the majority of my friends and peers. It crosses my mind. Sometimes I have to remind myself that everyone doesn't think like me. I don't like being the minority because I'm looked at as inferior. At least I feel like I'm being looked at as inferior. I might not be looked at like that but that is how I feel it.

Tasha describes her initial reaction to being a minority when she arrived at orientation.

I was in shock... I was like where are all the black people. I was looking around at every side. I was thinking that some people weren't friendly. What have I gotten myself into? It was kind of shocking; I was in shock but when I moved into Creswell [residence hall], you could not really tell that because we were everywhere. I feel a little bit more at home. I think I got accustomed to my environment. Oh, it is other black people. I'm seeing black people here--my roommate is black, people across the hall are black, my RA [resident assistant] and CA [class advocates are African American students that live in the residence halls charged with mentoring other African American students]. I really did not think anything of me being a minority but then when I got to class and I was one of two black people in there. I was the person that was looked at for the opinion on the black race. I was like I can't speak for everybody. That is when I became aware... but I always know that I'm a minority here.

Tonya has always been the minority in school settings. She has become accustomed to the pressures of a predominantly white environment. She has chosen to disassociate herself from the majority and bond with the black students. Tonya consciously chose her social circle to be all black. Currently as an upperclassman she has broadened her horizons and allowed whites to become a part of her inner circle.

It is something about being at an all-white school. You always find the black people, and it is like white people aren't even around. I hate to say it but my first

two years here, the only white people I really knew were the people I came up from high school with. Until I got my job this year; that is when I started getting to know white people and other minority students. When you get to these schools, black people get together and stick together. It is like a mini HBCU.

Racial Incidents

Participants were asked to describe any racial incidents they have encountered at UGA. Every participant had at least one incident involving them or a close friend. The incidents ranged from subtle to blatant. A few participants were able to describe incidents in great detail, while others provided very few specifics.

I know a lot of students say it bothers them when they are sitting down on the bus and no other seats are there but the seat next to them and no one will come sit next to them. That stuff doesn't bother me. Actually that stuff wouldn't bother me. I would laugh at it. If they want to stand up they can stand up when there is a seat right here. Yesterday I had on this cap [black cap with a fila emblem] that makes me appear like a thug if I'm dressed in a way that I appear to be a thug on the street. It's just funny to see people's reaction, especially people I see on a consistent basis. Like the day before I wore the hat, I was in a sport coat and khakis and the next day I was dressed down. It is funny to see people's reaction to that. In the perspective of others, it does bother me being minority. I know some students do experience overt racism consistently. Some students are

actually hurt when someone runs away from them or doesn't want to sit next to them on the bus for one reason or another.

Bernard encountered racism during freshman orientation. He describes how his roommate did not want to stay in the room with him because he was black.

When I was at orientation, my roommate must have saw me and knew I was black and he stayed with his parents that night in the hotel. That kind of bothered me. He claimed he just wanted to be with his parents. But why would they pay for him to stay in the dorms that night if he wasn't going to stay? I did not want my college roommate to know I was black. I did not want my roommate in college to do the same thing. When we talked on the phone, I did not say anything to identify my race. I would just make it seem like you couldn't really tell what race I was. You have that fear that a lot of freshmen do that when they come in if they find out that their roommate is black then they [white students] will switch.

During a campus radio show, Bernard was in a debate on race with another student who made unfounded racist remarks like, "it makes more sense people would be smarter the further they get from Africa because that's the origin of all life and that black people are definitely inferior." Bernard thinks that this kind of activity is detrimental to the campus discussion on race and diversity.

Bernard:

It just makes it harder for us to connect when you have all these ignorant people messing up the channels of communication. Where if they are throwing their

theories out and we are trying to disclaim them. Then it's like a battle back and forth. It just makes it harder for us to connect when you have all these ignorant people messing up the channels of communication.

Bernard is a member of an elite campus group. He recounts an incident in which two black females were asked not to come back to the group because of their attitudes. He believes that the white people did not understand their disposition as black females. The black females were very outspoken and opinionated, which did not sit well with the other group members. From this and other experiences, Bernard has concluded that blacks cannot be outspoken on certain issues for fear of losing their membership to particular groups.

Once you say something, they are like maybe you don't need to be in the organizations. Some people did not like their attitudes. The black students in the group stick to ourselves even though we try and open up more. We can't be honest about our perception of minority treatment. People who really know how the university does things with the recruitment of black students and what's offered here [can't be too vocal]. I can't make any changes being totally honest because I'll be removed from my position and not allowed to be involved in those things that make a way for more black people. You can't be too militant and black on this campus. I have talked to other pioneers on the campus like the first black homecoming king. He was real militant but he said you still have to keep your place or you wouldn't be allowed to be in all these leadership programs. Nobody wants anyone that is too much of a militant.

Rachel describes racial incidents that she has been involved in.

I have faced racism before. Once at a Georgia football game. I had tickets on the 50-yard line. Someone gave me the tickets, a black man who actually doing very well. He gave them to us. When we got there, there was an older couple sitting down and the lady was sitting closer to the aisle. When we sat down she made her husband switch places with her because she did not want to sit by us. The whole time throughout the game they were asking where did ya'll get these tickets. "How did ya'll get them?" Interrogating us. We were like, we got them from friends or whatever. They were like we know the people who are here normally and going on. I guess the guy who gave us the tickets got them from someone else. We were like whatever.

One other time, I was going to Conner Hall from Baldwin and there was a UGA truck with a UGA worker driving. He motioned for me to come across. As I was halfway across the street, he just drove off behind me and they were just laughing. These were like UGA workers. I was just like okay. This white girl saw it. She was like oh my god and asked me was I okay. I was like, "yeah, I am fine."

Tasha was a Resident Assistant (RA) in the dorms and was responsible for creating bulletin boards for the residents. She was excited about all of the history she learned in an African American studies class. Her enthusiasm led to a bulletin board

highlighting some of the accomplishments of African Americans. Below she tells what happened to one of the boards.

It was around Black History Month and I put up a bulletin board that said “Did you know?” It was a lot of stuff I learned from my African American studies class. I put on my bulletin board that black people invented this and all this other stuff. One board was never touched because it was located by two cameras. The other one got torn up twice. They scratched across it and ripped stuff down. The N-word was used. They wrote that black people did not do this and I put the board up again the next week and it was torn up again with “bull, this is not true.” A week after I put it up an RA called me and told me that the bulletin board was torn up. It happened twice after that so I took it down and we had to report it as a hate crime because it had stuff about diversity. It made me think that people don’t want to accept it. I’m just trying to give people more knowledge and make them aware of things they might not have known before. I could not believe that people are still like this in 1998.

According to Tasha, during the fall 2000 semester, a white Greek organization sponsored a social with the theme, “Ghetto Night in Harlem.” The partygoers were supposed to depict the Harlem way of life in their dress, speech and attitudes. Tasha was offended by the theme because of how the girls were dressed. She was opposed to the implication that blacks in Harlem only drank 40 ounce bottles of beer, dressed in a hip-hop style and had tattoos. More so, she was insulted that that is all these groups of white people see when they think of Harlem. Instead she wanted them to see the rich history and art of Harlem.

Tasha:

It came up that a sorority had a “Ghetto Night in Harlem” or something like that and that was the theme and everyone was in class just up roaring and fussing... Had it been ghetto night or whatever it would have been okay but they used Harlem, which means they are associating it with black people. They said it was just a theme... It’s not just a theme. Would you have white trash night? They said they don’t understand the big deal and why all of you are so upset. A lot of us were mad about that in class. People saw some of the people going to the event and the white girls had braids, bandannas and “ghetto bitch” written on their stomach and gold teeth and things like that walking around with 40s.

Tasha cited other racist incidents whereby white students would make comments like “black people don’t ski,” or “speak correct English.” She was visibly irritated in the interview as she described having conversations with white people who made negative assumptions about all black people. She was also offended when whites assumed she should know certain things because she is black.

It is a whole lot of white people around and they will say black people don't ski or other stuff. That is when it makes me upset. Some concert coming to town, a reggae band, and this guy was like “you don’t know who that is?” I said no and he said, I thought the one black person I knew would tell me who it is. I said I don’t know who that is and he said you are one black friend. A classmate was repeating a conversation we had to another person, and it made me so mad because she was like the other day when Tasha was talking she said “just because I be listening to and I be buying.” I said hold up, that is “not how I said it. You

have never heard me say “I be.” She said that is how she thought I said it. I said ‘no, that is how you think all black people talk.’ That is not how I said. It. That is what gets me upset when they are not aware of how ignorant that is. I was thinking, “Hey, I’ve been in school all this time, I know how to talk.” Other people give me compliments at work because I do orientation and this guy was like I did not know you were this cool because you talk so clear. You just talk so clear. I asked him what that was supposed to mean and he said you don’t sound like the other black people who work here.

Bernard and Charles acknowledged that perceptions play a significant role in how they view the racial climate. Bernard:

Perceptions, which have something to do with views. Because people’s parents have crafted their minds to think certain ways. Whether it’s to be open to black people, they have already come in with that mentality. Then it’s like you can change some people. I’ve seen some people say two years ago I would have never been hanging with you or come to a step show; or never at the block party. My parents would die if they knew I was here. You have people that come in with these mentalities and feel bad for being against their parents but they know that they need to be open. The climate won’t get any better until people can let go of their prejudices and previous thoughts and be more open.

Charles:

Confederate flags. I had never seen things like that. In my dorm, I was the only black on my floor. Maybe it wasn’t so much of them. It might have been me,

too. I don't know. Maybe I was thinking they are looking at me. Maybe they are saying there is a black guy. Now that I think about it, it probably wasn't even like that. I did have some experiences where I was like here it is.

Black Males and Stereotyping

Black males make up a small percentage of the population at UGA. The four black males in the study each made it clear that they encounter additional racial tension because of their race and gender. Malik comments,

The thing that brought out disbelief was that out of a freshman class of over 4,000 there are only 84 black males. I'm included in that so I was feeling like there was a problem there. I suppose a stigma could be that since I'm a black male, maybe I did get here on the point system that the university rarely uses. I know that I did better than most of the people that are here at the university. That is a stigma I have.

Bernard states that black males are "so rare." "There might be 70 in each entering class now and 30 of them will be athletes. I am surprised if I have another black male in any of my classes." Charles explains what it is like for him as a young black male on this campus. He encounters people who are frightened of him for no apparent reason. He is often asked if he is an athlete.

It is unique to me because I'm not like the average black male and I know this. I tuck my shirt in every day, I speak right, I like to dance and I'm outspoken. A lot of my male friends portray that thug image. I have a friend who has dreadlocks

but this guy is smart. He is not thuggish at all. He just has long hair. He is looked at so differently. He is so quiet. If a black man comes, they grab their purse. This happens so much to me. I'm walking toward someone; I know I don't look like the thug image so it is beyond the thug image. It is the black male period. If I'm walking toward a white person, they grab their purse immediately. I'm more scared of them. I don't look like I'm going to bother anybody. I could have on a suit coming from church or I could have on my running clothes. It doesn't matter what I have on or if my hair is cut; just because I'm a black male puts this fear in their heart that should not be there. I have been in the lunch line, and I was coming from running and I had on a sweat suit that happened to be black and white and they say you run track. I could be dressed up with my nice clothes on and they will say, "You run track." I used to think it was the jogging suit and I'm black and I'm here so I must be on an athletic scholarship. No, take the athletes out of the minority count, numbers and you really have an issue. They don't want to do that because they know it is ridiculous.

Social Experiences at The University of Georgia

Participants were asked questions related to their social experiences at the University of Georgia, including what role, if any, race plays in their social life. The two main areas that were discussed by participants were downtown Athens, an area brimming with clubs and bars, and Greek sponsored social events. Students spoke briefly about campus-wide activities such as concerts and sporting events.

Downtown Athens, Georgia, is the center of the social scene for the UGA student community, with a plethora of bars, restaurants and shops. At any given time, day or

night, students are downtown partying or checking out the music scene. Athens is widely known for its bars and music scene. Many fraternities and sororities rent the bars and restaurants for private parties. By renting a place, the group is able to have a later closing time than with campus facilities and there are fewer restrictions on patrons. Also, alcohol can be served. The rental costs include security and other miscellaneous expenses.

Black students do not feel that the downtown merchants are welcoming and fair to them when they want to rent a facility. Bernard believes that clubs change some of their policies to exclude blacks. He explains,

There was an issue with a club downtown my freshman year. They were treating blacks unfairly by making them pay certain amounts of money. Jacking up [the prices] or going from hip-hop night and making it something else because you want to keep black people out of the club.

Melody gives two examples of how she thinks a couple of downtown establishments passed dress codes aimed at blacks to deter them from gaining admission to the clubs.

There is nothing for us when we go downtown. My freshmen year, [a club that black students frequented] passed this dress code. When you looked at it, it was targeted at black students. They changed the dress code. You used to wear jeans. No skullie caps and no jeans. Stuff that black people wore. Stuff that was typical of things that we wore.

Some of my friends go to the Crib. There is a bouncer there. One of my friends went and she had on a skirt and a vest and some nice shoes. She was looking cute. He told her she had on a vest and could not come in. She said I'm dressed

nice, what are you talking about. He let these two white guys in with flip flops and t-shirts.

Malik says he has noticed that black groups have a difficult time renting facilities.

If a certain group wants to rent out a club or bar, they have more trouble than when another group tries to rent it out...It is apparent why that reason is. It is a black function and they think they will have more troubles so they make them pay more. They have more strict regulations.

Since downtown is the center of the Athens party scene, students were asked to talk about their experiences in downtown Athens. The experiences ranged from: rarely frequents; attends black functions only; and attends frequently for all types of functions. Bernard says he and most other blacks don't interact much downtown. "You don't see people at these bars unless there is a party you want to go, places where you feel comfortable and relax. I wouldn't feel comfortable in a white bar with everybody drunk and rebel flags."

Tonya echoes Melody "If you are into going downtown and getting drunk then you are set. A lot of black people don't like to do that. A lot of [blacks] don't feel comfortable because they know when they go down there it is not going to be a lot of black people down there."

Charles attends functions downtown only when they are sponsored by a black organization. "We don't have a black club. We go to the club on 'our night' and party on 'our' night.

Tasha used to attend black-only functions during her freshman and sophomore years. She has evolved in this area.

Usually the only time black people go down there is when a frat or sorority is holding a party. This summer, I went when the white people always go out. It wasn't as bad as I thought it was going to be. I would hear a few comments about me being there, but for the most part I did not feel uncomfortable.

Rachel also speaks of her evolution, saying that because she is "legally able to drink and loves to eat so going to a restaurant or bar is okay." She suggests that blacks should get out of their comfort zones and try downtown more often.

Malik agrees with Rachel. He recalls a time when he told a black friend that he had gone downtown with a former white roommate to hang out. His friend said, "It [downtown] doesn't cater to black people." Malik replied, "That doesn't mean you can't do it."

A few students voiced concern about some stores in the downtown area. They feel that the quality of service received from store workers is based on their race. Students don't want to be mistaken for locals because they believe that black locals are looked down upon by white merchants and residents.

Bernard:

Just being in the city you don't want to be accused of being a local because I think the local residents don't get much respect from the community. That's obvious when you go into the downtown stores with a hat on backwards and two earrings; you look like a local so you don't expect to get much treatment.

Melody went to an establishment and was treated similarly. The sales person approached her and asked if she could help her. Melody said, "I'm just looking." The salesperson asked if she was a student at the university. Melody replied yes, and the salesperson just walked away without another word. Melody thinks the salesperson wanted to make sure she wasn't just some local loitering around.

There is one store every female can tell you about. When you walk in there they are so unwelcoming. They do not want to help you. They are like "what do you want?" No black girl that I know has ever spent money in there because the way they treat black people.

Although Melody describes most stores as "liberal and friendly," she had a similar experience at the same store.

It took the lady 10 minutes to ask me how she could help me. I had to go to her and ask for my size. She was very abrupt saying "we don't." I never buy anything but I go in there from time to time just to remind them of how black people look.

Rachel wanted to get a job at a downtown store but felt very apprehensive about applying. She didn't think she had a very good chance of getting hired but she gave it a try anyway. "The first thing I said was that they would probably never hire a black person. The fact that everybody said I was right was frustrating." She did not get the job.

Greek System and Social Experiences

The Greek system at UGA is very visible and influential. Every year hundreds of young men and women participate in a Greek fraternity or sorority at the University of Georgia. According to UGA's Greek life office, there are over 40 fraternities and sororities on campus.

The organizations are divided among the Panhellenic Council (PHC), the Intrafraternity Council (IFC) and the National Pan Hellenic Council (NPHC). The PHC is the representative governing body of 18 white sororities at UGA. The IFC is the self-governing body that represents 23 predominantly white fraternities and the NPHC serves as a coordinating agent for eight historically black fraternities and sororities. Currently, there are seven active black Greek organizations. The sororities are Alpha Kappa Alpha, Delta Sigma Theta, Zeta Phi Beta, and Sigma Gamma Rho. The fraternities are Alpha Phi Alpha, Kappa Alpha Psi, and Phi Beta Sigma. Omega Psi Phi fraternity is serving a suspension for hazing and is not active.

The racial divide that is evident in the Greek organizations is just one indicator of how certain aspects of the campus remain segregated. The Greek organizations are overwhelmingly segregated. With few exceptions, Greek organizations are either all black or all white. Students choose to be a part of the Greek system for a variety of reasons. Among the most prevalent reasons is the social aspect. Once you become a member you have an instant social scene, complete with "sisters or brothers," parties, and community outreach.

Of the interviewees, one man and one woman were Greek. Participants expressed reservations when asked whether the Greek system should be desegregated. Malik

explains that he would not seek membership in a white fraternity. He describes white fraternities as having a “good old boy mentality” where a black person would never be welcomed. “I personally would not join a fraternity that wasn’t a black fraternity. I understand that’s the way things are. I don’t think that change is going to happen where Greeks become diverse.”

The sentiment among the participants is that black Greek organizations differ from white ones in that black Greeks were established as a way to uplift and empower the black community. Therefore, this fundamental difference inherently promotes segregation. Participants also pointed out that because of discrimination, blacks were excluded from joining white Greek organizations and had to create their own.

Malik, “I think there is a line drawn especially black fraternities and sororities which were meant to empower the black community. I don’t think those [white] organizations will become.

Kenneth, “A lot of people tend to forget the historical context of black Greek organizations. We had to create those because [whites] wouldn’t let us into theirs. We were barely accepted into the schools let alone the social life so people often ignore that.

Bernard states, “Black Greek organizations were founded to uplift the black community. You can’t expect the white community to uplift us. So, that is what they [black Greek] needs to continue to be.” Rachel, who is a member of a black sorority, says “you have to have your own groups because the white people would not let you in their group.”

Melody thinks, “[Segregated systems] seem to be working for the black people. I think that some of the issues they address in the NPHC aren’t things they address in the

PHC or the IFC because white people have houses, black people don't. I think the issues are so different.”

Participants were rarely invited to participate in white Greek events and on the rare occasion that they were invited, most did not feel comfortable attending. On occasion, black Greeks and white Greeks collaborate and have events. Most times the events are successful; however, at times there is backlash from other white Greeks and alumni. Bernard says white Greeks take a chance of being ostracized by other white Greek organizations for partnering with black Greeks. Bernard comments,

If a white fraternity has a social event with a black fraternity then the other white fraternities will look down on them. There is one white sorority that had a social with us and their alumni did not approve of it. They kept it internally but it got leaked out that they had problems. Some of the alumni weren't really too pleased about it.

Rachel says her Greek organization has had a good relationship with white fraternities and sororities. She believes collaboration has worked because both groups wanted to work together and it was not forced. She is disturbed that many white Greek organizations want the black Greeks to entertain them by performing choreographed dance routines known as step shows. Rachel explains,

All the interaction that we have had with white frats and sororities when it's worked it has worked because we each had a desire to be together, to work together. We did a social with a white fraternity. It worked well because we all wanted to do it. It wasn't like the president saying we are going to interact with these black frats and sororities. They always want us to step for them. We are trying to get out of that when we interact with them. We try and do other things. Once again the idea of

black people entertaining. They don't see it like that. Every time they ask you to do something you don't want to step. You want to showcase that you have other talents. We are intelligent, we can sit down and have a roundtable discussion if you want to do that or just interact period.

Black Greeks feel that a central part of their mission is to engage in community service programs. In contrast, the white Greeks are centered around social activities. Rachel says, "Most of the white fraternities and sororities are based on social aspects. My sorority has only had three parties this year. Comparing that with our programs and community service is like a big discrepancy."

Tonya, a non-Greek, says, "Black fraternities and sororities do everything really. They have all the parties." Rachel feels very strongly that black Greeks perform a tremendous service to the University by sponsoring the majority of the social outlets for African Americans.

Rachel:

All of these black students come up here and this campus is not made for them. We have to go out of our way to make sure students enjoy UGA. So, actually we are doing a service to the university. We are putting on programs that people look forward to. A lot of people look forward to certain things and we kind of keep students coming here because if the black Greeks weren't here, I can guarantee you that a lot of blacks at UGA would not be here. After their first year, they would leave because there would be nothing for them to do at all.

Rachel points out that most people on campus know that some of the white Greeks are notoriously racist. “There is one fraternity that everybody knows to be a racist fraternity and a lot of the others right off of Lumpkin [street].” Bernard believes that this is the reason blacks do not attend white Greek events. “The IFC give off this vibe that it is not very welcoming toward African Americans. Their parties are invitation only so you are not invited to any parties.” Bernard further explains,

The social climate is really divided. I know a lot of everybody now so I feel comfortable going to certain ones [white Greek parties]. I wouldn’t go to all of the white frat parties. I just knew not to go. But you have some people who get caught up and get confused and that is how you have the incident like we had in August and September with Alpha Gamma Delta.

Charles describes a time when he was invited to a white Greek party,

I have had some bad experiences. I have walked past some frat houses and been called nigger and stuff like that. The people on my hall, say Charles come go with me to this bar and at first I’m like go with you to that party and I’ll go to the frat house. I don’t want to go to the frat house, but I’ll go and say I’m glad I came because I enjoyed it. Two weeks ago a guy on my hall pledged a fraternity, a white guy and he said why don’t you come to my house and party with us? The first thing I thought about was ya’ll going to get in there and lynch me. I’m not going there.

The Pan Hellenic Council and Inter-Fraternity Council conduct rush a few times a year. During the fall 2000 rush, an incident involving Alpha Gamma Delta (AGD) occurred where a member reported to the administration that AGD denied a black woman admittance into the group because of her race. This incident incited the campus into several debates on racism, discrimination, segregation and other heated topics. The incident drew nationwide media coverage and proved to be a hot topic for the semester.

The participants in the study discussed social experiences as they relate to the AGD incident. Malik explains, “The girl who did not get into one sorority because she was black. I don’t really see how you could involve yourself in that type of sorority.” Bernard thinks that the black female got confused when she tried to join AGD. He says despite cautions from other black students, she insisted on going through rush. Bernard believes rush is not for African Americans.

She wasn’t a black girl that could pass for white. She was a black girl with braids and she was really cultural. I know that no white sorority was going to take her. You may not find your niche in them...they are a different system. Basically she went through it and did not make it.

Many of the participants were perplexed as to why the black female even tried Rush. Tasha could not understand why the student even tried to enter the white sorority. She asks, “Why in the world would she want to do that anyway?” Melody and Tonya think that the student should have been aware of the racism that exists and should never have put herself in that situation. Melody explains,

First, I said she should have the right to get into any sorority she wants to. If she wants to hang around a bunch of white chicks and party and get drunk and do whatever then that is what she should do. But, she should have known that that was going to happen. I don't care how open say that they are; you practice what you preach. If you can walk into a house or look down Milledge you see confederate flags and a whole bunch of white people and kegs. Maybe this girl was raised in a predominantly white environment and maybe...If I had stayed in that type of environment I don't think I would have been as aware as I am of what being black means. I don't think I know now but I have somewhat of an understanding. If that is what she wants to do then they should not have stopped her from doing that. I think it was wrong of them to say they are open.

Tonya says:

She should have known better. That is a problem with black people who hang around white people. They feel like they are accepted and all the white people like them and they are just like them...They need to realize that when it comes to certain situations... She felt comfortable being around her white friends, we are all just people, but then when she tried for the sorority, that was a wake up call for her. People do see color and no they don't want you in their sorority.

Charles echoes the sentiments of Melody and Tonya and goes on to say that the sorority should have been honest about their rejection of the black woman.

That situation was pathetic. First of all, I guess I'm so down to earth, I say what was she trying to do it for anyway. That is me being sarcastic. The first thing I

said is that she knew better. Why did she even do that? But, then again, why couldn't she do it? When they made it an issue, they tried to cover up and say they just did not want her. They know why they did not choose her. If you are going to do it, don't punk out once it is brought to the media, and you try and portray this image like you are so equal when it is not. If you are going to discriminate, discriminate. But don't try and act like you're not. Don't put on airs like you are not doing it. I can't get mad because they did not accept her. If they did not want her, you don't want her, but if you don't want her, don't choose her because of her skin color. Don't choose her because she is not what you want to choose for your sorority.

Participants in the study also weighed in on the punishment of AGD. The responses were divided into Greek and non-Greek. Black Greeks and non Greeks in this study disagree on the AGD punishment. Greeks are more accepting of the action and deem it appropriate. Non-Greek participants felt that there was serious disparity in reprimanding black Greeks and white Greeks. They felt that the administration is unfair in meting out disciplinary action.

Kenneth:

I call what they did a plea bargain. I was rather upset that the university let them get off that easy. Obviously they admitted to guilt if they decided that we may have done this and we are going to take some sensitivity classes on our own terms. The university pretty much said okay. I think that was inappropriate and it does not send a good message to people on the outside looking in. Not even to

those who are actually here. One could say the university condones this type of act as long as you admit to it and come up with your own punishment. That is an extreme conclusion. The university really did not do anything to [reprimand] the sorority and say that they were indeed wrong and give them some kind of penalty as a result of their actions.

Bernard:

I don't think you can punish a social organization based on who they want to be in their clique. You have a circle of friends. You can't make them when they have the power to vote on whom they want. For any reason. I don't think there could have been any punishment suitable for that, because every other organization would have done the same.

Melody:

They have to undergo diversity training, some ludicrous type of stuff. How is that going to teach you about other people? They were like we are racist by no means but that goes back to the university again. You can just see in terms of student judiciary and practices of meting out punishment. It is different. Like the white boys last year; the boy was killed. It was a hazing incident. The boy was killed--he was handcuffed. At the university it is like a network. If you have money you can do anything. If it had been one of the black frat, they would have been expelled to the nth degree. Infinity, you are never coming back to UGA. But, was this frat even expelled? I don't know. I don't think so. That same year, a

month before, the Ques [Omega Psi Phi Fraternity] had a hazing incident. It was wrong what they did. They were kicked off. At first they were expelled then they appealed then it was changed to an eight year suspension, then four years, then until all of the current Ques graduated. They had to go through this whole process. There is a girl in law school who said she was on the student judiciary as an advocate. She wished she was on the deciding panel because they see a black male, they assume he is guilty. But if it is a white male they listen to the case. The ways they decide the cases in black and white and the disparity between the two. They [the administration] don't care. I think they care to a certain extent. We are going to do what looks good. We will do what is easy for us to do right now.

Charles:

I left it alone. They did not get punished or something. I think it was left alone. They did not punish the sorority when I think they should have been punished. I think the punishment should have been much more harsh than what it was.

When asked if punishment was meted out differently for white and black groups,

Bernard replied:

Especially when it comes to fraternities and sororities. If that had been a black frat or sorority, they might have been kicked off the campus for a few years or something like that. It would have been much more harsh. I know, I have a strong feeling. It would have been much more harsh. Let it would have been a

black frat or sorority not accepting a member because of their skin color so to speak and they could not prove why else they did not pick them, it would have been a much harsher decision. The action sends a message to the black community that the administration is biased, the disciplinary action as far as anything goes is biased. I have even gotten to the point where now I feel like if I go and harass a white person, I'll be kicked out of the university. But, if a white person harasses me, they might go to court and get off of it.

Administrative Commitment to Diversity

Students were asked questions related to their perceptions of the UGA administration's commitment to diversity and equity. Diversity was defined as a reasonable proportion of ethnic minorities in the student body and faculty. Equity was defined as equal opportunities for all students financially, academically and judicially. The administration's commitment was divided into three categories:

1. Outreach Efforts-efforts by the university to recruit and retain African American students and faculty;
2. Overall Commitment-perceptions and opinions of the administration's actions on diversity initiatives; and
3. Institutional Progress-UGA's progress in the areas of diversity and equity 40 years after the 1961 desegregation.

Commitment to Diversity and Equity by UGA Administration

The enrollment of African American freshmen at UGA has been on a steady decline since 1996. Although the specific reasons for this decline have not been identified, factors such as the reverse discrimination admissions lawsuit, the competitive admissions pool, and the HOPE scholarship are likely contributors. Because of this significant decline, UGA administrators have been on the defensive as they attempt to explain to their many constituents the reasons and remedies for this issue. Participants expressed feelings of disappointment and discouragement because UGA administrators did not show enough support for programs and activities geared toward minorities.

Rachel led an effort to meet with university officials to address these problems. She says,

We made a seven target plan of what the university could do. They were all feasible. It was called the diversity contract with UGA and we presented it. We invited every VP, president and no one came. There were five easy points. It is very disappointing. It's discouraging.

Rachel says that when she approached a black administrator, his response was similar to that of the white administrators and she left feeling discouraged.

We have had black people to discourage us as well. One of the black officials who works here told us that whenever we were having a rally that the tactics of the '60s are not going to work. We were like can we get some support.

Bernard suggests funding is a telltale sign of how much the administration is committed to diversity efforts. He believes that if the university was truly dedicated to

equity and multiculturalism that it would put more money into diversity oriented programs and activities.

Until the university actually says let's give Minority Services and Programs twice as much funding so they can really do some programming. Instead of wasting hundreds of thousands of dollars on these other projects and hiring a search committee to search for a new office that really won't do much unless the right funding is here for them anyway. We just need to channel our priorities in better places.

Rachel suggests that UGA should do a better job of implementing affirmative action instead of using a quota-like system. She also criticizes the administration for allowing legacy-based admissions.

You can tell the hidden and blatant racism. There is a big misconception about affirmative action. People think it is just taking a lot of unqualified people and placing them and actually it is not like that. You are actually making a commitment to get the best people to be in the position. You can only fault the company or school when they are not getting the best and getting mediocre. That makes the program look bad and the university or company look bad as well. It comes from white people thinking that they worked their butt off to get in here and you just got in because you are black. You have alumni. Your parents might have gone to the university and that is what is getting you in here. Plus, by you being white you are looked at before we are.

Many participants blamed the dismal African American enrollment on the university's image. They were convinced that UGA has such a negative image in the black community that it is no wonder blacks shy away from coming here. Academically successful black students have their choice of attending elite HBCUs and more diverse traditionally white institutions. Consequently, participants believe that UGA needs to improve its image in order to attract the best and brightest African American students.

Bernard says:

I truly believe that UGA has an image problem. It is an image problem that they have had over the last 40 or so years with rejection initially of African American students from even thinking about coming here. Even up until now because there are still symbols of hate here that tend to fly around on campus with the fraternity houses.

Tasha says:

Until UGA eliminates the image of negativity that blacks will never get in here and they will not be liked when they get here...then we won't have really progress like we should in 40 years' time. I think that the image is still there when Charlayne and Hamilton arrived on campus. Until the university makes efforts to improve that image and focus on some positive...the image will stay the same and nothing is going to change.

Events Surrounding the 40th Anniversary of the Desegregation of UGA

During the fall of 2000, university officials proposed to the Board of Regents that the Academic Building be named the Holmes/Hunter Academic Building. The Board

voted in favor of the change. The official renaming ceremony was scheduled for January 9, 2001, to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the desegregation of the University of Georgia. The university planned a commemorative celebration of the 1961 desegregation. Among the activities was a panel discussion with the lawyers and politicians from both sides of the desegregation activity. Charlayne Hunter-Gault delivered the keynote address for the occasion.

Participants' responses to the building renaming and the 40th commemoration was mixed. Some students felt it was a huge step in the right direction, while others thought it was just a public relations ploy. For most of the participants, the naming was more than a symbolic gesture recognizing two of its most accomplished alumni; it was a significant effort in the healing process for UGA and the African American population.

Kenneth, a campus leader, was very excited and happy to hear that a building was being named for Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes to mark their achievements.

It caught me by surprise. We were actually going to lobby for the naming of the new student-learning center being built... The Academic Building was a great surprise considering that the Academic Building is one of the most recognized buildings on campus. I think that is an appropriate tribute to both Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes because of the fact that was the first building that they went to when they got to the school. That was met with a lot of enthusiasm. I think that that sends a message to the students that the administration is trying. They have a lot of work to do but they are trying. I hope that is not an act of tokenism. I think it is a step in the right direction.

Tonya's response echoes Kenneth:

I think that it is a step. Some people don't think it is. The fact that they will name an important building that a lot of people go in and out of after African Americans, I think that is wonderful. When I heard about that, I could not believe it passed. I think they were trying to name the student resource center after them.

Bernard and Rachel believe the naming was just a public relations stunt to divert media attention from the reverse discrimination lawsuit and the University's treatment of minority groups.

Bernard:

I think they are throwing a lot into this event so when the media is here it will look like we are doing more than we are. Let's rename the academic building the day of the celebration. Nobody knew about it. None of the students were asked if we agree on it. I don't think Minority Services and Programs knew about it. The initial offering from the students was to name the new learning center after Charlayne Hunter-Gault and Hamilton Holmes. My stance is that I don't think two people need to be on one building because they are no other buildings with two names, besides Butts-Mehre. And they weren't really that noticeable. I think we are trying to put on a front and disguise the fact that we have problems. I think we have come far. But for [Blacks to still be accomplishing firsts] in 1999, it just shows you how far we haven't come. It's like we still have a lot of growing to do.

Rachel:

But people who follow certain issues are upset that they named the academic building after Holmes/Hunter. The proposed building was the new learning center. Someone was on the senate and proposed that the building be named after them. To me, you know that there is some under the table dealings with that. Why would they name a building that people are still going to call the Academic Building versus the Holmes/Hunter building? There is no other building on campus under the name of two people. Why don't you go ahead and honor them by naming this building that you put millions and millions of dollars in and bring students together after these two people who you say you love so much who have done so much for the university. That was not the initial proposal.

Participants also expressed opinions about the university's progress in the 40 years since desegregation. Rachel says,

As far as public relations, it's going to be great. We are putting all these things to make it appear that UGA is really open to minorities, which it can be. But I think it's only going to hurt the university. Forty years and this is all that they have done. This is all they can show for it. The athletics have gotten so much better but it is 40 years and you still don't have ten percent black. You have a long way to go. I feel like it should be a lot more done in 40 years. In a matter of 40 years, we, blacks have made it in, we have gotten here and we have made progress. The university and the state have made progress but we still have quite a ways to go.

Rachel:

I definitely would say that we have progressed, just by the fact that there are African Americans on the campus. As far as complete acceptance and integration and just the feeling of being comfortable is not there. Everything is not comfortable but you should feel almost comfortable.

Tasha and Tonya are more cynical in their opinions on the matter. They believe that as soon as the hype surrounding the commemoration is over, the university will continue with a business-as-usual attitude. They both agree that it is hypocritical for the university to celebrate desegregation yet continue to allow racist ideals to be touted on the campus.

Tasha:

The university doesn't help because it is good we can get an academic building renamed and all these other things. But, if you are still allowing this kind of stuff to go on where people can wave confederate flags a block from the academic building, what type of equality is that?

Tonya goes on to say, "the fact that they will change the name of the building is a step. It is progress that we are allowed to go here. It is like they don't really want us they just tolerate us."

Recruitment and Retention

Participants felt that part of the decline was due to lackluster recruitment and retention efforts along with an understaffed admissions office. They felt that the recruitment and retention efforts were lacking enthusiasm and resources.

The sentiments of Tonya sum up the overall opinion of the group: “They aren’t doing a good job of keeping us here or trying to get us to come.” Bernard states,

The university could make efforts in its recruitment of African American students to at least attract them here. As far as recruitment, the big thing is funding. Look at the people they hire. Those people should not be recruiting minorities. You are hiring people who have no kind of love for the institution. It’s like, “Hey, there is a position open so I’m going to hire someone.” Minority recruitment has just died. It’s terrible. It was a lot better my freshman year. It helped me get here. In 1996 they were doing some things. More of a personal touch. You got calls.

Tonya felt that the university does not do a good job of overall recruitment, not just minority recruitment. “They don’t recruit people. They don’t recruit period, let alone minorities. I don’t know if UGA came to my school.”

Kenneth says that diversity would be a natural by-product of increased African American enrollment. “If UGA can get to a point where people are just interacting, it will be better. The only way you can do that is increasing the number of blacks up here. That would force people to interact.”

Bernard says the problem with low enrollment starts with UGA recruiters. He believes that enrollment would increase if recruiters were enthusiastic about their jobs and loved UGA. Bernard:

The admissions office just wants to fill the positions so badly that they just hire anybody. If the recruiters are lackluster and give off a negative vibe then the students won't give UGA a serious look. I think they are trying but only time will tell if they start putting into place some of the things that were discussed and some of the solutions are imposed. I think that other students will listen to us. But it is better if you have recruiting people who say they want to go out to the schools. I think affirmative action is needed here as long as they are not recruiting, as they should. Maybe this is a wake up call for the university.

The participants believe that the university should continue to use race as a factor in admissions until a level of equity is reached. The current admissions policy, they say, is the key to increasing enrollment.

Tonya:

They do need to do more things to recruit minorities. I don't know what they are doing with the admissions policy. We really do need it. They act like it is so many minorities here that they can take out the admissions policy.

According to Melody , the university spends extreme amounts of effort to attract African American athletes. She sees this as a value judgment by administrators who believe that black athletes are worth more to the university than black scholars.

I think it is a cop out when UGA says they can't come and visit some black schools. I'm a Class Advocate, they have this thing called building bridges. It is an annual thing...We invite faculty and staff to come out and speak to the students; they have the opportunity to ask questions in terms of comfortability in class, what can I do to make an A, what our professors like to hear. We had the dean of admissions there the first year I was a CA, my junior year. Somebody asked him why he did not visit black schools and he said that the only time they could come was lunch time and that wasn't a good time for them. I said it is sad; Quincy Carter went to my high school. It is sad you can come to my school and spend time recruiting Quincy Carter but you can't recruit us, the honor roll students. If they took the effort to say we at least care about you...I think that deters a lot of black people from [coming here]. Some people are under the impression that black students are poor and we will take anywhere.

Rachel also says UGA does a good job of encouraging black athletes but a poor one when acknowledging black scholars. She suggests that this sends the wrong message to students and contributes to the tension between black students and the administration.

With that, the black students are making UGA look good so they are going to cheer them on. If you are just a black student getting an education, even though

you will go on to benefit UGA by being successful I don't think they really see the benefit of that. Every student has the opportunity to help the university shine. So I think we need to appreciate the fact. So, we have to make ways and avenues for us [scholars] to be looked at and to be considered and they just don't get it.

Minority Preview Days

Minority Preview Days are a recruitment event where black students and parents are invited to campus and treated to meals, parties and step shows. black faculty, staff and current students are on hand to talk with potential students and give them an idea of the UGA lifestyle. Tasha enjoyed minority preview days. "I thought it was a good idea to introduce you to some black faces at UGA. When you see a student you can talk to them about their experiences. I thought that was effective. I got to sit up there and share everything."

Bernard likes minority preview days but questions the execution of the program since many black student leaders don't know when the programs are.

They have minority student preview day where they invite 300 students out. They wanted to move it to a day of class. Even as a freshman I heard about it. But before it was like come out and support minority preview day and be a part of it. I'm a senior and established campus leader; therefore, it should not be a surprise that it is minority day. It's like you have 70 students walking around. That is the kind of stuff we should know about.

During Minority Preview Day, students are bombarded with “black events.” Black fraternities and sororities have step shows and parties. Black faculty, staff and students serve as hosts for the event. Prospective students are given an image of UGA that some participants say is not real. Charles comments,

I came here to visit before I came. My visit was totally different than what it is now. I went to black stuff and saw all these black people. The weekend I came, a black fraternity or sorority was crossing over and I was seeing all this stuff. They take you around these black people and I see the white people too, but I see more black people so I was like this is pretty nice. When I came for orientation as a freshman, I saw what it was really like.

The students feel that it is deceptive of the administration to portray a false image of the campus. Many students were under the impression that there were more African American students and faculty on the campus. When they arrived in the fall, reality did not match their perception.

Charles:

Keep it real, whatever it is that you do, keep it real. Don't have them coming here thinking they will be around all these black people when it is not going to be like that. Don't hide an image. If the image is not like that when it should be then don't portray it.

Participants Suggestions for Outreach

Participants were vocal when offering suggestions to the university to increase the enrollment and retention of African American students. Students are in a unique position

to provide advice because they know what it takes for students to enroll and remain at UGA. Suggestions included summer programs, better recruitment and regular communication with the minority students. Having summer programs for minority students would allow UGA to gain exposure early in students' high school careers.

Rachel:

One [idea] was to start a program called horizons, a minority summer program. You could be on the campus, see it and then when it came time to apply you would know if you wanted to go there based on your experiences. That puts UGA's name out there.

Students suggested that the university incorporate leadership and student involvement into the recruitment process. It gives students something to identify with and offers a sense of belonging for the students, helping them feel that they are an integral part of the university culture. This can limit feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Bernard:

The big effort that they need to take is a video showing students what UGA offers. A video doesn't cost that much to create. They can get journalism students to do it and pay them. If it is student produced then it may be more effective. Instead of sending out brochures with pictures that talk about UGA. You just have to take a more personal approach. That's where we are lacking. We want the newspapers and televisions to say UGA is doing this but as far as the institution we are not giving that personal touch to really draw people.

Tasha is angry that UGA does not visit her old high school and offer a personal touch to students interested in attending UGA. When she was in her predominantly black high school, recruiters would come to the school during lunch and actually chat with the students about life at UGA. Tasha feels that her one-on-one experience with the recruiter was a major reason why she decided to apply and attend. She comments, “I think they should go back to the actual hometowns. I don’t know how they recruit in high school but when I was in high school they would sit in the hallway during lunch time and they would come and talk to people.”

UGA sponsors receptions across the state for students who have been accepted. This is another opportunity for UGA reps to entice students to enroll. Tasha was invited to a reception 90 minutes drive from her hometown. She found this gave her a negative impression of the school and suggested that UGA have receptions in actual hometowns of admitted students to provide a more personal touch.

Charles has a more dramatic and radical approach. He thinks the way to improve the experiences of blacks at UGA is for the administration to make a concerted effort to diversify all campus life. He believes that by intentionally creating diversity i.e., placing blacks in all white classes and placing whites in classes with black faculty, the university would be a better environment for all.

I don’t know what I would do. I don’t know if I would do quotas. I would make sure...I would try my best to put at least one black student in every class. I don’t know if that would help. Give equal opportunities...try and get more black teachers

so white students can realize that there are educated black people. Whatever it takes to make whites see that blacks are educated too, then do that.

Academic Experiences at The University of Georgia

The research also examined the impact of the current racial climate on students' perceptions and experiences of academic life. Students were asked questions about their academic experiences, classroom atmosphere, and their interaction with faculty and other students. Overall, participants indicated that the racial climate had very little impact on their academic lives.

Malik: That's [racial climate] one thing that doesn't affect my academics. You come to school for academics. My dad has always said, put priorities first. So, I don't think the racial climate has anything to do with my academics. I still have to do well in class regardless of whether this campus is diverse or not... It's not because I'm black that I want to do well. I just want to do well.

Kenneth says his academic experience has been "rather good." He attributes his good experience to utilizing many available resources to assist him with his classes. He stressed the importance of attending professors' office hours as a way to enhance the academic experience.

Bernard and Rachel both said that the racial climate does not affect their academic performance; however, they both go on to cite evidence to the contrary. Bernard, for example, said he feels the need to prove to whites that he is on their level. Therefore, to some extent being a minority does place additional pressure on Bernard to do well.

Bernard: I don't think it's really changed that. I still work hard to do well on my own. So I can keep HOPE scholarship and do all that. I think that's me anyway, you want to prove to people that you are on their level. I think black students feel like we have to prove to whites that we are on that level. Then when they see you have skills...and do all this stuff then they are more accepting to you.

Rachel: I don't think it has affected it. There have been times I've been so upset after reading an article [in the student newspaper] that I did not focus on the class. I was too busy writing my rebuttal, that I wasn't even paying attention to the professor.

Perhaps they are not aware of the role race seems to be playing in their academic experiences. As for Rachel, by not focusing in class to write a letter to the editor, Rachel is missing valuable class information. She is preoccupied with a racial matter and thus her class time is not utilized to the fullest. Bernard need to prove he is "on their level" is indicative of the underlying role race plays in academic matters.

Charles also feels the need to prove himself to white faculty. "You have to go to office hours and establish a relationship and let them see that you are willing and that you are not like every other minority student that they have come into contact with." He believes that the professors have stereotyped him negatively and he feels the pressure to combat that image, whether it's real or perception.

Charles is in a major that consistently lacks significant African American presence. He is the only black male in his major club and describes his experiences as

uncomfortable. His discomfort lies in his self-value. He does not feel that he is as bright as the white students. Charles goes on to explain how he feels uneasy in his major club meetings. “When we have our major club meetings, I am the only black male. It is a lot of black females but I am the only black male right now. It makes me feel uncomfortable.”

Students were asked how the racial climate affected their perception of the classroom atmosphere. Because of the small number of African Americans at UGA, it is a regular experience for blacks to be the only black in the class. This feeling of being different is magnified when issues related to African Americans are presented in class. The classroom atmosphere can cause students to feel isolated and unsure of themselves.

Malik says occasionally whites in his classes are amazed at how well he performs academically. “Every time we get test grades, I always make the highest in the class. They are like, how do you do so well?”

The following excerpts provide pictures of their experiences:

Bernard:

Lately, because I’m older it is better. My classes are smaller and I’m in my major class now. It is more than just me. When things do occur on campus if you are one of the only black people in your class then everyone will look to you to discuss this and ask me what I think and I’m like what do you think. Last semester, it was a major course. It was only four black people in the class and my professor was black. We had to work in groups a lot so if we were sitting around at someone’s apartment, anything black that came up they asked me what I thought about it. Did you see such and such movie. Bringing up stuff like so and

so is so hot; just because they were black. I was like, “Oh god, I watch more than just [black movies].

Melody:

A lot of times I'll listen and if I feel I want to say something I will. But before I felt compelled to say something. I don't have to say anything or if I don't have an opinion right now or if I don't feel like jumping into the discussion I don't have to say anything. I represent Melody. I'm not the chieftain for the black race. It bothers me when they say the black leader like we have somebody to lead us all around and he or she speaks for us...I speak for myself. I was in my major class. All my classes, I'm the only black student. In another class, we discussed the accreditation issue. My professor, she is cool, she is white. She is one of those white people who really want to get in touch with the minorities. I think she genuinely cares. She comes across like she knows everything. You don't know it unless you have lived it, so please give me some space. If I don't feel like saying something; don't have me say anything. She said that is an issue you should know well about Melody and I said really and I asked her why? And she said it is because you are African American. I said what does that have to do with the issue and I told her I did not feel like saying anything. I will just listen to the discussion but thank you for trying to include me.

Charles:

For the first portion of the class, I'm trying to get comfortable. Where that is time it could have been constructive or learning. I feel like if I have a question, I better wait until office hours and go speak to him one-on-one. If I raise my hand in a 300-person class with all these white people then they are not going to take my

question as serious. I have to say, no, ask your question now. All this processing I'm going through in my mind could have been time... Instead of thinking about should I raise my question; it shouldn't even be a question. I should just raise my hand and ask my question and not worry about what everyone thinks. But, you have to take into consideration that there is a racial climate and no one wants to be talked about. Like, my English class, I was the only black person in there. We had debates in the class and we would start off with stuff like slavery and then it would turn into UGA. It would be me against the white people. I would say ya'll are so comfortable here. I agreed with them that sometimes it is not so much racism it is just black people are thinking that it is racism so it ends up being that way. It comes a time like in here, how many times have ya'll had questions in here and ya'll don't say, EB do you know this. None of you have said, EB do you know this. With the exception of one girl, she would say, what did he say or what was the assignment or can you help me with this and she realized, you are smart. Everybody else looked at my skin color and did not ask me anything when I would hear them asking each other and I would know the answer to the question. One day I turned around and said the answer and they just looked like they saw a ghost and said, he said something. It got better toward the end. The beginning was not good. I was the only black person in there. That was the first time ever that I was a minority in the classroom. My first college class, my first class ever. It was 8:00 on Monday and my first taste of everything.

Black Faculty

The presence of black faculty at UGA is sparse at best. Black faculty at UGA make up a small percentage of the total faculty. Because of the low percentage of black professors, many students go through their entire college careers without ever having been taught by a black professor. Participants expressed concern in the low number of black faculty and explained how they think this affects their academic experiences.

Although most participants had one or no black faculty, they felt like their academic experience would be enhanced if they had more black faculty. They based this feeling on believing that because the professors are black, they would have more in common and thus could relate to what students were facing. Those that did have black faculty sought out the professor for an elective so they could have the experience of being taught by an African American.

Malik, a sophomore business major, says “It’s a shame that I haven’t had any black faculty yet.” He recalls a program he attended that was supposed to bring black faculty from across the campus to interact with minority students.

We did a program not too long ago called Building Bridges. Minority faculty members came and talked to the students and tell them different ways they can enhance their experience while they are here. I only met a few minority faculty members at that program. The minority faculty members are pretty much like the students. They are a small number and percentage. [The number of black faculty] should definitely be increased. I’m not sure what goes into a faculty member’s decision to come and teach at UGA. [The administration] should figure out why the numbers are so low and do something to change that.

Malik says having black faculty would positively impact his college experience. “I would gain more from a black professor who maybe understood what I was going through while here at the university. Who would be more empathetic. Maybe I could talk to on a one-to-one personal basis and things like that.”

Charles, a junior social science major has had four black faculty, the most of the group. He believes so strongly in the benefits of having black teachers that he sought out at least one black teacher per term.

There is for some reason a sense of comfort when you have a black professor. I don't think I'm going to get by or anything. It seems that the black professors I've had they are harder than the regular professors. I would feel more comfortable talking with this professor if I needed to. They could possibly relate more than any other professor could.

Rachel believes that black professors motivate black students to learn. She thinks that black teachers would encourage students to do well by being role models and mentors.

All my experiences with black teachers is that they are a lot more demanding. You have to go after the best. You can't just get the mediocre teacher you have got to get great teachers at the university. I've heard bad things about black professors, too.

In classes with black professors it motivates you to do better in their class. They want to see their own students succeed. I think it is sad. You know that there are academics of all races just everywhere. I don't know if the university is out

recruiting a great diverse background of people. Maybe you should get someone who knows about black politics, who studied politics in the civil rights movement and bring that perspective to the university. We are lacking that.

Tasha was reluctant to speak with her professors until she had a black teacher. Initially she was still reluctant but later went and spoke with the teacher and had a positive experience. She was able to approach the teacher because she was black and Tasha believed that the professor could relate to her. This level of comfort had a positive impact on Tasha and her performance in that class.

When I went in there, she was a black professor and she was really good. I was glad I made this decision. It was easier to go up to her after class than it was other professors. She was real open and easy to talk to. I never had a problem in that class.

Melody hasn't had any black faculty yet but her perception is that Black teachers are harder on black students and that they serve as a role model for black students.

I haven't had a bad black teacher yet. They press you. They are hard as hell but I appreciate it. You can come up to that person after class. I think they push children harder. Even my dad says that we push you all harder because you all have a lot more to face and we know how good ya'll are. I don't know if that would change my experience but maybe I would have a professor that I could go and talk to. I talk to professors in the J-school but I just think there are certain things you can discuss with a black person that you are not able to talk to the

white person or you might be able to talk to the white person but they won't understand.

Charles feels like he can let his guard down when dealing with a black professor. He feels like he doesn't have to be on the defensive when interacting with Black faculty, whereas with whites, he is constantly trying to defy stereotypes of the "lazy black man."

Charles says that his one black teacher is very personable with him. They have established a relationship whereby the professor cares about how he is doing in his classes and otherwise. Charles believes that his black teacher cares about his well-being and that allows Charles to let his guard down and confide in his teacher. Charles describes how white teachers treat him.

In the white class I'm looked over. Not all, because I've had good teachers. My math teachers were really nice to me. Some of them, I was looked over. If I was in the class or if I came in late or said, sorry I was late, it was like you are still getting an absence. If someone else came in and said I was late it was like oh, you are a few minutes late, sign the roll. It was a little tension but you have to look past that.

Most participants believe that the entire campus could benefit from an increased presence of black faculty. Black faculty could serve as a way to enhance the diversity efforts of the campus not only by being present but by what they teach. Participants feel that black faculty bring a different and necessary perspective to classes that white teachers can't.

Charles:

[Having more black faculty] enhances the experiences of white students. I have a teacher now in my sociology class. He is very down-to-earth and tells it like it is. He told everybody both white and black that we are going to air out dirty laundry in this class. There is a different perspective that black teachers can bring to the table as opposed to the white teachers. There is a different perspective that Asian teachers bring that black or white professors can't. The perspectives are different and I think that enhances people's education overall.

Participants say that black teachers expose students to aspects of cultures other than their own. Black professors are more likely to require students to attend cultural functions such as lectures, art exhibits and musical performances.

If you have a black professor, I think you are just more open about culture on campus. Most of them require that their students go to stuff like step shows. They make them experience culture. They give them an incentive for going. They are more likely to come out and see it. When I was in the Black Theatrical Ensemble my freshman year, there would be white people at the play whose professor made them come. They get a chance to experience African American culture. Which is something that if you never had a black professor you miss out on that.

Black students believe that black faculty require more from black students than from their white counterparts. They think that black faculty engage students in a more

meaningful way by encouraging them to step out of their comfort zones. Participants seemed to like this type of teaching and want more of it.

Rachel:

I think [increasing black faculty] would be good. I don't know if the university knows this but they bring the fire. They are a lot more demanding on their students. I think they scratch deeper by bringing in outside resources to reinforce what they are saying.

Melody hasn't had any faculty but still has a deep-rooted belief that black professors would be more challenging and better teachers. Her friends who have had black faculty encouraged her to take a class from a black faculty member. Unfortunately, she is a senior and the only black professor in her department doesn't teach any of her remaining courses. However, she has found a black professor who teaches a minor elective. She is very excited about the class because of the "good reputation" of the teacher. Melody emphasized the difficulty of the class. Nevertheless, she is excited just to have a black professor.

Melody:

I have had minority faculty. I'm excited. I hear that the entire black faculty [are thorough]. All of them are really good. I heard she was difficult. It seemed like the black teachers, even in high school, they would not cut you any slack. They were saying she is a good teacher and they have a lot of respect for her.

Charles thinks that black students, especially those from predominantly black high schools, are at a disadvantage by not having more black faculty. White students don't have to make a transition when they come to UGA because the teachers look like them. This leads to a higher level of comfort and better communication. Unlike white students, black students have to deal with being the only black and adjusting to white teachers. Charles has a black teacher for a class and is having a positive experience. It is much better than his interaction with white professors.

I love it. It is not just a chorus class to me. I learn so much in there. He makes us strive. He doesn't address the black-white issue. He always tells us, it's people of all races in there, to be ourselves and strive. To look past color. He tells the blacks to look past their black skin. Tells the whites to look past their white skin and look at a person as individual and not just black or white or Indian or Hispanic.

It would help the minority students as well as the majority students. If we had more minority teachers here then if they wanted to be so diverse, that would make it even more diverse if you had white students getting taught by black teachers for the first time. Then having black students feeling more comfortable with the black teachers just as the white students feel comfortable with the white teachers.

[Whites] are in a comfort zone. They are more comfortable. It is like mom and dad or their high school teachers versus a person they never talked to. It just shocks me because some white people I talk to have never talked to, studied with, talked on the phone with a black person in

their life. I can't believe you talk this way or that way. I'm like what do you mean? I can't believe ya'll have not. It felt real funny the first white person I talked to and they told me I was the first black person they had ever carried a conversation with.

Tonya comments on what black professors bring to the subject.

She gave her own opinion and different perspective for you to think about. She did not just talk and talk. Not just black teachers. You need minorities. They bring a different perspective because they have been through different experiences. Sometimes teachers like to get up there and tell stories. Their story could be totally different from a white teacher's story, even if they are talking about the same topic. We need more minority faculty and staff to give different perspectives.

Summary

Participants in this study provided the researcher with a glimpse into their lives at UGA. Their stories and examples provided thick rich data used to identify themes about the racial, social, and academic experiences of African American students at UGA. In Chapter 5, the themes from this research are summarized. Suggestions for university action are presented, and the limitations of the study along with future suggestions for research are described.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS and IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions and experiences of African American students at a traditionally white institution. The context of this study was the anti-affirmative action climate in Georgia and around the nation. The research focused on students' social and academic experiences in the midst of racial tension. Students discussed their feelings about being a minority on campus and their perceptions of the racial climate on campus, and they gave detailed accounts of racial incidents they have encountered. Students also discussed the administration's commitment to diversity and equity.

The major themes of this investigation were based on the research questions established for this study and were further shaped by responses from the participants. The following research questions guided this study. 1) How do African American students perceive the current racial and social climate at the University of Georgia? 2) How do African American students interpret their academic and social experiences in light of the current racial and social climate at the University of Georgia? 3) How do African American students perceive the university's commitment to issues of diversity and equity?

The participants in this study provided meaningful insight into their lives, perceptions, and experiences at the University of Georgia. They were candid in their responses and genuinely wanted to share their opinions with the researcher in hopes of

making things better for future African American students. Several of the participants were just happy that someone wanted to hear what they had to say. They were excited that they would have a voice, even if it was not the administration asking the questions.

Data from this study show that participants encounter racism in their social and academic experiences. Participants are disengaged from primary social activities such as the downtown “scene” and Greek life, are often uncomfortable in classes because they are a small minority, and are generally dissatisfied with administrative efforts to address diversity and equity. Overall, however, students believed they were receiving a good education and were pleased that they came to the University of Georgia.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into three sections. First, the findings from this research are summarized. Second, suggestions for improving the social and academic experiences of African American students at the University of Georgia are provided. Finally, implications and issues for future research are noted.

Summary of Findings

Eight African American students attending the University of Georgia were interviewed in fall semester 2000 to elicit their perceptions of the university, their academic and social experiences and the administrations to diversity. The findings are summarized below.

Racial and Social Climate

It is evident from the data presented that racial issues continue to exist at the University of Georgia. African American participants in this study experienced racial incidents, social isolation, and a less than optimal learning environment. Students were also disappointed in the administration for not being more committed to diversity and for exhibiting a lack of sensitivity to minority students. The campus racial climate and feelings of alienation and isolation were at the center of their discussions on their social and academic experiences.

Campus climate has been shown to have an influence on the academic and social experiences of African American college students attending traditionally white institutions (Hurtado, 1992). The racial climate in higher education is marred by reverse discrimination lawsuits and challenges to institutions' affirmative action programs. Georgia is no stranger to the litigation surrounding race-based admissions and increased racial tension. The climate at UGA was described as unwelcoming, uncomfortable and divided. In fact, there were no positive phrases used to describe UGA's racial climate. Students did, however, speak of the academic reputation of the institution. Participants were willing to attend college in an uncomfortable setting because of the "good education" they would receive. Students were not satisfied with the campus environment and faulted the administration for failing to act to improve the situation. Yet, they persisted and acknowledged that they are happy with their decision to attend UGA in spite of feeling alienated.

All participants reported negative experiences, but black males described experiences unique to their gender. They were assumed to be athletes by other students and faculty. Black males believed that being black was a stigma that caused others to think of them as inferior. Race coupled with gender created a unique experience for these young men. They felt that many people on campus were afraid of them because of the criminal stereotype. Black males in this study cited the low number of African American male faculty as one of the reasons they have a hard time adjusting. The campus has a high number of black males working in the physical plant, so the image of black men laboring for menial wages dominates. UGA does not have a critical mass of black male professionals, and black male participants felt an absence of role models.

Participants were almost always conscious of their skin color. They carried with them a burden of trying to dismantle stereotypes by constantly trying to prove themselves to peers and faculty. Some students seemed to identify strongly with their race and said that that is what allows them to navigate through UGA.

Studies show that African American students also experience difficulty in participating in the social arena at TWIs. A lack of social integration into the mainstream of campus life can be detrimental to the academic achievement and social development of African American students at TWIs (Nettles, 1991; Hurtado, 1992). The participants in this study expressed difficulty with fitting into the main social activities on campus. They wanted to participate in campus wide, majority white events but felt uneasy about the prospect because of the racial composition. They self-segregated mainly as a coping mechanism, and they created a “mini HBCU” atmosphere to socialize.

Three major areas for socializing at UGA are Greek life activities, the downtown scene, and football games. Greek life and downtown were the areas in which students felt like outsiders. Surprisingly, football was hardly mentioned as a viable social outlet. The Greek system organizes many of the social events for the campus, sponsoring parties, socials and community service events that attract a lot of students, but few blacks. These events serve as a primary outlet for both Greek and non-Greek students.

The black Greek organizations make a major contribution to the campus since they are responsible for most of the parties and social events geared toward black students. This is a double-edged sword in that black Greeks are providing a service for the students and university by sponsoring social outings for African American students; however, these groups are small in number and have limited budgets. The limited resources directly affect the quantity and quality of social activities available for African Americans. One participant felt that the black Greek social events were the main reason why people persist at UGA beyond the freshman year. The Greek participants felt it was their duty to make life at UGA as pleasant as possible for African American students, especially incoming students. They were happy to be of service but felt frustrated and used at the same time because the administration did not acknowledge their efforts and contributions to the campus. It is good that the black Greek organizations see it as part of their mission to provide programs and activities for the African American student community; however, they should not shoulder the major responsibility for providing social outlets for African American students.

The segregation of the Greek system also presents a problem for black students wishing to engage in the UGA social scene. Participants felt that the Alpha Gamma Delta racial incident reflected a deep-rooted notion that blacks are not welcomed in the white Greek system or its social scene. To many participants, the white Greek system represents racism at its worst, with the confederate flags flying from the houses and the denial of blacks into their groups. Participants attended white Greek parties by invitation only. They stressed that they would not go to a party unless they were invited because of the racist attitudes of the organizations. Participants were very clear in stating that they “knew” that the white Greek socials were off-limits to them unless personally invited. Even with an invitation, participants still felt uneasy about entering a white Greek house.

It is obvious from the responses that participants felt socially estranged and limited in their social outlets. Participants felt that the overall social scene, both at UGA and downtown, was not designed for them. For example, although Athens is known for its music scene, African American students do not participate because in general it is not their kind of music. Many young African Americans prefer the hip-hop culture which is limited in Athens.

The researcher also noted what was missing from the descriptions of social experiences by the participants. There was very little discussion of campus wide events such as concerts, movies and plays. Rather, the participants’ major social outlets were black Greek sponsored events. This could be an indication that participants did not feel welcome at campus events, weren’t interested in campus wide events, or attended

infrequently. Either way, participants did not view campus wide social events as a viable social outlet.

African American students found solace in each other. By “hanging tight” with each other, many of the participants felt a sense of belonging within their own ethnic or racial community. They spoke of making a conscious decision to associate with blacks only to eliminate the feelings of uneasiness. African American students became very creative when it came to occupying their time. Students played cards and dominos or gathered in each other’s rooms and listened to music to avoid feelings of isolation.

Participants also went home several weekends during the semester. They would leave the campus on weekends to return home to the comfort of family and friends. They spoke of traveling to Atlanta to party at nightclubs and attend concerts. Students also traveled to HBCUs around the state for parties and step shows. This is a further indication that socializing is very important to the participants.

The most noticeable omission from the descriptions of the social scene was football games and surrounding activities. With the exception of one or two participants, no one attended football games or related activities regularly, although UGA has a rich football tradition that permeates the campus, city and state. On game day, thousands of people descend on the campus for tailgating, parties, and to attend the game. Students stand in line in the spring for several hours to buy tickets for the upcoming season. Many students also travel to away games to support the Bulldogs. However, students in this study did not attend. Some even left town on game weekends to avoid Bulldog mania. Participants said that they do not enjoy athletic events as much as the majority because of

the exploitation of black athletes. Participants noted that African American athletes are cheered on the field and face discrimination off of it. Several participants saw this as further evidence of the hypocritical nature of UGA's commitment to diversity.

Academic Experiences

All participants expressed that being a minority in a class can be overwhelming especially when the class is large or when they are the only African American in the class. Many freshman level classes are large, sometimes with as many as 300 students in a lecture section. The first time that these students encountered a large lecture class and realized that there were only a few black students, they were exposed to a stark reality. Eventually participants were able to deal with their minority status in class. Most participants went through an evolution during which their behavior changed. As freshmen, they retreated into a shell when finding themselves the lone black student. As juniors and seniors, they were more likely to interact with their classmates, speak up, and ask questions. This gradual change in behavior can be attributed to students getting used to the environment, having positive experiences with white students, and increasing in confidence.

After an adjustment period, the shock of being a minority wore off and participants became accustomed to the university environment. The passage of time led to students feeling more comfortable and confident in the academic setting. Over time, they approached white classmates and faculty more often and participated more frequently in class. Many participants mentioned that they gained confidence over time

and were less intimidated by white students and faculty. As freshmen, they felt they needed to prove that they were worthy of being at UGA and that they were just as smart as other students. After taking several classes and performing as well as or better than white classmates, participants no longer felt the need to prove they belonged.

Participants were frustrated that they were called on to be the spokesperson for the black race during certain discussions. They were offended that whites thought all black people held the same opinion and that one black person could speak for everybody. Thus, another stereotype was exposed, that of blacks being thought to agree on all issues and that one black person can speak for all black people.

Students also expressed disappointment with faculty who put them in that position. When white faculty hold the same assumptions as white students, the notion of “one race, one voice” is perpetrated in the classroom. Participants began to resent white faculty who participated in this stereotyping along with those who allowed this perception to persist. Once the resentment sets in, black students are alienated from their professors. A strained relationship can be detrimental to a student’s academic progress because he or she is less likely to approach that professor with questions and concerns. Students who sensed stereotyping were less likely to visit during office hours and potentially missed out on information necessary to improve performance in class.

The benefits of having black faculty were stressed by the participants. Students who had black faculty felt their college experience was enhanced by the experience. Kenneth purposely chose a black professor every term. He knew that this contact would give him an opportunity to interact with someone he could “relate to.” He emphasized

that he did not seek out black faculty because he thought that they would be easy on him. In fact, most participants had the impression that black faculty are harder on them than other professors. They believed that black faculty were more demanding of black students because they had a vested interest in seeing them succeed. If the students have this perception of black professors and black students, it is reasonable to assume that they feel that white students and white professors have the same type of relationship. Participants believed that white students had an advantage when dealing with white faculty because the professors “look like their parents,” thus, the white students felt more comfortable with them. An increased level of comfort could mean that white students are more likely to attend office hours and develop good relationships with white faculty. Benefits of these good relationships may include higher grades, a better learning experience, future contacts for jobs and graduate school, and positive letters of recommendation.

The lack of a critical mass of black faculty on the campus leaves African American students without role models; whereas more black faculty could lead to greater diversity, an increased number of African American students, and academic integration of African American students. According to the participants, increasing the number of black faculty would improve their experiences and the experience of the entire campus since many white students complete their entire college career at UGA without ever having a black professor.

Administrative Commitment to Diversity and Equity

Allen (1992) found that it is primarily the responsibility of the administration to lead the diversity efforts in the campus community. Participants were very critical of the administration and their lack of commitment to diversity and equity. All of the participants felt that administrators could do more to increase diversity on the campus. Although disappointed in the administration's past efforts, a few of the subjects were hopeful that the administration would do more in the future.

A major issue of concern for the participants was UGA's recruitment and retention efforts. The students believed that UGA should invest more money and time in recruitment to ensure that black students know about UGA and feel comfortable coming here. The participants mentioned one such effort called Minority Preview Days. On Preview Days African American students visit the campus and see what UGA has to offer. Students thought this was a good idea, but they were critical of the effort because it depicts an unrealistic view of UGA. When potential students visited, they were bombarded with black events and introduced to black faculty and staff, consequently, they were unaware until orientation of how predominantly white the campus community is. Participants felt they had been deceived and misled during Minority Preview Day and would have preferred to experience the entire campus earlier. This deception by the university set the tone for the students' views of the administration and their lack of commitment to diversity. After orientation, students went home with a different view of UGA than they did upon leaving Minority Preview Day. Since orientation is held during the summer prior to the beginning of the academic year, African American students felt

they were at a disadvantage since it was probably too late to change schools or to rethink their decision.

Participants also were upset that UGA administrators feverishly recruit black athletes while ignoring black scholars. Students were given inadequate explanations as to why black athletes are courted and black scholars are overlooked. Participants that felt this phenomenon fed into the negative stereotype that blacks are athletically gifted and academically inferior. Participants believed that UGA values the athletic prowess of black athletes, while ignoring the intellect of black scholars.

UGA also has a hard time recruiting black students because of its “image problem.” The desegregation of the University of Georgia was very public and caught national headlines. Reporters and camera crews from across the nation descended on the Athens campus to get a glimpse of the dismantling of segregation in the South. According to participants, UGA has a negative image in the African American community because of its history of racism and discrimination. One participant said that it is hard for blacks to forget the image of Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes walking across campus under police protection.

To combat this negative image, according to participants, UGA should boost its recruiting efforts by devoting more money and resources to the task. UGA must be more creative in attempting to get students interested in attending the state’s flagship institution. The president of UGA, Dr. Michael Adams, has vowed to improve diversity at UGA. Some participants saw this as a deep commitment to increasing diversity, while others were less hopeful, waiting for action instead of lip service. Despite fighting

lawsuits and the race-based admissions policy, UGA has experienced a decrease in African American enrollment over the past several years.

UGA recently commemorated the 40th anniversary of the desegregation of the institution. This event featured speakers and programs chronicling the efforts to desegregate the campus by Charlayne Hunter, Hamilton Holmes, and their legal team. Participant views of this celebration were mixed. Some of the students were genuinely pleased with the university's effort to acknowledge the bitter battle. Other students saw this as a big public relations move to disguise the fact that UGA has problems. They expressed disappointment that UGA has not made more progress toward equity and diversity in the 40 years since desegregation. According to the participants, African American students are present on the campus, but most of them do not feel integrated into the campus.

Improving the Social and Academic Experiences of African American Students

It is of utmost importance for administrators to show a sincere level of support for minority students so that these students can feel like an integral part of the campus community. Senior-level administrators and faculty are responsible for creating a welcoming climate for all students and ensuring that students have the necessary resources to achieve their academic goals (Williams, J.B., 1997).

Accountability begins with the president and permeates the entire campus. Strong leaders should mandate that all units develop bold, effective initiatives, and they must hold the units accountable for results. Increasing the numbers of African American

students must be coupled with programs that increase interaction among all ethnic groups.

The information presented in this section provides UGA with suggestions for improving the campus climate. Issues such as UGA's history of discrimination against African Americans, the need for pre-collegiate programming, and scholarships will be addressed.

UGA's History of Exclusion

The University of Georgia has a long history of exclusion and discrimination toward African Americans, Georgia's largest minority group. Even today this history plays a significant role in current race relations. For 175 of its 217 years of existence, UGA did not allow blacks to enroll in undergraduate or graduate programs. This system of inequity and exclusion created a climate of institutional racism that has long lasting ramifications. UGA did not desegregate until mandated by a court order in 1961. It is important to note that this was seven years after the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision. Senior level administrators and Board of Regents members participated in the systematic exclusion of blacks by devising bogus admissions plans to ensure that blacks did not gain admission. Many African Americans witnessed and remember these events, and have not forgotten the hatred and violence directed at blacks. For this reason, it is important that UGA acknowledge its misdeeds toward African Americans.

Many people both black and white would rather forget the past and look forward to the future. For some, this course of action is satisfactory; however, for others a lack of

acknowledgement continues to leave them hurt and distrustful of UGA's current efforts to diversify the campus. During the dismantling of apartheid in South Africa, a truth council was seated so that all citizens could speak clearly of their wrong doings without fear of prosecution. UGA could benefit from its version of the South African truth commission by specifically detailing its role in the discrimination of blacks. This process would produce some painful memories, but it could serve as another step toward racial healing.

Pre-Collegiate Programs

UGA has a land grant mission of teaching, research, and service and is therefore charged with assisting Georgians with the issues that affect them. One such issue is the achievement gap between whites and underrepresented groups. As long as there is a significant difference in the quality of education between affluent whites, blacks, and the poor, the minority pipeline to UGA will continue to be small. For instance, in Clarke County the home of UGA's main campus, only 21% of African American seniors graduated with a college preparatory degree in 2001. Statistics like these do not bode well for UGA's recruitment efforts.

Pre-collegiate programs must be established to address the gap in standardized test scores, academic preparedness, and to introduce the idea of college attendance at an early age. These programs should involve K-12 students, community groups, parents and all campus units. The first phase of pre-collegiate programs must start in the early grades to prepare students academically and socially; thereby, the numbers of African

Americans in college preparatory curricula will increase. The second phase of pre-collegiate programs should focus on preparing students to select UGA as their college of choice. One way to do this is by exposing students to the wealth of resources at UGA. Students and their parents should be invited to campus to interact with faculty, staff and students. A standard, generic tour will not achieve the desired level of contact necessary to encourage African American students to attend UGA. The programs should be set up so that once a student is exposed to UGA properly, they can begin seeing themselves as future UGA bulldogs. Inviting people to campus who would not normally come, breaks invisible barriers and allows people to secure ownership of “their” university.

Scholarships

Financing college can be a major barrier to enrollment for African American students. To address this problem, UGA should develop a legally viable plan to provide scholarships to outstanding minority students. Students are admitted on merit and should be assisted with financing college if necessary. Money should not be a barrier to attending UGA. UGA has access to a vast number of legal minds and should use these resources to establish a legally viable financial assistance program for minorities. Private funds, which tend to have fewer restrictions, should also be used to establish scholarships. UGA is a top tier research university and should offer viable financial options for Georgia’s African American students. Instead, other institutions are more attractive because of the financial assistance offered to African American students.

Administrators should look at best practices nationwide and model UGA's scholarship programs after those programs that have been proven effective.

Creating a Better Climate at the University of Georgia

A critical mass of black faculty and administrators is necessary for UGA to attract significant numbers of black students. Black faculty serve as mentors, role models and confidants to black students. Students in the study complained about the low number of black faculty on campus. They spoke of having to search for a class to take that had a black instructor. A minority faculty hiring program should be initiated to recruit and retain scholars and administrators of color. Increasing the numbers would help in creating a more welcoming climate for black students.

UGA will have to address several other issues to create a better climate for African American students. The social scene must be enhanced for minority students. African American students felt left out of the three major social outlets: Greek life, downtown scene, and football. Student affairs personnel need to do a better job of encouraging African American students to get involved with these activities, or they must create other forms of socialization for students. UGA officials must speak with downtown merchants and address issues of discrimination at the establishments. Partnering with school districts with a high enrollment of black students should also be done. Having a casual relationship with these districts will not produce large gains in the numbers of African American students. Finally, UGA should critically review its admissions policies to determine if the policies are inadvertently excluding minority

students. For instance, heavy reliance on the Scholastic Aptitude Test may not be the best way to evaluate minority students for admissions.

Campus Diversity Initiatives

In 2001, UGA recently established an office to address campus diversity and equity. This is a major step by UGA to make the campus more reflective of the state's population and to make the campus more inviting for minority students. However, the creation of this office should not absolve other campus units from addressing issues of inclusiveness. Establishing this office is definitely a significant sign of commitment by the administration to address current inequities. This effort is in the early stages and, therefore, it is too early to know the impact such an office may have on the campus.

Limitations of the Study

Although this research provides valuable information on the experiences of African American students at a traditionally white institution in the South, it does not allow for generalizations. Information was gathered from only one underrepresented group; consequently, it should not be assumed that all minority groups have the same issues. These reported perceptions and experiences may be unique to the research participants and, therefore, should be considered accordingly. Additionally, these students do not speak for all African Americans on the University of Georgia campus. Because of the qualitative methodology used, the number of participants was small. It is difficult to conduct interviews with large numbers of participants because of limited

resources and time. Nevertheless, valuable insights were gained through this research, and implications and issues for further research are noted below

Suggestions and Issues for Further Research

The University of Georgia is evolving into one of the premier public institutions in the nation; however, UGA must not exclude a significant portion of the state's population as it meets the challenges of the 21st century. As the flagship institution in a state with a large minority population, UGA must continue to forge ahead with its missions of teaching, research, and service to all Georgians while improving the social environment, academic culture, and overall campus climate for African American students.

To build on this research, a university-wide assessment of campus climate should be conducted. This assessment should involve faculty, staff, and students to develop an accurate gauge of how people view the campus. It is clear from this study that more information is needed about the experiences and perceptions of all minority groups on campus to determine if the issues presented here resonate with others. A campus wide assessment would give administrators an overview of issues needing attention and would allow for the creation of a strategic plan to remedy problems.

Studies should be done to determine the benefits of increasing the number of black faculty for black students at TWIs as well as for white students. Information on how UGA is perceived within the larger African American community should also be obtained and used to improve the university's image through a genuine commitment to

expanding diversity and establishing equity. Another important study is to investigate the academic and non-academic reasons that African American students give for leaving the University of Georgia. Studies of retention and attrition would assist administrators in developing solid retention programs to help African Americans complete their studies.

To improve the social and academic experience of black students, a critical mass of African American students must be present on the campus. If black students have a good experience, it is likely that they will spread the word and encourage other black students to consider UGA. In order for UGA to be a world class institution and compete in a global society, it must not just embrace the spirit of diversity, it must actively pursue equality in admissions and work to develop a campus that is welcoming and comfortable for all of its students, especially those who the university has excluded and discriminated against in the past. Studies are needed to examine the recruitment efforts aimed at African American students by traditionally white institutions across the nation.

Closing Comments

This research provided insight into how current racial and legal issues affect African American students' perception of the climate at the University of Georgia. It is clear that the anti-affirmative climate and other racially charged incidents have a negative affect on the academic and social experiences of African Americans at UGA. African American students were at the center of the major racial issues during the time of this study. Based on the comments of the students in this study, it is evident that the UGA climate must be improved.

REFERENCES

- Adair, A.V. (1984). *Desegregation: The Illusion of black progress*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Allen, W.R. (1984). Race consciousness and collective commitments among black students on white campuses. *Western Journal of Black Studies*, 8, 156-166.
- Allen, W.R. (1985). Black student, white campus: Structural, interpersonal, and psychological correlates of success. *Journal of Negro Education*, 54, 135-147.
- Allen, W.R. (1988). Black students in U.S. higher education: Toward improved access, adjustment, and achievement. *Urban Review*, 20, 165-87.
- Allen, W.R. (1992). The Color of success: African-American college student outcomes of predominantly white and historically black public colleges and universities. *Harvard Educational Review*, 62, p. 26-44.
- Allen, W.R. & Hanniff, N.Z. (1991). Race, gender, and academic performance in U.S. higher education. In W.R. Allen, E.G. Epps, & N.Z. Hanniff (Eds.), *College in Black and White* (pp. 95-110). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Anderson, J. (1988). *The education of blacks in the south, 1860-1935*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press
- Anderson, T. (1988). Black encounters of racism and elitism in white academe. *Journal of Black Studies*, 18, 259-272.
- Astin, A.W. (1968). *The college environment*. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education.
- Bogdan, R. & Bilken, S. K. *Qualitative research for education*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Burd, S. (1998). House votes down proposal to bar racial preferences in admissions. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Retrieved March 1999, from www.chronicle.com.
- Department of Technical and Adult Education (2002). *Hope Scholarship Program*. Retrieved June 1, 2002 from www.dtae.org/hope.html>

- DuBois, W.E.B., (1973). *The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960*. Herbert Aptheker (Ed.). New York: Monthly Review Press.
- Dyer, T.G. (1985). *The University of Georgia: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press.
- Eastland, T. & Bennett, W. (1979) *Counting by race: Equality from the founding fathers to Bakke and Weber*. New York: Basic Books.
- Eustis, R. (2001, August, 29). The long and winding road. *Fulton County Daily Report*. Retrieved June 23, 2002 from <http://www.uga.edu/lexis-nexis.com>.
- Farrell Jr., W.C. & Jones, C.K. (1988). Recent racial incidents in higher education: A Preliminary perspective. *The Urban Review*, 20, 211-226.
- Feagin, J.R. & Sikes, M.P. (1995). How black students cope with racism on white campuses. *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, Summer*, 91-97.
- Fossett, M.A. & Kiecolt, K.J. (1989). The relative size of minority populations and white racial attitudes. *Social Science Quarterly*, 70, 820-835.
- Georgia Department of Education (2002). *System Report Cards*. Retrieved July 8, 2002, from <http://accountability.doe.k12.ga.us/report01>.
- Georgia Student Finance Commission (2002). *Overview of Eligible Students*. Retrieved July 8, 2002, from http://www.gsfc.org/HOPE/dsp_hopeos.cfm.
- Globetti, E.C. (1993). Social interaction and multiculturalism. *NASPA Journal*, 30, 209-18.
- Hannon, S. (2000). Columns. *Faculty Committee recommends changes to admissions criteria*. Retrieved March 20, 2000, from www.uga.edu/columns/000313/campusnews3.htm
- Harvey, W.B. (2001). *Minorities in Higher Education 2000-2001*. American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.
- Hebel, S. (2000, August 4). Federal judge declares U. of Georgia's admissions policies unconstitutional. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, p. A28.
- Herrington, A. (2000, September 7). Alpha Gamma Delta suspended. *The Red and Black* p. 1.
- Howard University Institute for the Study of Educational Policy. (1976). *Equal educational opportunity for blacks in U.S. higher education*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press.

- Hurtado, S. (1992). The campus racial climate. *Journal of Higher Education*, 63, 539-569.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J.F., Clayton-Pederson, A.R. & Allen, W.R. (1998). Enhancing campus climates for racial/ethnic diversity: Educational Policy and Practice. *The Review of Higher Education*, 21, 279-302.
- Hurtado, S., Milem, J.F., Clayton-Pederson, A.R. & Allen, W.R. (1999). Enacting diverse learning environments: Improving campus climate for racial/ethnic diversity in higher education. *ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report Volume 26, No. 8*. Washington, D.C.: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.
- Jackson, K.W. & Swan, A.L. (1991). Institutional and individual factors affecting black undergraduate student performance: Campus race and student gender. In W.R. Allen, E.G. Epps & N.Z. Hanniff (Eds.), *College in Black and White* (pp. 127-142). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Jaschik, S. & Lederman, D. (1996, March 29). Appeals court bars racial preference in college admissions. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Kanter, R.M. (1977). Some effects of proportions on group life: Skewed sex ratios and responses to token women. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82, 965-989.
- Merriam, S.B., (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.
- Myers, S. L. (1989) *Desegregation, enhancement and integration*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.
- Nettles, M.T. (1991). Racial similarities and differences in the predictors of college student achievement. In W.R. Allen, E.G. Epps, N.Z. Hannif (Eds.), *College in Black and White* (pp.75-91). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Orfield, G. & Paul, F. (1988). Declines in minority access: A tale of five cities. *Educational Record, Fall/Winter*, 57-62.
- Pease, J. H. & Pease, W.H. (1974). *They who would be free: Blacks' search for freedom, 1830-1861*. New York: Atheneum.
- Peshkin, A. (1988). In search of subjectivity—one's own. *Educational Researcher*, 17, 17-21.

- Peterson, M.W., Blackburn, R.T., Gamson, Z.E., Arce, C.H., Davenport, R.W., & Mingle, J.R. (1978). *Black students on white campuses: The impacts of increased blacks enrollments*. Ann Arbor: Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan.
- Schmidt, P. (1996, November 15). California vote to ban racial preferences sparks lawsuits, protests. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Smedley, A. (1993). *Race in North America: Origin and evolution of a world view*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Smith, A.W. (1991). Personal traits, institutional prestige, racial attitudes, and black student academic performance in college. In W.R. Allen, E.G. Epps, & N.Z. Hanniff (Eds.), *College in Black and White* (pp. 111-126). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Thomas, G. (1981). *Black students in higher education*. London: Greenwood Press.
- Thomas, G. (1991). Assessing the college major selection process for black students. In W.R. Allen, E.G. Epps, & N.Z. Hanniff (Eds.), *College in Black and White* (pp.61-74). Albany, NY: State University of New York.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research*, 45, 89-125.
- United States Census Bureau, (2000). Profile of general demographic characteristics for the United States. Retrieved March 4, 2001 from <http://www.census.gov>.
- University of Georgia, Institutional Research and Planning. (1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001). *University of Georgia Fact Book*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia, Institution Research and Planning.
- University of Georgia (2002). The mission of the University of Georgia. Retrieved February 26, 2002, from University of Georgia website: <http://www.uga.edu/uga/purpose.html>
- University of Georgia Minority Services and Programs (2001). *Organizations*. Retrieved November 11, 2001, from <http://www.uga.edu/msp/organizations.htm>
- Williams, John. (1988) *Desegregating America's Colleges and Universities: Title VI Regulation of Higher Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Williams, J. B. (1997). *Race Discrimination In Public Higher Education*. Westport: Praeger

Wilson, B.F. & Wilson, M.D. (1979). Higher education in Georgia: The struggle for equity. *The Negro Educational Review* 30, 203-209.

Woodson, C.G. (2000). *The miseducation of the Negro*. Chicago: African American Images.

Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods*. (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

APPENDIX A
INFORMATION CARD

Information Card

Name _____

Campus Address/Local Address _____

Hometown _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Are you a transfer student? Yes No

Did you receive HOPE as a freshman? Yes No

What is your classification? Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

Major _____

Would you be willing to participate in an interview to discuss your academic, social, and financial experiences at the University of Georgia?

Yes No (If yes, you may be contacted to schedule an interview.)

*****If selected to participate in the interview, you will receive 2 movie passes!***

If you have questions or concerns, please contact Tracey Ford at 583-0454 or fordt@arches.uga.edu.

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Academic

1. How would you characterize your academic experience at UGA?
2. How would describe your relationship with Faculty?
3. How would you characterize your in-class experience?
4. How would you characterize your academic experience beyond the classroom?

Social

1. How would you characterize your social involvement at UGA?
2. Describe the types of clubs and organizations that you are a member of?
3. Describe your involvement in activities geared toward minorities?
4. Describe your social relationship with
 - Faculty
 - staff
 - other students (white and minority)

Financial Aid

1. How are you funding college?
2. Do you have to work to help pay for your education?
3. How would you characterize your experience with the HOPE scholarship program?
4. Describe how your family contributes and assists you financially?

Capstone Questions

1. Which of your experiences has been most helpful to your academic experience at UGA?
2. What has enabled you to persist and succeed?
3. What has been the least helpful experience?

APPENDIX C

CITED COURT CASES

Adams v. Richardson, 356 F. Supp. 92 (1973)

Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483, 74 S. Ct. 686 (1954)

Gaines v. Canada, 305 U.S. 337, 352, 59 S. Ct. 232, 238 (1938)

Holmes v. Danner, 191 F. Supp. 394, 398, 407 (M.D. Ga. 1961)

Hopwood v. State of Texas 78 F. 3d. 932 (5th Cir. 1996)

McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 339 U.S. 637-642 (1950)

Pearson et al. v. Murray, Court of Appeals of Maryland 592 (1936)

Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896)

Regents of University of California v. Bakke, 98. S. Ct. 2733 (1978)

Sipuel v. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, 332 U.S. 631, 68 S. Ct. 299 (1948)

Sweatt v. Painter, 339 U.S. 629 (1950).

Ward v. Regents, 191 F. Supp. 491 (N.D. Ga 1957).

Wooden v. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, 247 F. 3d 1262 (2001).

APPENDIX D

CHRONOLOGY OF UGA LAWSUIT

The following is a chronology of events leading to Monday's 11th Circuit decision declaring unconstitutional The University of Georgia's use of racial preferences in **admissions**. This chronology was culled from the archives of the Daily Report and the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, and from interviews with the parties.

March 1997: Attorney A. Leroy "Lee" Parks Jr. files suit in U.S. District Court in Savannah on behalf of 11 white and black plaintiffs. The suit charges that The University of Georgia applies unconstitutional racial preferences in **admissions**, and that Georgia's historically black colleges Fort Valley State, Albany State and Savannah State unconstitutionally segregate black students. *Wooden v. Board of Regents*, 247 F.3d 1262 (11th Cir. 2001).

March 1999: Edenfield dismisses claims brought by black plaintiffs in *Wooden*, ruling that the four plaintiffs lacked standing. That portion of the complaint was brought not on behalf of students, but of educators and school administrators concerned about disparities in quality between Georgia's historically black colleges and the state's other universities.

July 1999: Edenfield tosses out the remaining plaintiffs' claims in *Wooden*, saying that the university did not rely on race as a factor in denying their applications for **admission**. However, Edenfield also warns UGA that its **admissions** policies do not meet constitutional standards.

August 1999: Parks files suit on behalf of Jennifer L. Johnson, who was denied **admission** in 1999. Johnson, a white woman, claims the school discriminated against her because of her race and sex. The school offers Johnson **admission** to its freshman class a few days after the suit is filed but she does not drop her suit. A week later, the school stops its policy of using gender as a factor in **admissions** decisions.

September 1999: Parks files suit on behalf of Aimee Bogrow and Molly Ann Beckenhauer, two other white women who claimed UGA's **admissions** policy discriminated against them on the basis of their race and sex. Their suit later would be joined with Johnson's.

October 1999: Johnson, Bogrow and Beckenhauer ask Edenfield to grant an injunction barring UGA from considering race in its **admissions** process.

April 2000: The 11th Circuit directs Edenfield to reconsider his ruling in *Wooden*, which dismissed some plaintiffs' claims because their rejections had not been based on race, and

which dismissed complaints from black educators about segregation at historically black colleges in Georgia.

May 2000: Parks sues on behalf of Virginia Noble and Robert Homlar, two white applicants to the University of Georgia School of Law, who claim they were denied **admission** on the basis of their race.

June 2000: Edenfield says his order in Wooden stands.

July 2000: Edenfield grants summary judgment to Bogrow, Johnson and Beckenhauer, and declares that UGA's use of race in its **admissions** policy violates constitutional principles. *Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University of Georgia*, 106 F. Sup. 2d 1362 (2000). Edenfield holds that Justice Powell's opinion in *Regents of the Univ. of Cal. v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265 (1978), is not binding precedent, and declares UGA's **admissions** policy unconstitutional. The judge orders the university to grant the women **admission** and damages. However, he does not grant the plaintiffs' request for an injunction barring the use of race in **admissions**.

August 2000: The university appeals Edenfield's order in Johnson, but announces that in the meantime it voluntarily will suspend its practice of using race as a factor in undergraduate **admissions**.

February 2001: UGA agrees to admit Homlar to the School of Law and to pay him \$15,000 to settle his suit against the university. It offers Noble, who does not attend UGA, \$20,000. The settlement did not require the school to change its **admissions** policies, and representatives for the university dispute whether Homlar was admitted as a full student or a visiting student, who would not receive his degree from UGA School of Law on completing his last year. *Noble v. Georgia Board of Regents*, No. 4:00-cv-133 (S.D. Ga. Feb. 5, 2001).

April 2001: The 11th Circuit affirms Edenfield's decision in Wooden to dismiss the complaints of black plaintiffs about historically black colleges, and the discrimination complaints of applicants denied **admission** to UGA on a basis other than race. However, the court reinstates the claims of Craig Green, one of the plaintiffs, who was denied **admission** to UGA in March 1997.

August 27, 2001: An 11th Circuit panel affirms Edenfield's order granting summary judgment to Bogrow, Beckenhauer and Johnson. It also declares that the University of Georgia's policy of granting preferential treatment to minority applicants in the **admissions** process is unconstitutional.

Source: R. Eustis, *Fulton County Daily Report*