RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE AND

INVOLVEMENT IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES, INTERNSHIPS, JOBS,

AND STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

By

SARAH MICHELLE KANE

(Under the direction of Dennis Duncan)

ABSTRACT

This study explored the impact of extra-curricular activities on the communication

competence of undergraduate students. The study surveyed 122 undergraduate students

enrolled in select classes in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences at

the University of Georgia. Involvement rates and means of impact on communication

confidence were measured. Students involved in extra-curricular activities had high

means of communication competence improvement. Date shows that extra-curricular

activities, internships, study abroad programs and jobs improved students perceived

communication skill competence.

Index Words: Communication competence, Communication apprehension, Extra-
curricular activities, Course work, Internships, Leadership, Self-efficacy,
Study-abroad programs, Jobs, Student-athlete, Honors Student,
Scholarship Student, Leadership, Problem-solving, Validity, Reliability

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SARAH MICHELLE KANE

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SARAH MICHELLE KANE

Major Professor: Dennis Duncan

Committee: Nick Fuhrman
K. Jill Rucker

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to everyone who has believed in me. To my family who has graciously funded my education from the first day I stepped on the University of Georgia campus in 2006. To my friends, who have supported me emotionally throughout my years as a Bulldawg. Finally, to my husband, who proofread every paper I wrote in college and graduate school, for which I am eternally grateful.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The time spent in college is an intellectual growing period for undergraduate

students. Personal growth can eventually mean success for students: some succeed and

some do not. What are the contributing factors to success of a college students'

communication efficacy? Communication skills are one of the most simple life skills but

can also be the hardest to achieve. To succeed as a contributing member of society one

must be able to effectively communicate with a diverse audience. Since college is a time

for professional and personal growth, undergraduates can improve on their

communication skills. There is a need to understand the factors contributing to an

undergraduate students' communication skill development.

Employers ideal job candidates are expected to have polished communication

skills as well as leadership skills, teamwork skills, initiative, interpersonal and social

networking skills, problem solving skills and analytical skills, among others (Employers,

2010). A primary function of a higher education institution should be to prepare students

for the workforce. The means for achieving this goal can stem from curriculum and other

activities. Higher education has a responsibility to provide undergraduate students with

the knowledge and exposure to experiences necessary for success in America's society

(Coers, Williams, & Duncan, 2010).

A study completed in 2008 by the Center for Agribusiness and Economic

Development at the University of Georgia showed that job candidates (undergraduates

seeking positions) were overly focused on technical skills and not soft skills. They found

that job candidates had poor communication skills, needed more emphasis on leadership

skills, critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills. Some employers in Silicon

Valley reported that sometimes college graduates do not have adequate communication

skills to complete jobs (Stevens, 2005). Employers believe it is part of the higher

education systems responsibility to teach these skills to the students before they graduate

into the work field (Cassidy, 2006). Regardless, it may be argued that college students

need more communication skills to make them successful in the workforce.

Statement of Problem

Employers are unsatisfied with recent university graduates soft skills like public

speaking, leadership and analytical skills. This is a major problem facing job retention. Is

there a solution for this problem? What parts of college life influence undergraduate

students' communication skills? How can certain activities offered in college help

undergraduates have more desirable communication skills for their career?

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if certain activities that

undergraduates participated in influence their perceived communication confidence, as it

relates to communication abilities. To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives

were identified; 1) Determine the relationship between students' course work and their

perceived importance and confidence in specific communication situations; 2) Determine

the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their

perceived confidence in communication skills; 3) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills; and 4) Determine if students demographics influence their involvement rates in certain extra-curricular activities.

Research Questions

The study focused on the following research questions?

1. What are students' perceptions of important aspects of undergraduate course work in relation to confidence in communication skills?

2. What are students' extra-curricular activities and do they positively affect confidence in communication skills?

3. What leadership roles in extra-curricular activities do students find that positively affect confidence in communication skills?

4. What are students' perceptions of internships and do they positively affect confidence in communication skills?

5. What are students' perceptions of study abroad programs and do they positively affect confidence in communication skills?

6. What are students' perceptions of jobs and do they positively affect confidence in communication skills?

7. Do students from certain colleges at UGA have higher communication skill confidence?

8. Do students on scholarship at UGA have higher communication skill confidence?

9. Do student athletes at UGA have higher communication skill confidence?

10. Do honor's students at UGA have higher communication skill confidence?

11. Do males/female students at UGA have higher communication skill confidence?

Significance of Study

Finding what activities promote communication skill development in undergraduate students could affect the way students interact in their college years and consequent careers. Implications of this data could suggest certain activities that could transform student communication skills to make them more confident when entering the workforce. If universities have data that suggests one or more extra-curricular activities produce more confident communicators they can endorse and advocate for participation in those activities. Having this information will help inform future college attendees what activities can help grow them in their communication confidence throughout their undergraduate years.

Operational Definitions

- *Communication competence-* Communication competence is defined as the degree to which a communicator's goals are achieved through effective and appropriate interaction (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989).

- *Communication apprehension-* Communication apprehension is defined as the apprehension an individual has toward interpersonal communication (Daly & McCroskey, 1975).

- *Course work-* For the purposes of this study, course work is defined as the classes students complete during their undergraduate career and any work associated to those classes.

- *Extra-curricular activities-* A form of involvement that occurs outside of the classroom, which includes organized involvement in on-campus or community (off-campus) groups or organizations (Haber, 2006). (For the purpose of this study varsity athletes can state their participation in varsity sports as an extra-curricular activity.)

- *Honors Student-* An honors student is a student that is part of the honors program at the University of Georgia.

- *Internships-* The University of Georgia Career Center defines internships as "a temporary position for the student or recent graduate with an emphasis on providing intentional learning objectives tied to the student's career goals or field of study" (University of Georgia Career Center).

- *Jobs-* A part-time or full-time job that an undergraduate student obtains while pursuing a degree.

- *Leadership-* Leadership is a process where by an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2010).

- *Problem-solving-* Problem solving involves the process of finding a solution to something that needs to change or a deviation from what you expected to happen.

- *Reliability-* Freedom from measurement (or random) error. In practice, this boils down to the consistency or stability of a measure or test from one use to the next.

When repeated measurements of the same thing give identical or very similar results, the measurement instrument is said to be reliable(Vogt, 1999).

- *Scholarship Student*- A scholarship student is a student at the University of Georgia who retains a scholarship other than the HOPE scholarship.
- *Self-efficacy*- self-efficacy refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to meet situational demands (Bandura, 1977).
- *Student-athlete*- A student athlete is defined as an athlete that is involved in one of the University of Georgia's nineteen varsity sports teams (on scholarship or not on scholarship (Open Doors- 2011 Fast Facts, 2011).
- *Study-abroad programs*- Short term stay (summer/6 weeks/less), mid-length stay (one semester/2 quarters), or long terms stay (one year/school year) where students take classes abroad.
- *Validity*- A term to describe a measurement instrument or test that accurately measures what it is supposed to measure; the extent to which a measure is free of *systematic error. Validity requires reliability, but the reverse is not true (Vogt, 1999).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to students (n=122) in targeted courses in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences during fall 2011 semester at the University of Georgia.

Limitations

The primary limitation of this study is participants in this study represent a small number of students from courses taught in the CAES. Because of this, the generalizability of these results is limited. Also, because this study serves as a pilot test for a new survey, the potential for measurement error exists. However, steps were taken to minimize the potential influence of measurement error and these steps are described in Chapter three.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine what parts of college life potentially influence undergraduate students communication skills and how certain activities offered in college help undergraduates have more desirable communication skills for their career. Additionally, this study focused on the following demographics: gender, year in school, college, major, scholarship, athletics, and honors. Chapter one offered a short summary of college graduate expectations in relation to communication aptitude. Research objectives and questions were discussed. Chapter two will discuss relevant literature concerning communication competence and the role of certain extra-curricular activities in communication development in undergraduate students.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature pertaining to the topic of this research. The review will explore the various extra-curricular outlets available in collegiate settings. The review is divided into the following sections: (1) Theoretical Framework; (2) Communication Competence; (3) Self-efficacy; (4) Course Work; (5) Extra-Curricular Activities; (6) Internships; (7) Study Abroad; (8) Jobs; and (9) Summary.

Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, student involvement is defined by Astin's Theory of Involvement (1999) as the amount of physical and psychological energy the student devotes to the academic experience. College students can be involved in a wide range of activities to include studying, working at a part-time job, extra-curricular activities and more. Astin suggested involvement is "not so much what the individual thinks or feels, but what the individual does, how he or she behaves, that defines and identifies involvement" (Astin, 1999, p. 519).

Astin's Theory of Student Involvement has been noted to have similarities to Freudian concept of *cathexis.* Freud believed people place physiological energy in objects and other people, which relates directly to being involved with something or

someone (Astin, 1999). Astin also suggests involvement relates to effort, vigilance and time-on-task.

Astin's Theory of Involvement comes from his research in student persistence. The findings of Astin's longitudinal study of undergraduate student persistence suggested uninvolved students were more likely to drop out than those highly involved (Astin, 1975). Any positive factor contributing to a students college life helped retention. Positive factors included place of residence, extra-curricular activities, and holding a part-time job on campus (Astin, 1999). The 1975 study also found students are more likely to persist at religious universities and black students are more likely to persist at black universities. Students who felt "connected" to their university and found their place to fit were more likely to continue with their undergraduate careers than those who did not. The most common reason for dropping out was boredom of classes, which implies a low involvement factor. After his initial research on persistence, Astin decided to look deeper into the specific involvement factors and their effect on college.

In the 1977 book *Four Critical Years,* Astin overviews his longitudinal study of more than 200,000 undergraduate students on 80 different outcomes based on different student involvement including place of residence, honors programs, undergraduate research participation, social fraternities and sororities, academic involvement, student-faculty interaction, athletic involvement, and involvement in student government (Astin, 1999). This research identified certain college activities that promote student involvement and success. From the data collected Astin concluded that place of residence, honors programs, academic involvement, student-faculty interaction, athletic

involvement, and involvement in student government produce positive impacts on student development.

The Student Involvement Theory suggests that higher education influences students beyond the classroom. Faculty and administrators can focus on the more passive, uninvolved students to help them find their place in the university. This theory also advises universities to remember the students and not only the research and other obligations to the faculty (Astin, 1977). Furthermore, Astin suggests more research on this topic of student involvement. The research presented in this thesis is directed to answering questions surrounding student involvement and its impact on communication competence, which is reviewed in the following section.

Communication Competence

Communication competence is broadly defined as the degree to which a communicator's goals are achieved through effective and appropriate interaction (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Communication competence in college-aged students is related to college success (Rubin, Graham, & Mignerey, 1990). Rubin, Rubin and Jordan (1997) found students in basic skills communication classes with low competence and high apprehension achieved large positive changes in communication competence over a period of time. Communication competence can be linked to higher self-esteem in some groups. People with higher communication competence have also been noted to be more positive than others (McCroskey, Richmond, Daly, & Falcione, 1977).

Communication apprehension is defined as the level of fear or anxiety associated with either real or anticipated communication with another person or persons (McCroskey J. C., 1982). Communication apprehension is a determinate on undergraduates' college success (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Communication apprehension (CA) is an agent of both interpersonal and academic success. Students with high CA were found to be more likely to drop out of college than students with low CA (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Studies have supported that students with high CA desired occupations with a low communication responsibilities such as mailman, statistician, computer programmer, farmer, assembly line worker, radiologist, research chemist, proof-reader, accountant, landscape gardener, botanist, miner, house painter and artist (Daly & McCroskey, 1975).

Self-Efficacy

Albert Bandura defines self-efficacy as ones personal beliefs about one's capabilities to perform actions, such as public speaking (Bandura, 1977). If someone feels efficacious in a certain situation they therefore should be successful in that situation. Self-efficacy changes peoples behavioral choices. People tend to avoid threatening situations in which they do not believe they can handle. Conversely, people thrive in situations in which they feel in charge and tend to behave assuredly (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy can also influence what types of activities a person will participate in. Efficacy can also determine how long and how much energy one will exert in a experience (Bandura, 1977). The concept of self-efficacy differs in magnitude depending

on the situation and a persons threshold to handle said situation. A persons belief in oneself is an essential factor for self-efficacy (Bandura A. , 1993)

Course Work

Undergraduates' completion of a basic skills communication class can increase communication satisfaction and lower communication apprehension (Schroeder, 2002). As stated in the communication competence section, students involvement in communication courses can elicit higher communication competence and lower communication apprehension (McCroskey, Booth-Butterfield, & Payne, 1989). Students with high communication apprehension show large gains in confidence and satisfaction from completion of basic skills communication courses (Schroeder, 2002). Students involved in basic communication classes have shown improvement in communication competence in class, work, and social settings. (Zabava Ford & Wolvin, 1993).

Astin's Theory of Student Involvement visits the importance of student-faculty interaction. The longitudinal study found frequent student and faculty interaction was more related to college satisfaction than any other involvement factor (i.e. place of residence, student government involvement etc.) (Astin, 1977). Overall institutional satisfaction including peer interaction, intellectual environment satisfaction was higher when students had frequent out of class time with faculty.

Extra-Curricular Activities (Involvement)

As stated in the conceptual framework section student involvement is defined as the amount of physical and psychological energy the student devotes to the academic

experience (Astin, 1999). Extra-curricular activities add different dimensions to student's college experience and can reinforce the goals of higher education (Tchibozo & Pasteur, 2007). Additionally, extra-curricular activities can help undergraduate students with the transition from college to the workplace (Tchibozo & Pasteur, 2007). Students who are un-involved with extra-curricular activities have been found to have a lower occupational status than those students who were involved with out of class activities (Tchibozo & Pasteur, 2007).

Extra-curricular activities have also been positively associated with student persistence and educational attainment (Ullah & Wilson, 2007). Undergraduates' involvement in student organizations enhances intellectual development, increases college experience satisfaction, and increases campus and community involvement (Montelongo, 2002). Participation in extra-curricular activities gives students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to "real-world" situations that will in turn help them succeed in life after graduation (Astin, 1993). Participation in extra-curricular activities have also been shown to be a strong predictor of work-place competence, stronger than grades (Kuh, 1995). Studies have shown students who are active in almost any extra-curricular activity are less likely to drop out than students who are not involved (Astin, 1999). College student organizations (extra-curricular opportunities) generally fall under the following categories: " governing bodies, greek letter social organizations, student government groups, academic clubs and professional honor societies, publication and media groups, service groups, intramural sports clubs, religious organizations and special interest/cultural groups" (Montelongo, 2002; Astin, 1993; Craig & Warner 1991).

From a qualitative study completed in 2005, data suggested that students who had a meaningful involvement in activities such as sports teams, student government association and band "helped clarify personal values and interests, and helped students experience diverse peers, learn about self, and develop new skills" (Komives, Owen, Longerbean, Mainella, & Osteen, 2005, p. 598).

Extra Curricular Activities (Leadership)

As previously stated, extra-curricular activities add depth and opportunity to the college experience. Furthermore, participation as a leader in extra-curricular activities can promote growth in areas such as personal development in undergraduates. Kuh (1995) showed leadership responsibilities came second only to peer interaction in positive changes in an undergraduate students personal development with academics, institutional ethos, faculty-contact, and work (Kuh, 1995). Students noted leadership positions gave them the opportunity to learn in the "real-world" classroom. Participating in leadership positions helps students learn skills needed for the workplace such as time-management, budgeting, and communicating with large, diverse groups. A study of students in leadership roles and students not involved in a leadership role concluded that leadership roles provide opportunity to sustain and further develop developmental skills (Haber, 2006).

Internships

The University of Georgia Career Center defines internships as "a temporary position for the student or recent graduate with an emphasis on providing intentional

learning objectives tied to the student's career goals or field of study" (University of Georgia Career Center). Internships offer a bridge between college and the work-force for undergraduate students. Internships are mutually beneficial to students, employers and universities (Coco, 2000). "Typically, 30% of each year's graduating seniors have job offers before graduation, but if the student completed an internship the percentage jumps to 58%" (Coco, 2000). Internships tend to create more refined graduates that make the transition to the workforce smoother for themselves as well as for their employers.

A study of business school alumni at West Chester University showed students who participated in an internship during their undergraduate career had significant early career advantages compared to non-intern experienced students. Some of these advantages include less time to obtain their first job, increased monetary compensation, and greater overall job satisfaction (Gault, Redington, & Schlager, 2000). Another study cited that internships provide the critical role to fill the gap between course work and the working world (Hergert, 2009).

Study Abroad

According to the University of Georgia Provost for International Education, Kavita Pandit, study abroad programs are "critical to students for a number of reasons. First, it contributes to their learning, teaching them that it's better to listen, observe and reflect on what's going on around them. They also gain personal benefits, the quiet confidence that 'I can do this,' whether it's catch a bus or learn a foreign language." "Finally, it gives them global skills and competencies. There is no doubt that employers value study abroad experience when they look at résumés" (University of Georgia

Foundation, 2011). The International Education Exchange cited 270,604 undergraduate students across the United States participated in international study abroad programs in the 2009-2010 school year (Open Doors- 2011 Fast Facts, 2011). Of the 270, 604 study-abroad students, 56.6 percent participated in a short-term stay (summer/8 weeks or less), 41.1 percent mid-length stay (one/two quarters or one semester), and 3.9 percent did a long-term stay of an academic or calendar year. For the 2009-2010 academic year, undergraduate institutions graduated 1,642,979 students and 14 percent participated in study-abroad programs (Open Doors- 2011 Fast Facts, 2011).

Researchers at Texas Christian University found students who participated in study abroad programs had a greater change in intercultural communication skills than students who did not participate (Williams, 2005). Some studies of students who participated in study-abroad programs have also shown that the students have superior problem-solving skills, strong communication skills, and had the ability to work effectively with diverse populations (Williams, 2005).

The Institute of International Education of Students (IES) surveyed over 2,300 study aboard alumni from 1950-1999 and found study abroad programs are usually the defining moment in a young person's life (Dwyer & Peters, 2004). Ninety-seven percent of respondents said study abroad programs increased maturity, 96 percent reported increased self-confidence and 80 percent of respondents reported an enhanced interest in academics (Dwyer & Peters, 2004). This study by IES as well as a study completed by the University of Delaware shows even short-term study abroad programs have significant impacts on a student's self-perceived personal development.

Jobs

While some believe that attending college is a full-time job, it is essential for some students to work part-time or even full-time to afford to attend college. Recent national statistics showed up to 68 percent of all college students work during the academic year and one-third of the working students clock 20 or more hours per week (Pike, Kuh, & Mass-McKinley, 2008). Research is inconclusive about the benefits and consequences of working college students. According to Astin's Theory of Student Involvement, a part-time job at an on-campus facility helps improve retention rates (Astin, 1999). But, the same research also admits students who work off-campus at a full-time job hurts retention rates. Research shows the more time spent away from academic activities causes retention rates suffer (Astin, 1999). A study completed at a small liberal arts college showed students who worked a job for 10-19 hours per week tended to excel in the classroom over their non-working peers (Dundes & Marx, 2006). Another study showed that there was a statically significant negative relationship between working 20 hours or more a week and grades (Pike, Kuh, & Mass-McKinley, 2008). Although, there is much discrepancy on the effects of working while in college, students who survive college while working show interpersonal competence (personal-satisfaction) and practical competence (time-management) (Kuh, 1995).

Summary

Chapter two has provided relevant literature concerning communication competence and the role of certain extra-curricular activities in communication development in undergraduate students. The literature has demonstrated there are benefits

for students who are involved in certain extra-curricular activities on their

communication skills.

      Chapter three will discuss the methods and procedures utilized in this study,

including the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, and the measures

and scoring.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to determine if certain activities that undergraduates participated in influence their perceived communication confidence, as it relates to communication abilities. To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives were identified; 1) Determine the relationship between students' course work and their perceived importance and confidence in specific communication situations; 2) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills; 3) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills; and 4) Determine if students demographics influence their involvement rates in certain extra-curricular activities.

All research was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for research involving human subjects at the University of Georgia (Appendix C).

Respondents

The selection of participants for this survey was done by convenience sampling. Students completing select leadership and communication based courses in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences were asked to complete the survey. Classes were all from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication. The five classes were chosen because they contained a large variety of

students from different backgrounds, majors and different years in school (first, second, third, fourth etc). The researcher chose these specific classes due to the availability made to visit the classes from professors. A cover letter and survey was distributed during a class period and students were asked to fill out the survey and return before class concluded. The researcher spoke to each class about the research and gave out the surveys, waited for them to be completed and left the class within the first 20 minutes. All surveys were voluntary and anonymous. All data was collected in the fall of 2011 in the middle of the semester.

A total of 125 students were asked to participate in the survey. Of the 125 students, 122 completed the survey, resulting in a 97.6 percent response rate.

Descriptive Research Design

The researcher decided to create an original survey because there was not a survey available that covered all of the variables needed to be evaluated. To design this survey the researcher followed Dillman's survey design method. The researcher also used previous surveys produced through the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication Department (ALEC) at the University of Georgia as samples for design ideas. The scales used for this survey were chosen based on research of other survey designs done through the ALEC department at the University of Georgia.

The design for the survey was an original paper survey constructed by the researcher with both Likert scale and open-ended questions. The survey is compiled of 4

parts/constructs; (1) Communication Competence, (2) Extra-Curricular Activities, (3)

Internships, Study Abroad Programs, and Jobs, and (4) Demographics.

For the communication importance and competence constructs, a Likert scale

questionnaire was compiled of 16 questions. The first eight questions asked for

respondents to reveal their perceived importance for certain communication skills used in

the college setting. The final eight questions asked for respondents to reveal their

perceived competence for the mentioned communication skills. The importance scale

included *(1) no/low importance, (2) low importance, (3) important, and (4) utmost

importance* and the confidence scale included *(1) no/low confidence, (2) low confidence,

(3) confident, and (4) utmost confidence.* The researcher decided not to give a neutral

answer option to let the respondents have some type negative or positive answer for the

questions presented.

The extra-curricular activity construct included yes/no, open-ended, and Likert

type scale questions. Respondents were asked to rank the perceived improvement on their

communication skill confidence using a ten point Likert type scale *(1) no/low impact on

improvement to (10) high impact on improvement.* Respondents were asked a series of

questions about their involvement in extra-curricular activities, executive boards,

committees and their overall perceived communication confidence gain from extra-

curricular activities.

The internships, study abroad programs, and job construct included yes/no, open-

ended, and 10 scale questions for a total of 9 items or three questions per section.

Respondents were asked to rank their perceived improvement on their communication

skill confidence using a ten point Likert type scale *(1) no/low impact on improvement to

(10) high impact on improvement. Respondents were asked a series of questions about their involvement in internships, study abroad programs, jobs and their overall perceived communication confidence gain from the activities. If a respondent was not involved in one or more of the activities they were directed to skip the section.

The demographic section included yes/no and open-ended questions. The demographic questions included; (1) Gender, (2) Year Born, (3) Ethnicity, (4) Year in School, (5) Major, (6) College, (7) Transfer Student, (8) Hours of Transfer Student, (9) Honors Student, (10) Student Athlete, and (11) Scholarship Students.

A copy of the survey is located in appendix B for reference.

Validity

Because of a lack of previous research on the topic, an instrument measuring the variables of interest was not currently available. Therefore the researcher created an original survey. The instrument was reviewed by a expert panel with expertise in leadership, communication, survey design, face validity and evaluation. The panel of experts were faculty members at the University of Georgia. A pilot study was not completed for this research due to time constraints. The researcher will test reliability before using this instrument for further research.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 19. SPSS allowed the researcher to analyze and interpret data using multivariate data analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations were calculated. The researcher chose

this mean of data analysis to be able to answer the research questions noted in Chapter 1.

SPSS gave the researcher flexibility to compare means, frequencies and standard

deviations.

Summary

Chapter three has discussed the methods and procedures utilized in this study,

including the research design, population and sample, instrumentation, data analysis, and

the measures and scoring. Chapter four will further discuss the data collected from the

study's instrument.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISSCUSSION

In this chapter, research findings are described, including a demographic analysis of the sample and research questions: 1) Determine the relationship between students' course work and their perceived communication skill confidence; 2) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills; 3) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills; and 4) Determine if students demographics influence their perceived confidence in communication skills.

Based on the data collected from 122 respondents, results are presented by the associated research question.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic characteristics of the respondents is condensed into the following tables… The participants in this study included 122 undergraduate students (121 responding) with 55 males (45.1%) and 67 females (54.9%). This experiment group included students ranging from age 28 to 18.

Table 4.1
Gender and Year Born

Category n=121	**Demographic**		*f*	*%*
Gender	M		55	45.1
	F		67	54.9
Year Born/Age	1983	28	1	.8

1985	26	1	.8
1986	25	1	.8
1987	24	2	1.7
1988	23	8	6.6
1989	22	23	19.0
1990	21	30	24.8
1991	20	15	12.4
1992	19	20	16.5
1993	18	18	14.9

Table 4.2 examines the respondent's ethnicity. Of the 122 respondents 121

completed the ethnicity question. One hundred and five out of the 121 respondents

classified themselves as while taking up 86.8 percent of the experiment group.

Black/African American (n=6), Hispanic (n=4), Asian (n=2), American Indian (n=2), and

other (n=2) completed the remainder of participants.

Table 4.2
Ethnicity

Category n=121	**Demographic**	*f*	**%**
Ethnicity	White	105	86.8
	Black/Af. American	6	5.0
	Hispanic	4	3.3
	Asian	2	1.7
	Am. Indian	2	1.7
	Other	2	1.7

The121 respondents contained freshmen (*n*=30), sophomores (*n*=11), juniors

(*n*=23), seniors (*n*=41) and fifth year students (*n*=16) as reported in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3
Academic Status

Category n=121	**Demographic**	f	**%**
Academic Status	Freshmen	30	24.8
	Sophomore	11	9.1
	Junior	23	19.0
	Senior	41	33.9
	Fifth Year Student	16	13.2

Of the 121 respondents there were 41 different majors represented. The top three majors were Biology (*n*=20), Sports Management (*n*=16) and Agriculture Education (*n*=14). All majors are listed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4
Majors

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Majors	Biology	20	16.5
	Sports Management	16	13.2
	Agriculture Education	14	11.5
	Agribusiness	5	4.13
	Agriculture Communications	4	3.30
	Finance	4	3.30
	Risk Management	4	3.30
	Broadcast Journalism	3	2.47
	Business Marketing	3	2.47
	History	3	2.47
	Pre-Business	3	2.47
	Psychology	3	2.47
	Accounting	2	1.65
	Communication Studies	2	1.65
	Family Financial Planning	2	1.65
	Journalism	2	1.65
	Management Information Systems	2	1.65
	Nutrition Science	2	1.65
	Pre-Journalism	2	1.65
	Real Estate	2	1.65
	Special Education	2	1.65
	Undecided	2	1.65
	Advertising	1	0.82
	Animal Science	1	0.82
	Chemistry	1	0.82
	Cell Biology	1	0.82
	Childhood and Family Development	1	0.82
	Early Childhood Education	1	0.82
	Economics	1	0.82
	Entomology	1	0.82
	Food Science	1	0.82
	Health Promotion	1	0.82
	International Business	1	0.82
	Landscape Architecture	1	0.82
	Math Education	1	0.82

Mass Media Arts	1	0.82	
Political Science	1	0.82	
Public Relations	1	0.82	
Religion	1	0.82	
Sociology	1	0.82	
Water and Soil Resources	1	0.82	

Table 4.5 summarizes all of the students by their home colleges. Students from

the University of Georgia are split into colleges depending on their major choice. Of the

121 respondents the College of Education (*n*=20), College of Agriculture and

Environmental Sciences (*n*=42), College of Family and Consumer Sciences (*n*=5),

Franklin College of Arts and Sciences (*n*=26), Terry College of Business (*n*=17), Grady

College of Journalism and Mass Communication (*n*=7), School of Public and

International Affairs (*n*=2), School of Environmental Design (*n*=1), and School of Public

Health (*n=1)* were represented in the population.

Table 4.5
Colleges

Category	**Demographic**	***f***	**%**	
Colleges	College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences	42	34.4	
	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences	26	21.5	
	College of Education	20	16.5	
	Terry College of Business	17	14.0	
	Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications	7	5.8	
	College of Family and Consumer Sciences	5	4.1	
	School of Public and International	2	1.7	

Affairs			
School of	1		.8
Environmental			
Design			
School of Public	1		.8
Health			

Table 4.6 comprised the remaining demographic questions from the survey. These

questions include if a respondent was a transfer student, honors student, student athlete,

or scholarship student. Of the 121 respondents there were 23 transfer students, 10 honors

students, 17 student athletes and 56 scholarship students.

Table 4.6
Other Demographic Questions

Category *n=121*	Demographic	*f*	%
Transfer Student	Yes	23	19.0
	No	98	81.0
Honors Student	Yes	10	8.2
	No	111	91.7
Student Athlete	Yes	17	14.0
	No	104	86.0
Scholarship Student	Yes	56	46.3
	No	65	53.7

Perceptions on Communication Importance and Competence

The first objective of this research was to determine the relationship between

students' course work and communication skill confidence. The first portion of the

survey was used to find communication competence using a Likert scale questionnaire

with sixteen questions. The first eight questions asked for respondents to reveal their

perceived importance for certain communication skills used in the college setting. The

final eight questions asked for respondents to reveal their perceived competence for the

mentioned communication skills. The importance scale included *(1) no/low importance,*

(2) low importance, (3) important, and (4) utmost importance and the confidence scale

included *(1) no/low confidence, (2) low confidence, (3) confident, and (4) utmost*

confidence. Table 4.7 shares the findings from the communication importance questions

and Table 4.8 shares the findings from the communication competence questions.

Table 4.7
Communication Importance

Content	Question (How important is it that you…)	*M*	*SD*
Communication Importance	Had one on one verbal contact with your class instructors?	3.27	.89
	Had electronic contact (i.e. eLC, e-mail, Facebook, Twitter etc.) with your class instructors?	3.18	.97
	Had time to speak in class (answer questions, ask questions, present projects etc.)	3.03	.92
	Had opportunities to use your communication abilities in a formal setting (i.e. business meetings, banquets, interviews)?	2.97	.97
	Working in groups/teams in your undergraduate course work?	2.94	.92
	Took communication classes in your undergraduate course work?	2.72	.97
	Had opportunities to present in front of faculty (i.e. panels, workplace, internships, conferences)?	2.71	1.07
	Had opportunities to present in class with a group?	2.64	1.03

Table 4.8
Communication Competence

Content	Question (How confident are you in…)	*M*	*SD*
Communication Competence	Your ability to communicate to your class instructors via technology?	3.43	.82
	Your ability to effectively work in groups?	3.39	.75
	Your ability to communicate to your class instructors verbally in person?	3.37	.83
	Your ability to effectively communicate to faculty?	3.27	.80
	Your ability to effectively deliver a presentation with a group in class?	3.23	.81
	Your ability to effectively communicate in	3.18	.86

a formal setting?			
Your communication skills (i.e. public speaking, non-verbal etc.)?		3.09	.87
Speaking in front of a class?		2.96	.97

Perceptions on Extra-Curricular Involvement and Communication Skill Improvement

Objective two of this research was to determine students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills in relation to the extra-curricular activity involvement. The second section of the survey overviewed questions about extra-curricular activity involvement. The extra-curricular activity construct included yes/no, open-ended, and Likert type scale questions. Of the 122 respondents 108 (88.5%) said that they had been involved in extra-curricular activities in their undergraduate careers. Of the 122 respondents 45 (36.8%) stated they served on an executive board of one/more of the activities they were involved in. Of those 45 executive members 13 stated they held the role of President, 9 Vice-President, 7 Treasurer, 3 Secretary, and 32 Other Executive Positions. Fifty-three of the 122 respondents stated that they were involved in a committee for one/more of their extra-curricular activities. Table 4.9 reflects the respondent's involvement in extra-curricular activities, executive boards and committees.

Table 4.9
Overall Extra-Curricular Activities Involvement and Gender

Content		Male f $n=55$	Male $\%$ $n=55$	Female f $n=67$	Female $\%$ $n=67$
Extra-Curricular	Are you involved in ECA?				
Involvement	Yes	48	87.3	60	89.6
	No	7	12.7	7	20.4

Table 4.10
Extra-Curricular Activity Involvement

Category	Question	*f*	%
Extra-Curricular Activity Involvement	Yes	108	88.5
	No	14	11.5
Executive Board	Yes	45	36.9
	No	77	63.1
	President	13	10.7
	Vice President	9	7.4
	Treasurer	7	5.7
	Secretary	3	2.5
	Other Exec. Position	32	26.2
Committees	Yes	53	43.4
	No	69	56.6

Respondents were asked to rank their perceived improvement on their

communication skill confidence using a ten point Likert type scale *(1) no/low impact on*

improvement to (10) high impact on improvement. Respondents were asked a series of

questions about their involvement in extra-curricular activities, executive boards,

committees and their overall perceived communication confidence gain from extra-

curricular activities. Table 4.11 summarizes the findings of this section. Table 4.12

summarizes the findings for specific executive positions.

Table 4.11
Extra-Curricular Activities Effect on Communication Competence Improvement

Category	**Question-** How much has being involved improved your confidence in your communication skills?	*M*	*SD*
Extra-Curricular Activities (overall)		8.03	1.81
Executive Boards		7.17	2.90
Committees		7.52	2.04

Note: (1) no/low impact on improvement to (10) high impact on improvement

Table 4.12
Executive Board Effect on Communication Competence Improvement

Category	Question- How much has being involved improved your confidence in your communication skills?	M	SD
Executive Boards	Overall	7.17	2.90
	President	8.46	2.66
	Vice President	7.66	3.20
	Treasurer	8.14	1.57
	Secretary	5.00	5.00
	Other Exec Positions	8.00	3.00

Note: (1) no/low impact on improvement to (10) high impact on improvement

Respondents listed the names of all extra-curricular activities they had participated in on the survey. These activities included; Greek Life, Student Government Association, Relay for Life, Collegiate FFA, Wesley Foundation, Mentoring, Intramural Sports, Club Sports, UGA HERO's, Habitat for Humanity, Professional Societies, Orientation Team, Campus Tour Team, Honors Societies, UGA Miracle, Freshmen Connection, College Ambassadors, Collegiate 4-H, Redcoats, Dance Teams, and political action organizations.

Respondents also listed the names of committees they were involved in. These committees included; Missions Council, New Member, Chapter Development, Judical Board, Public Relations, Fundraising, Internal Relations, Logistics, Ritual, Chapter Relations, Rush, Pledge, Traditions, Social, Community Outreach, Hospital Relations, Finance, Homecoming, Special Events, Alumni Relations, T-Shirt, Philanthropy, Risk Management, and Service.

Perceptions on Internships, Study Abroad, Jobs and Communication Skill

Improvement

The third objective of this study was to determine students' involvement in

internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in

communication skills in relation to their involvement in said activities The internships,

study abroad programs, and job construct included yes/no, open-ended, and 10 scale

questions for a total of 9 items or three questions per section. Of the 122 respondents 37

(30.3%) reported that they had been involved in an internship, 15 (12.3%) a study-abroad

program and 75 (61.5%) a job during their undergraduate career (Table 4.11).

Table 4.13
Involvement in Internships, Study Abroad Programs, and Jobs

Category	Question	*f*	%
Internships	Yes	37	30.3
	No	85	69.7
Study Abroad Programs	Yes	15	12.3
	No	107	87.7
Jobs	Yes	75	61.5
	No	47	38.5

Respondents were asked to rank their perceived improvement on their

communication skill confidence using a ten point Likert type scale *(1) no/low impact on*

improvement to (10) high impact on improvement. Respondents were asked a series of

questions about their involvement in internships, study abroad programs, jobs and their

overall perceived communication confidence gain from the activities. If a respondent was

not involved in one or more of the activities they skipped the section. Table 4.14

summaries the findings from this section.

Table 4.14
Internships, Study Abroad Programs, Jobs and Relation to Communication Competence
Improvement

Category	Question- How much has being involved improved your confidence in your communication skills?	*M*	*SD*
	Internships	8.57	1.21
	Study-Abroad Programs	7.93	1.66
	Jobs	8.08	1.82

Note: (1) no/low impact on improvement to (10) high impact on improvement

Respondents were asked to expand on why they believed that their participation in

internships, study-abroad programs and/or jobs had affected their communication skills.

Below are those open-ended responses.

Internships

How has being involved in study abroad programs helped your communication skills,

explain?

"Allowed me to communicate with professionals in my specific field effectively."
"It puts you in situations where you have to communicate effectively to be successful my internship centered around helping people."
"You have to effectively communicate in the real and I believe it is the most important aspect of the professional world."
"Real life experience."
"Being given the opportunity to lend other helps develop communication."
"During the internship I was challenged to write effectively and communicate verbally to my co-workers."
"Getting experience in the work environment is invaluable."
"I worked for a State Farm agent. It involved answering and making many calls and communicating with customers in the office."
"Gave me experience in communicating with co-workers and clients in a business setting."
"Real world experience, you can only achieve so much in the classroom."
"Taught me to communicate on a team with superiors and with students."
"Speaking to people on a professional level."
"It has given the opportunity to work/interact with people that are older and able to teach more."

"I've had to interact in a formal and professional manner with celebrities and fellow workers."

"Gained confidence when speaking with professionals. Real world, hands-on experience that related to the way I had to communicate with an audience."

"It got me more comfortable with a real world environment instead of a class room."

"Because I had to face important business people and present myself in a different manner than I do in the classroom."

"It helps me get out an meet and talk with industry leaders and learn so much."

"My internship increased my confidence in speaking on particular subjects."

"Becoming adjusted to this difference between and academic setting to a professional setting put in a position of authority."

"Gives me professional experience before I enter the workplace."

"Talk to fans at random, ask questions."

"I was given the opportunity to have conversations with people who have the power to get me a job after graduation. This forced me to want to have better communication skills."

"Work with a variety of people."

"Real World becomes less scary. Practice. Push myself to be better because I want to excel in my internship."

"I learned how to work with others in a professional environment. I also learned how to effectively work in teams and communicate with clients."

"Allowed me to communicate to people I normally wouldn't communicate with."

"Opportunity to communicate with many different people in a more formal setting."

"I spoke with numerous clients on the phone on a daily. Communicating correct info was vital."

"It gave me real world experience that will make me more comfortable in the future."

"The change to practice the language of business."

"It has given me a little preview of what working with a corporate company is like."

"You learn necessary skills to communicate effectively in the workplace."

Study Abroad Programs

How has being involved in study abroad programs helped your communication skills,

explain?

"Communication with people from a global perspective."

"Allowed me to communicate with many different types of people with different background that I usually wouldn't communicate with."

"Talking to people you don't know in different culture helps speak a totally different language that you by using body language."

"Study abroad challenged me to be outside of my comfort zone and communicate in a language I was not fluent in, this gave me practice and confidence in communication."

"Time management"

"It did not affect it much with other US students but did help in communication with Europeans."
"I can handle different cultures."
"I had to communicate with people I didn't know in a foreign country."
"I had to communicate in another language."
"More unique experiences to talk about."
"Study abroad helped to broadened my views and to help me understand how important it is to learn and ask questions."
"I had the opportunity to represent my University abroad. So I didn't want to embarrass the school or my professors with bad skills."
"It forced me to use my communication skills to meet new people in a foreign environment."

Jobs

How has being employed during college helped your communication skills, explain?

"Working with superiors and law students."
"CTAE-RN: communicating with CTAE teachers about lesson plans."
"Working with people with authority."
"Because my job works with people and having to work with people has helped with being confident to talk to people older than me. "
"Had to communicate with professional and students from very different backgrounds."
"It helps you connect with others, The environment and pressures of a job help you learn dependence on good communication."
"They had to work young kids so I learned a different communication style with them."
"I have modeled throughout my undergrad career and it has forced me to be more outgoing and social when around clients."
"Interacting with customers, bosses, and co-workers improved my communication abilities."
"Working at a bar downtown has put me in the position to meet new people and interact with customers on a daily basis has no doubt increased my communication skills."
"Language barriers."
"Learned how to communicate with older, successful people."
"Same as 3."
"I don't feel as if it has greatly improved my skills because I have previously worked in retail and have gained skills previously."
"Helped me become more confident when speaking and dealing with adults."
"I gave tours so I learned to talk to visitors, parents and guests."
"Allows me to work in a professional environment and prepare for the workforce."
"Planning events and communicating with large groups of people."
"I've had to communicate a lot more with strangers and communicate well so I can help them."
"Also, I've been exposed to communication with people in leadership positions."

"I teach dance therefore I am constantly in communication with my boss and students. It positively affected my skills."

"I am a receptionist at a gym so I am constantly talking with members."

"You have to interact with employees as well as dealing with managers/bosses."

"I've had to communicate with a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds."

"Depending on my job I also had to communication based on my power position relative to these people."

"Communication with customers."

"I work at a golf course it's easier for me to talk to older people now."

"I worked at the Tate center card office during summer. It really improved the way I communicated with large groups of people."

"I run a lawn business back home, since I am the owner I have to talk to customers and please them. This helps build my communication skills with adults."

"Having to interact with different personalities has helped with providing customer service."

"Waitressing is all about communication and reading other people."

"Know how to talk to superiors."

"I learned to effectively communicate through email and communicate with my professor. "

"I worked for the Dean's office as an office assistant and being around people of high standard helped me be confident in my communication skills."

"Working with and teaching high school students helped to boost confidence and effectiveness of delivering a lesson."

"I have worked in a professional business setting."

"Had to communicate with co-workers, bosses the kids I teach swim lessons to and their parents."

"The job I've had for the past year has been in retail business. I have learned how to create conversations with customers to get them involved and how to diffuse stubborn customers."

"I communicate with my boss and fellow co-workers."

"Talking with people everyday at work."

"Hasn't because the job doesn't require much socialization."

"I've gained confidence in myself and my abilities."

"My jobs in retail have allowed me to practice talking with hundreds of people daily."

"At my job I have to be able to communicate with everyone in my office and I must be reachable. If not I will miss deadlines that people are counting on me to complete."

"Being able to communicate with bosses and customers."

"Organization, budgeting, Responsibility."

"It has forced me to be able to deal with a diverse group of people."

"Being able to talk with people who weren't my friends at first, but are now. Creating relationships."

"Interaction with customers."

"I have to interact with customers as well as employees."

"Made me learn how to communicate with hard headed doctors."

"Talking and communicating with people on a daily basis. Customer service is extremely important to the company."
"Daily interaction with students and faculty."
"Job is the same as my internship."
"Being a manager at Chick-fil-A has helped me to be able to deal with problems, and communicate with people."
"Being required to discuss personal information on a daily basis was very important."
"I now have actual work experience and can shoe trust to potential career employers, which is more important to showing involvement on campus, greek life, etc."
"Worked at golf course so it did not affect communication very much."
"It has allowed me to meet new people. I was almost forced to meet people when I got a job."
"I have to interact with the customers so I have to be confident in communicating with them.
It really hasn't."
"It has allowed me to interact with many different kinds of people on a weekly basis."
"Because I have held a lot of responsibility in full time job position. Training from basketball coach, Youth sports league director and construction."
"As a server, I am constantly talking to people and making sure they are enjoying themselves."

Domain Analysis of Qualitative Data

Students who participated in internships and gave open-ended questions had many repetitive and congruent responses. "Real-World" was mentioned five times throughout the responses. "Experience" was mentioned seven times and "real life" twice. Students also talked heavily about getting the opportunity to communicate with different people often. Finally, they noted that during their internships they had a chance to learn how to speak professionally.

Study abroad program participants noted that they worked out to their comfort zone and they had to communicate in many different ways. They also noted that it was difficult to speak through the language barrier but it gave them the opportunity to learn and grow through adversity.

Students who held jobs noted similar findings to internships. Jobs gave students

and opportunity to meet new people, interact with a diverse population, and prepare for

their entrance in the work force.

Comparisons using Demographic Data

The fourth and final objective of this study was to determine if student

demographics affect their perceived confidence in communication skills. From the data

collected many comparisons can be made using the demographic data. Tables 4.15

through Table 4.20 overview the demographic data's impact on the importance and

competence constructs (objective one).

Table 4.15
Communication Importance and Gender

Content	Question (How important is it that you…)	Male *M* n=55	Male *SD* n=55	Question (How important is it that you…)	Female *M* n=67	Female *SD* n=67
Communication Importance	Q3	3.09	.98	Q3	3.43	.78
	Q7	3.01	.87	Q4	3.37	.95
	Q2	2.98	.82	Q5	3.07	.98
	Q5	2.98	.84	Q7	2.94	1.05
	Q4	2.94	.97	Q2	2.91	.99
	Q8	2.70	.97	Q1	2.74	1.02
	Q1	2.69	.92	Q8	2.71	1.16
	Q6	2.69	.95	Q6	2.61	1.10

Note: See table 4.7 for Questions

Table 4.16
Communication Importance and Honors and Scholarship Students

Content	Question (How important is it that you…)	Hon *M* n=10	Hon *SD* n=10	Question (How important is it that you…)	Scholar *M* n=56	Scholar *SD* n=56
Communication	Q4	3.80	.42	Q3	3.26	.94

Importance

	Q3	3.70	.48	Q4	3.17	1.02
	Q5	3.50	.70	Q5	2.96	.99
	Q7	3.30	.82	Q7	2.92	1.02
	Q2	2.50	.97	Q2	2.78	1.00
	Q6	2.50	.97	Q1	2.69	.97
	Q8	2.50	1.08	Q8	2.69	1.12
	Q1	2.40	.96	Q6	2.62	1.10

*Note: S*ee table 4.7 for Questions

Table 4.17
Communication Importance and Transfer Student and Student Athletes

Content	Question (How important is it that you…)	Trans *M* *n=23*	Trans *SD* *n=23*	Question (How important is it that you…)	Ath *M* *n=17*	Ath *SD* *n=17*
Communication Importance	Q3	3.21	.95	Q3	3.26	.94
	Q7	3.04	1.02	Q4	3.17	1.02
	Q5	3.00	.95	Q5	2.96	.99
	Q1	2.78	1.04	Q7	2.92	1.02
	Q6	2.78	1.16	Q2	2.78	1.00
	Q4	2.78	1.27	Q8	2.69	1.12
	Q2	2.69	1.10	Q6	2.62	1.10
	Q8	2.65	1.11	Q1	2.35	.97

Note: See table 4.7 for Questions

Table 4.18
Communication Competence and Gender

Content	Question (How confident are you…)	Male *M* *n=55*	Male *SD* *n=55*	Question (How confident are you…)	Female *M* *n=67*	Female *SD* *n=67*
Communication Competence	Q3	3.09	.98	Q4	3.49	.82
	Q7	3.01	.87	Q2	3.38	.77
	Q2	2.98	.82	Q3	3.32	.87
	Q5	2.98	.84	Q8	3.25	.80
	Q4	2.94	.97	Q6	3.16	.84
	Q8	2.70	.97	Q7	3.11	.92
	Q1	2.69	.92	Q1	2.94	.85
	Q6	2.69	.95	Q5	2.82	.99

Note: See table 4.8 for Questions

Table 4.19
Communication Competence and Honors and Scholarship Students

Content	Question (How confident are you…)	Hon *M* *n*=10	Hon *SD* *n*=10	Question (How confident are you…)	Scholar *M* *n*=56	Scholar *SD* *n*=56
Communication Competence	Q3	3.80	.42	Q3	3.48	.87
	Q2	3.60	.51	Q4	3.44	.91
	Q4	3.50	.70	Q2	3.41	.75
	Q8	3.50	.52	Q8	3.35	.76
	Q6	3.40	.69	Q7	3.26	.92
	Q7	3.20	.78	Q6	3.25	.83
	Q5	2.90	1.10	Q1	3.10	.90
	Q1	3.00	.94	Q5	3.08	1.01

Note: See Table 4.8 for questions

Table 4.20
Communication Competence and Transfer and Student Athletes

Content	Question (How confident are you…)	Trans *M* *n*=23	Trans *SD* *n*=23	Question (How confident are you…)	Ath *M* *n*=17	Ath *SD* *n*=17
Communication Competence	Q8	3.39	.98	Q3	3.48	.71
	Q3	3.30	.97	Q4	3.44	.56
	Q7	3.21	.90	Q2	3.41	.62
	Q2	3.13	.91	Q8	3.35	.69
	Q4	3.08	.94	Q1	3.29	.84
	Q6	3.00	.95	Q7	3.26	.72
	Q1	2.91	.99	Q6	3.25	.75
	Q5	2.73	1.00	Q5	3.08	.82

Note: See Table 4.8 for questions.

Objective 2 sought to determine students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills. The following tables (4.21-4.26) complied the demographic data in relation to the extra-curricular activity sections (objective two).

Table 4.21

Gender and Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities

Category	Question	Male *f* n=55	Male %	Female *f* n=67	Female %
Extra-Curricular Involvement	Yes	48	87.3	60	89.6
	No	7	12.7	7	10.4
Executive Board	Yes	16	29.1	29	43.3
	No	39	70.9	38	56.7
Committees	Yes	31	38.2	32	47.8
	No	24	61.8	35	52.2

Table 4.22

Colleges and Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Colleges	Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications *n=7*	7	100.0
	School of Environmental Design *n=1*	1	100.0
	School of Public Health *n=1*	1	100.0
	Terry College of Business *n=17*	16	94.1
	College of Education *n=20*	18	90.0
	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences *n=26*	23	88.5
	College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences *n=42*	36	85.7
	College of Family and Consumer Sciences *n=5*	4	80.0
	School of Public and International Affairs *n=2*	1	50.0

Table 4.23

Specific Student Classifications and Involvement in Extra-Curricular Activities

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Student Classifications	Student Athletes *n=17*	16	94.1
	Transfer Students *n=23*	21	91.3
	Scholarship Students *n=56*	51	91.1
	Honors Students *n=10*	9	90.0

Table 4. 24
Extra-Curricular Activities Communication Competence Gains and Gender

Category	Question	Male M	Male SD	Female M	Female SD
Extra-Curricular Activities	How much has being involved in ECA's helped your communication skills?	7.35 *n=48*	2.40	7.76 *n=60*	2.72
	How much has being involved in Executive Boards improved your communication skills?	6.06 *n=19*	3.49	7.79 *n=29*	2.36
	How much has being in committees improved your communication skills?	6.52 *n=21*	2.01	8.18 *n=32*	1.80

Table 4.25
Extra-Curricular Activities Communication Competence Gains in Honors and Scholarship Students

Category	Question	Hon M	Hon SD	Scholar M	Scholar SD
Extra-Curricular Activities	How much has being involved in ECA's helped your communication skills?	7.88 *n=9*	3.21	7.47 *n=51*	2.92
	How much has being involved in Executive Boards improved your communication skills?	8.83 *n=6*	1.60	7.08 *n=24*	3.07
	How much has being in committees improved your communication skills?	8.85 *n=7*	1.21	7.59 *n=27*	2.17

Table 4.26
Extra-Curricular Activities Communication Competence Gains and Transfer Students and Student Athletes

Category	Question	Trans M	Trans SD	Ath M	Ath SD
Extra-Curricular Activities	How much has being involved in ECA's helped your communication skills?	7.95 *n=21*	2.47	8.12 *n=16*	1.45
	How much has being involved in Executive Boards improved your communication skills?	6.11 *n=9*	3.10	8.80 *n=5*	1.64

How much has being in committees improved your communication skills?	6.87 *n=8*	2.64	7.50 *n=4*	1.91

The third objective of this study covered the areas of internships, study-abroad programs and jobs. The following tables (4.27-4.33) illustrate the demographic items effect on this sections data.

Table 4.27
Gender and Involvement in Internships, Study Abroad Programs, and Jobs

Category	Question	M *f* n=55	M%	F *f* n=67	F%
Internships	Yes	19	34.5	18	26.9
	No	36	65.5	49	73.1
Study Abroad Programs	Yes	6	10.9	9	13.4
	No	49	89.1	58	86.6
Jobs	Yes	32	58.2	43	64.2
	No	23	41.8	24	35.8

Table 4.28
Colleges and Involvement in Internships

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Colleges	School of Public Health *n=1*	1	100.0
	Terry College of Business *n=17*	14	82.4
	College of Education *n=20*	14	70.0
	Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications *n=7*	2	28.6
	College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences *n=42*	11	26.2
	College of Family and Consumer Sciences *n=5*	1	20.0
	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences *n=26*	2	7.7
	School of Public and International Affairs *n=2*	0	0.0
	School of Environmental Design *n=1*	0	0.0

Table 4.29
Colleges and Involvement in Study Abroad Programs

Category	Demographic	f	%
Colleges	Terry College of Business *n=17*	4	23.5
	College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences *n=42*	9	21.4
	College of Family and Consumer Sciences *n=5*	1	20.0
	College of Education *n=20*	1	5.0
	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences *n=26*	0	0.0
	Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications *n=7*	0	0.0
	School of Public and International Affairs *n=2*	0	0.0
	School of Environmental Design *n=1*	0	0.0
	School of Public Health *n=1*	0	0.0

Table 4.30
Colleges and Involvement in Jobs

Category	Demographic	f	%
Colleges	School of Public Health *n=1*	1	100.0
	College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences *n=42*	34	81.0
	College of Family and Consumer Sciences *n=5*	4	80.0
	Terry College of Business *n=17*	12	70.6
	College of Education *n=20*	12	60.0
	Franklin College of Arts and Sciences *n=26*	9	34.6
	Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications *n=7*	2	28.6
	School of Public and International Affairs *n=2*	0	0.0
	School of Environmental Design *n=1*	0	0.0

Table 4.31
Specific Student Classifications and Involvement in Internships

Category	Demographic	f	%
Student Classifications	Transfer Students *n=23*	13	56.5
	Honors Students *n=10*	5	50.0
	Scholarship Students *n=56*	17	30.4
	Student Athletes *n=17*	2	11.8

Table 4.32
Specific Student Classifications and Involvement in Study-Abroad Programs

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Student Classifications	Transfer Students *n=23*	3	13.0
	Honors Students *n=10*	2	20.0
	Student Athletes *n=17*	0	0.0
	Scholarship Students *n=56*	8	14.3

Table 4.33
Specific Student Classifications and Involvement in Jobs

Category	Demographic	*f*	%
Student Classifications	Transfer Students *n=23*	20	87.0
	Honors Students *n=10*	8	80.0
	Student Athletes *n=17*	6	35.3
	Scholarship Students *n=56*	40	71.4

Limitations

It is important to note that this study did not complete a pilot study. Therefore, the reliability of this instrument has not been determined.

Summary

Chapter four has discussed the research findings of this survey, including a demographic analysis of the sample and research questions: 1) Determine the relationship between students' course work and their perceived communication skill confidence; 2) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills; 3) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills in relation to their involvement in said activities; and 4) Determine if students demographics influence their involvement in

certain activities. Chapter five will provide further discussion about the data as well as draw conclusions and make suggestions based on the given results.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The time spent in college is an intellectual growing period for undergraduate students. Personal growth can eventually mean academic and career success for students. While some succeed, some struggle to find their passions and demonstrate competency in technical and social skills. What are the contributing factors to success of a college students' communication efficacy? Communication skills are one of the most simple life skills but can also be the hardest to achieve. To succeed as a contributing member of society one must be able to effectively communicate with a diverse audience. Since college is a time for personal growth, undergraduates can improve on their communication skills and college faculty can play a role in building these life skills..

The ideal job candidates in the eyes of employers are expected to have polished communication skills as well as leadership skills, teamwork skills, initiative, interpersonal and social networking skills, problem solving skills and analytical skills, among others (Employers, 2010). A primary function of a higher education institution should be to prepare students for the workforce. The means for achieving this goal can stem from curriculum and other activities. Higher education has a responsibility to provide undergraduate students with the knowledge and exposure to experiences necessary for success in America's society (Coers, Williams, & Duncan, 2010). Some of these skills include "soft" skills, such as leadership and communication abilities. A study completed in 2008 by the Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development at the

University of Georgia showed that job candidates (undergraduates seeking positions) were overly focused on technical skills and not soft skills. They found that job candidates had poor communication skills, needed more emphasis on leadership skills, critical thinking, problem solving and analytical skills (Brooks, Flanders, Jones, Kane, & Shepherd, 2008). Some employers in Silicon Valley reported that sometimes college graduates do not have adequate communication skills to complete jobs (Stevens, 2005). Employers believe it is part of the higher education systems' responsibility to teach these skills to the students before they graduate (Cassidy, 2006). Regardless, it may be argued that college students need more communication skills to make them successful in the workforce.

Purpose of study

The purpose of this study was to determine if certain activities that undergraduates participated in influence their perceived communication ability. To accomplish this purpose, the following objectives were identified; 1) Determine the relationship between students' course work and their perceived importance and confidence in specific communication situations; 2) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills; 3) Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills; and 4) Determine if students demographics influence their involvement rates in certain extra-curricular activities.

Summary of Methods

The selection of participants for this survey was done by convenience sampling. Students completing select courses in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences were asked to complete the survey. Classes were all from the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication. The five classes were chosen due to a large variety of students from different backgrounds, majors and different years in school (first, second, third, fourth etc). For these five classes a cover letter and survey was distributed during a class period and students were asked to fill out the survey and return before class concluded. All surveys were voluntary and anonymous. A total of 125 students were asked to participate in the survey. Of the 125 students, 122 completed the survey, resulting in a 97.6 percent response rate.

Data was analyzed using SPSS version 19. SPSS allowed the researcher to analyze and interpret data using multivariate data analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations were calculated. The researcher chose this mean of data analysis to be able to answer the research questions noted in Chapter 1. SPSS gave the researcher flexibility to compare means, frequencies and standard deviations.

Summary of Findings

Objective 1: Determine the relationship between students' course work and their

perceived importance and confidence in specific communication situations

On a scale of 1 to 4 with 1 representing no/low importance and 4 representing high importance, students stated that it was most important that they had verbal contact with their class instructors (M=3.27; S =.89) followed by electronic contact with instructors (M=3.18; SD=.97), time to speak in class (M= 3.03; SD=.92), opportunities to use communication abilities in formal settings (M=2.97; SD=.97), work in groups in course work (M=2.94; SD=.92), took communication classes in undergraduate years (M=2.72; SD=1.07), opportunities to present in front of faculty (M=2.71; SD=1.07), had opportunities to present with a group (M=2.64; SD=1.03).

Students found it very important that they had contact with their class instructors whether in person or via technology. Students also found it important to speak in class, use their communication abilities in formal settings, and worked in teams in their undergraduate careers. Finally, students found it somewhat important that they took communication classes and had opportunities to present with groups/teams in school.

Students were also asked about their communication competence in relation to their undergraduate studies. Students stated that they were most competent in communicating with instructors via technology (M=3.43; SD=.82) followed by their ability to work effectively in groups (M=3.39; SD=.75), communicate to class instructors in person (M=3.37; SD=.83), communicate with faculty in general (M=3.27; SD=.81), deliver a presentation with a group (M=3.27; SD=.81), communicate in a formal setting (M=3.18; SD=.86), to communicate in general (M=3.09; SD=.87), and speak in front of a class (M=2.96; SD=.97).

From this data students seemed most competent in communicating via technology. The means all feel under the competence category, so students are mostly competent in all situations presented in this research.

These findings are similar to those reported in Astin's longitudinal study that found that frequent student and faculty interaction was more related to college satisfaction than any other involvement factor (i.e. place of residence, student government involvement etc.) (Astin, 1977). Overall institutional satisfaction including peer interaction, intellectual environment and more were higher when students had frequent out of class time with faculty.

Objective 2: Determine the relationship between students' involvement in extra-curricular activities and their perceived confidence in communication skills

Of the 122 respondents 108 (88.5%) said that they had been involved in extra-curricular activities in their undergraduate careers. From the 108 extra-curricular involved students 45 (36.9%) stated they served on an executive board of one/more of the activities they were involved in. Of those 45 executive members 13 (10.7%) stated they held the role of President, 9 (7.4%) Vice-President, 7 (5.7%) Treasurer, 3 (2.5%) Secretary, and 32 (26.2%) Other Executive Positions. Fifty-three (43.4%) of the 122 respondents stated that they were involved in a committee for one/more of their extra-curricular activities.

The respondents were asked to rank their communication skill improvement on a 1-10 Likert scale with 1 representing no/low impact on communication skill improvement and 10 representing high impact on communication skill improvement.

Respondents who were involved in extra-curricular activities noted a high mean of communication skill improvement (M=8.03; SD=1.81). Executive board (M=7.17; SD=2.90) and committee members (M=7.52; SD= 2.04) also noted a high impact on communication skills. Students who responded that they held an executive board position also showed high impacts on communication skills. The presidential position held the highest impact (M=8.46; SD=2.66) followed by treasurer (M=8.14; SD=1.57), other executive positions (M=8.00; SD=3.00), vice president (M=7.66, SD=3.20), and secretary (M=5.00, SD= 5.00).

From this data it is easy to note that students find that being involved in extra-curricular activities improves their perceived communication competence. Communication skill competence can also be improved by participating in select executive board positions especially the presidential position. Being involved in extra-curricular activities not only can be a strong predictor of work-place competence, stronger than grades (Kuh, 1995) but can also help improve their perceived communication skill competence. As stated in the literature review undergraduates' involvement in student organizations enhances intellectual development, increases college experience satisfaction, and increases campus and community involvement (Montelongo, 2002). Participation in extra-curricular activities gives students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to "real-world" situations that will in turn help them succeed in life after graduation (Astin, 1993). Moreover, research showed that leadership responsibilities came second only to peer interaction in positive changes in an undergraduate students personal development with academics, institutional ethos, faculty-contact, and work (Kuh, 1995). Students noted that leadership positions gave them the

opportunity to learn in the "real-world" classroom (Haber, 2006). All of these positive factors related to extra-curricular activity involvement related back to the data found in this research.

Objective 3: Determine the relationship between students' involvement in internships, study abroad programs and jobs and their perceived confidence in communication skills.

Of the 122 respondents 37 (30.3 %) reported that they had been involved in an internship, 15 (12.3 %) had been involved with a study-abroad program and 75 (61.5%) had been involved with a job during their undergraduate career. The respondents were asked to rank their communication skill improvement on a 1-10 Likert scale with 1 representing no/low impact on communication skill improvement and 10 representing high impact on communication skill improvement. Respondents who were involved in internships noted 8.57 mean (SD=1.21), study abroad programs a 7.93 mean (SD=1.66), and respondents who held a job during their undergraduate career an 8.08 mean (SD=1.82). All of these activities had a high mean on improvement meaning that students thought that their involvement in internships, study abroad programs, and jobs had improved their confidence in their communication skills. As found in objective 2, it is easy to note that participation in internships, study abroad programs and jobs improved student perceived communication competence.

This objective also has some qualitative questions. Chapter 4 noted all comments from the surveys. Below are selected comments that support the high impact on communication skill improvement.

Internships

"Getting experience in the work environment is invaluable."
"Real life experience."
"During the internship I was challenged to write effectively and communicate verbally to my co-workers."
"Real world experience, you can only achieve so much in the classroom."
"Gained confidence when speaking with professionals. Real world, hands-on experience that related to the way I had to communicate with an audience."
"It got me more comfortable with a real world environment instead of a class room."
"My internship increased my confidence in speaking on particular subjects."
"Gives me professional experience before I enter the workplace."
"I was given the opportunity to have conversations with people who have the power to get me a job after graduation. This forced me to want to have better communication skills."
"You learn necessary skills to communicate effectively in the workplace."

Study Abroad Programs

"Talking to people you don't know in different culture helps speak a totally different language that you by using body language."
"Study abroad challenged me to be outside of my comfort zone and communicate in a language I was not fluent in, this gave me practice and confidence in communication."
"I had to communicate in another language."
"Study abroad helped to broadened my views and to help me understand how important it is to learn and ask questions."
"It forced me to use my communication skills to meet new people in a foreign environment."

Jobs

"It helps you connect with others, The environment and pressures of a job help you learn dependence on good communication."
"Interacting with customers, bosses, and co-workers improved my communication abilities."
"Working at a bar downtown has put me in the position to meet new people and interact with customers on a daily basis has no doubt increased my communication skills."
"Allows me to work in a professional environment and prepare for the workforce."

"I run a lawn business back home, since I am the owner I have to talk to customers and please them. This helps build my communication skills with adults."
"Having to interact with different personalities has helped with providing customer service."
"I learned to effectively communicate through email and communicate with my professor. "
"At my job I have to be able to communicate with everyone in my office and I must be reachable. If not I will miss deadlines that people are counting on me to complete."
"It has forced me to be able to deal with a diverse group of people."

From the data collected for this survey a few conclusions can be made. First of all, a high percentage of students believe that their participation in internships, study abroad programs and jobs can increase their perceived communication skill competence. Many students noted that their involvement in these activities was more valuable then their time spent in the college classroom. These activities have a commonly high communication requirement and therefore "forces" the participants to grow as a communicator during their participation. While the involvement percentages vary the overall perceived communication competence improvement showed a high importance for all three activities. As found in research, all three of these activities can promote growth in personal development. Getting students out of the classroom and into the "real-world" creates opportunities for growth in communication skills, soft-skills, interpersonal competence and practical competence (Kuh, 1995; & Tucker, McCarthy, Hoxmeier, & Lenk, 1998; & Williams, 2005).

Objective 4: Determine if students demographics influence their involvement rates in certain extra-curricular activities.

Communication Importance

In the importance construct (1 representing no/low importance and 4 representing high importance), male and female respondents noted very similar responses. Both parties noted that having contact with faculty was most important (M= 3.09; SD=3.43) and having opportunities to work in groups was least important (M=2.69; SD=2.61). Honors, Scholarship, Transfer and Student Athletes also shared similar views on importance of having communication with instructors. Group work usually has mixed reviews in college settings. Many students are underwhelmed by group projects because of common problems associated with groups like scheduling problems and social loafing (Coers, Williams, & Duncan, 2010).

Communication Competence

In the competence construct (1 representing no/low importance and 4 representing high importance), male and female respondents noted very similar responses with females having a slightly higher competence in a few statements. Females had the highest confidence in their ability to communicate with instructors via technology (M=3.49; SD=.82) and ability to work effectively in groups (M=3.38; SD=.77). Males had highest confidence in communicating with instructors verbally (M:3.09; SD=.98) and ability to communicate in a formal setting (M=3.01; SD=.87). Females were the least confident in their ability to speak in front of a class (M=2.82; SD=.99) and males were least confident in their ability to deliver a presentation with a group (M=2.69; SD=.95). Honors, Scholarship, Transfer and Student Athletes also shared a high mean of confidence in communicating with faculty and a low confidence mean in speaking in front of a class.

Extra-Curricular Activity-Involvement

From an involvement standpoint it is important to note that both males and females are highly involved in extra-curricular activities (Male=87.3%; Female=89.6%). Females (43.3%) had a slightly higher involvement in executive boards than males (29.1%), and both males and females had similar involvement in extra-curricular committees (Male=38.2%; Female=47.8%)

For colleges, all but one posted an extra-curricular activity involvement percentage of 80% or higher. It is also important to note that Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, School of Environmental Design, School of Public Health, College of Family and Consumer Sciences, and School of Public and International Affairs had less than 10 respondents total.

The specific student classifications used for this research all posted a 90 percent or higher extra-curricular involvement. Student Athletes had the highest percentage at 94.4% followed by Transfer Students at 91.3% , Scholarship Students at 91.1% ,and Honors Students at 90.0%.

This data shows that extra-curricular involvement in undergraduate students represented by this study is very high among all demographic areas. While involvement in executive board positions and committees is lower, this may be because the fact there are only a certain amount of spots available for these positions.

Extra Curricular Activity-Communication Competence

In terms of communication competence gain from involvement in extra-curricular activities gender did not play a role. Both males and females showed a moderately high impact on communication competence from involvement in extra-curricular activities (M=7.39; SD=7.76). On the other hand, females (M=7.79; SD=8.18) showed a higher gain in communication skill competence from being involved in executive boards and committee than their male counterparts (M=6.06; SD=6.52). This higher mean of communication skill competence improvement in females may be because they are more involved in executive board positions then males.

For the specific student classifications all categories showed a high gain in perceived communication skill competence improvement from being involved in extra-curricular activities. Student athletes had the highest improvement with mean of 8.12 and a low standard deviation of 1.45. Transfer Students (M=7.95; SD=2.47), honors students (M=7.88; SD=3.21), and scholarship students followed behind (M=7.47; SD=2.92). Student athletes (M=8.80; SD=1.64) and honors students (M=8.83; SD=1.60) communication skill improvement soared above the other categories in means of involvement in executive boards. Honors students found that participation in committees was very important in their communication skill improvement at a mean of 8.85 (SD=1.21), scholarships students posted a mean of 7.59(SD=2.64), student athletes 7.50(SD=1.91) and transfer students 6.87 (SD=2.64). This data of specific communication skill competence shows that student athletes have the highest communication skill competence improvement related to their involvement in extra curricular activities. I believe that this can be from the fact the University of Georgia

athletics are highly valued and taken seriously. Athletes are held to a high standard of academic and athletic excellence. Student athletes spend required time on team activities, study hall, and practice that other undergraduates are not subject to. This could promote a change in perceived communication competence because they are "forced" to participate in their extra-curricular activity everyday all–year round.

This data suggests that, regardless of demographic, involvement in extra curricular activities had a high mean of improvement in communication skill competence. As related back to Astin's Theory of Involvement, participation in extra-curricular activities gives students the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to "real-world" situations that will in turn help them succeed in life after graduation (Astin, 1993).

Internships

From an involvement standpoint gender did not play a significant role in the respondents involvement in internships. Males showed a slightly higher percentage at 34.5 percent and females at 26.9 percent. College enrollment did show a significant impact on internship involvement. School of Public Health, Terry College of Business, and the College of Education had internship involvement percentages at or above 70.0 percent where as the remaining colleges had below 30 percent involvement.

In terms of specific student classifications transfer and honors students led the participation rates in internships at 56.5 and 50.0 percent respectively. Scholarship students (30.4) held an involvement at a third of respondents and student athletes only held an 11.8 percent involvement in internships.

This data shows that internships have a high level of importance in some colleges at the University of Georgia compared to others. Internships are valued greatly by Terry College of Business and the College of Education. From data analyzed early in this study, internships show a high mean of improvement on perceived communication skill competence. The colleges who lack behind in participation in internships could be informed of this statistic and should note to encourage their students to attempt to participate in an internship while they complete their undergraduate degree.

Study Abroad Programs

From the involvement standpoint study abroad programs posted the lowest participation numbers compared to internships and jobs. Females showed a slightly higher involvement at 13.4 percent and males at 10.9 percent. Colleges showed some interesting data. Terry College of Business (23.6%), College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (21.4%), College of Family and Consumer Sciences (20.0%) and the College of Education (5.0%) had the highest participation rates while the remaining colleges had no student participate in a study-abroad program based on this sample.

For the specific student classifications the involvement percentages were low just like the other demographics analyzed. Honors students had a 20.0 percent involvement rate followed by scholarship students (14.3%) and transfer students (13.0). None of the student athletes h participated in a study abroad program. Although, involvement is the lowest for study abroad programs it is congruent with the statistics found by International Education Exchange.

From the data collected about study abroad program it shows that all demographic areas had low participation in these programs. It is important to note that study abroad programs have a high impact on self perceived communication competence improvement and colleges should encourage more students to become involved. This high mean of improvement could come from the fact that in most study abroad programs you are forced to communicate in any means possible. For students who go to countries with different native languages they need to find a way to communicate whether it is verbal or non-verbal. After an experience abroad, speaking in the native tongue could be found easier and therefore boosts communication skill competence.

Jobs

Job participation had the highest involvement rates. Females showed a slightly higher involvement at 64.2 percent and males at 58.2 percent. The School of Public Health (100.0%), College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (81.0%), College of Family and Consumer Sciences (80.0%), Terry College of Business (70.6%), Franklin College of Arts and Sciences (34.6%) and Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communications (28.6%) had student involvement in jobs while the School of Public and International Affairs and School of Environmental Design had none (note: both SPIA and SED had only two and one respondents respectively).

Transfer students had the highest participation rate at 87.0 percent followed by honors students (80.0%), scholarship students (71.4%) and student athletes (35.3%).

Jobs show the highest level of participation behind overall extra-curricular activities from the data presented in this study. Almost all demographic areas showed

high involvement in jobs. Jobs showed a high impact on perceived improvement of communication competence. Jobs give students an opportunity to hone communication skills regardless of job type. Having an opportunity to communicate with different people at a job gives students the needed practice for speaking skills that they may be missing in undergraduate courses.

Recommendations for Research

Many recommendations can be made for this survey. First of all, I would recommend that the next step in this research should be test of reliability of the survey by examining the consistency of responses within constructs. Since there was no pilot study of the survey beyond examining the face validity of the instrument using a panel of experts, testing the reliability would benefit the integrity of the survey and its data. Secondly, I would recommend that the survey add a portion that would provide a means of comparing students not involved in activities (extra-curricular, internships, study abroad programs and jobs) and those involved and their overall perceived communication skill competence. This would benefit the research that these activities are important to the communication development of participants.

Recommendations for Practice

I would recommend that colleges promote involvement in all of the studied activities. All the activities stated in this research show a high improvement mean of self-perceived communication skill competence. Undergraduate advisors have the opportunity to advise students about what would be beneficial for their academic and personal

development. This does not need to stop at class recommendations. Advisors can use this data to recommend that students get involved in extra-curricular activities, take on a leadership role, apply for an internship, take time to study abroad or just take up a part-time job during their time as an undergraduate. From the data presented in this study any of these activities can positively affect an undergraduates perceived communication skill competence.

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APPENDIX A-Informational Letter

I am a graduate student under the direction of Dr. Dennis Duncan in the Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication at the University of Georgia. I invite you to participate in a research study titled "Undergraduate student's perception of communication abilities and their relation to college course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, jobs, and student abroad programs." The purpose of this study is to determine if certain activities undergraduates participate in have any effect on their perceived self-efficacy of their communication abilities.

Your participation will involve completing a survey with 45 questions that will take about 25 minutes of your class time to complete. Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or choose to stop taking the survey at any time without consequence. No individually-identifiable information about you will be collected and your participation will be anonymous.

The study will provide information about the impact of course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, etc. on students perceived communication skills and the importance of participation for the undergraduate student. There are no known risks associated with this study.

If you have any further questions about this survey please feel free to call me at 478-918-6040 or Dr. Dennis Duncan at 706-542-3898. You can also reach us at our e-mail addresses kane325@uga.edu and/or dwd@uga.edu.

Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant should be directed to The Chairperson, University of Georgia Institutional Review Board, 629 Boyd GSRC, Athens, Georgia 30602; telephone (706) 542-3199; email address irb@uga.edu.

By completing and returning this survey in the envelope provided, you are agreeing to participate in the above described research project.

Thank you for your consideration! Please keep this letter for your records.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kane

APPENDIX B-SURVEY

This survey will take about 20 minutes to complete. If you have any questions please ask the researcher. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Section One: Course Completion

The first section of this questionnaire will ask you questions about how your course completion at the University of Georgia has influenced your confidence in your communication skills. Please check only one answer per question. **Using the scale below circle the answer option that best describes your feelings from 1 being no/low importance/confidence and 4 being utmost importance/confidence.**

How important is it that you…				
1. Took communication classes in your undergraduate course work?	1	2	3	4
2. Worked in groups/teams in your undergraduate course work?	1	2	3	4
3. Had one on one verbal contact with your class instructors	1	2	3	4
4. Had electronic contact (i.e. eLC, e-mail, FaceBook, Twitter etc.) with your class instructors?	1	2	3	4
5. Had time to speak in class (answer questions, ask questions, present projects etc.)?	1	2	3	4
6. Have opportunities to present in classes with a group?	1	2	3	4
7. Have opportunities to meet use your communication abilities in a formal setting (i.e. business meetings, banquets, interviews)	1	2	3	4
8. Have opportunities to present in front of faculty (i.e. panels, workplace, internships, conferences)	1	2	3	4
How confident are you in…				
9. Your communication skills (i.e. public speaking, non-verbal etc.)	1	2	3	4
10. Your ability to effectively work in groups?	1	2	3	4
11. Your ability to communicate to your class instructors verbally in person?	1	2	3	4
12. Your ability to communicate to your class instructors via technology?	1	2	3	4
13. Speaking in front of a class?	1	2	3	4
14. Your ability to effectively deliver a presentation with a group in class?	1	2	3	4
15. Your ability to effectively communicate in a formal setting?	1	2	3	4
16. Your ability to effectively communicate to faculty?	1	2	3	4

Section 2: Extra-Curricular Activities

Please fill out the following questions pertaining to your involvement in extra-curricular activities during your undergraduate career at the University of Georgia. (Transfer Students may fill out pertaining to their previous school and UGA.)

1. Have you been involved in extra-curricular activities during your undergraduate career??
   (i.e. Greek Life, Clubs, Sport's Teams, Professional Societies etc.)
   (If none skip to section 3)   Yes   No

2. Name all extra-curricular activities.
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.
   6.

3. Did you serve on any executive boards in any of the activities? Check one.   Yes   No
   (If no skip to question #6)

4. Circle positions held, if other please list in the space provided.

   President----------------YES   NO
   Vice President----------YES   NO
   Treasurer----------------YES   NO
   Secretary----------------YES   NO
   Other (List if applicable):_____
   _____

5. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being on executive boards in extra-curricular activities improved your confidence in your communication skills? Circle one.

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. Did you serve on any committees in any of the activities? Circle one.   Yes   No
   (If no skip to question #9)

7. Name all committees along with the activity.
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

8. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being involved in committees in extra-curricular activities improved your confidence in your communication skills? Circle one.

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Has being involved in extra-curricular activities helped your overall communication skills? Check one.
   (If YES continue to Question 10, if NO continue to section 3)   Yes   No

10. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being involved in extra-curricular activities improved your confidence in your communication skills? Check one.

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Section 3: Internships/Study Abroad/Jobs

This section will ask you questions about internships, study abroad programs, and jobs you completed in your undergraduate career.

1. Have you completed an internship during your undergraduate career? Circle one. **(If no skip to question #4)**

Yes	No

2. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being involved in your internship improved you confidence in your communication skills?

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3. Please expand on why you believe that your participation in internships has affected your communication skills?

4. Have you completed a study abroad program during your undergraduate career? Circle one. **(If no skip to question #7)**

Yes	No

5. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being involved in your study abroad program improved you confidence in your communication skills?

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. Please expand on why you believe that your participation in study abroad programs has affected your communication skills?

7. Have you held a job during your undergraduate career? Circle one. **(If no skip to section 4)**

Yes	No

8. Rank from 1 to 10: How much has being involved in your job improved you confidence in your communication skills?

No/Low Impact on Improvement   Average   High Impact on Improvement

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

9. Please expand on why you believe that your participation a job(s) has affected your communication skills?

Section 4: Demographics

1. Gender [Male] [Female]   2. Year Born [1 9 _ _]

3. Ethnicity (Circle One) [White] [Black/Af. American] [Hispanic] [Asian] [Am. Indian]

[Other, Please Specify:]

4. Year in School (number) [   ]

5. Major [   ]

6. College (ex. Terry, Franklin, CAES etc.) [   ]

7. Transfer Student [Yes] [No] **(If NO skip to question 8, If YES go to question 7.)**

8. How many transfer hours did you enter the University of Georgia with? Check one.

[<16 hours] [16-30 hours] [30+ hours]

9. Are you an Honors Student at the University of Georgia? [Yes] [No]

10. Are you a Student-Athlete at the University of Georgia? [Yes] [No]

11. Do you maintain a scholarship (other than the HOPE Scholarship) at the University of Georgia?

[Yes] [No]

Thank you for participating in our questionnaire. We truly appreciate your time and effort you put into the data that will help us in our research efforts. If you have any more questions or concerns pertaining to this survey please contact us. Thank you.

Respectfully,

Dr. Dennis Duncan
dwd@uga.edu

Sarah Kane
kane325@uga.edu

APPENDIX C-IRB APPROVAL FORM

The University of Georgia

Office of The Vice President for Research
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

APPROVAL FORM

Date Proposal Received: 2011-09-23   **Project Number:** 2012-10275-0

Name	Title	Dept/Phone	Address	Email
Dr. Dennis W. Duncan	PI	ALEC 133 Four Towers 706-542-8913		dwd@uga.edu
Ms. Sarah Kane	CO	ALEC 478-918-6040	210 East Rutherford Street Apt B Athens, GA 30605	kane325@uga.edu

Title of Study: Undergraduate student's perception of communication abilities and their relation to college course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, jobs, and student abroad programs

45 CFR 46 Category: Administrative 2   **Change(s) Required for Approval:**
Parameters: Revised Consent Document(s);
Waiver of Signed Consent 46.117 (c) (2);

Approved : 2011-10-25   Begin date : 2011-10-25   Expiration date : 2016-10-24

NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end data collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.

Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs: **Funding Agency:**

Your human subjects study has been approved.

Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:
. . . of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;
. . . of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;
. . . that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;
. . . that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.

For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigtor refer to the IRB Guidelines.
Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.
Keep this original approval form for your records.

Chairperson or Designee,
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX D-IRB APPLICATION

The University of Georgia ®

Institutional Review Board (IRB)
HUMAN RESEARCH APPLICATION

To submit: http://www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso/how/application

IMPORTANT: Please respond to all the questions. Do not leave items blank; if not applicable, mark N/A. Please note that incomplete applications may result in delayed review. Click on the hyperlinks (text underlined in blue) to obtain additional information.	For Human Subjects Office Use Only
	Project #: **Date Received:**
	Type of Review: ☐ Exempt ☐ Expedited ☐ Full

Section A: PROJECT INFORMATION

  1. Study Title: Undergraduate student's perception of communication abilities and their relation to college course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, jobs, and student abroad programs

2. Application Type: ☒ New Project   ☐ Response to Initial Review (*All revisions must be in italics or different font color.*)
         ☐ 5-Year Renewal; Previous IRB number:

3. Principal Investigator: (*Must be UGA faculty or senior staff. See Eligibility to Serve as PI.*)
    Name: Dennis Duncan   **Title:** Dr.
    Department Name: Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication
    Mailing Address:
    Phone: -5428913   **UGA E-mail** (Required): dwd@uga.edu

4. Co-Principal Investigator: (*Required only if for thesis/dissertation or other student project.*)
    Name: Sarah Kane   **Title:** Ms.
    Department: Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication
    Mailing address: 210 East Rutherford Street Apt B Athens GA 30605
    Phone: 4789186040   **UGA E-mail** (Required): kane325@uga.edu

5. Anticipated Start Date: (*Must be at least 4 weeks after application is received.*) October 24, 2011

Section B: PROJECT FUNDING

  1. Funding Status: ☐ Funded   ☐ Pending   ☒ No Funding
  2. Funding Source: ☐ Internal   Account #:
                   ☐ External   Funding Source: OSP Proposal or Award #:
  3. Name of Proposal or Award PI (if different from PI of IRB protocol):
  4. Proposal or Award Title (if different from title of IRB protocol):

Section C: STUDY PERSONNEL / RESEARCH TEAM

Including the PI, identify all personnel who will be engaged in the conduct of human research. *Important Note: All researchers listed below are required to complete the CITI IRB Training prior to submission of this application. This application will be returned to PI for resubmission if training requirement has not been satisfied. To add more names, bring cursor to outside of last row, and press "enter" key.*

Name	E-mail	*Institution
Dr. Dennis Duncan	Dwd@uga.edu	UGA
Sarah Kane	Kane325@uga.edu	UGA

*Submit an *Individual Investigator Agreement* for all study personnel affiliated with an institution that does not have an assurance with the Office for Human Research Protections or OHRP (typically, local schools, private doctors' clinics).*

Section D: PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSURANCE

As the Principal Investigator, I have the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the study and the protection of the rights and welfare of human participants. *By affixing my signature below,*

- I assure that all the information contained in this Human Research Application is true and all the activities described for this study accurately summarize the nature and extent of the proposed participation of human participants.
- If funded, I assure that this proposal accurately reflects all procedures involving human participants described in the grant application to the funding agency.
- I agree to comply with all UGA policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws on the protection of human participants in research.
- I assure that all personnel listed on this project are qualified, appropriately trained, and will adhere to the provisions of the approved protocol.
- I will notify the IRB regarding any adverse events, unexpected problems or incidents that involve risks to participants or others, and any complaints.
- I am aware that no change(s) to the final approved protocol will be initiated without prior review and written approval from the IRB (except in an emergency, if necessary to safeguard the well-being of human participants and then notify the IRB as soon as possible afterwards).
- I understand that I am responsible for monitoring the expiration of this study, and complying with the requirements for an annual continuing review for expedited and full board studies.
- If human research activities will continue five years after the original IRB approval, I will submit a new IRB Application Form. (*Exceptions:* If the research is permanently closed to the enrollment of new participants, all participants have completed all research-related interventions, and the research will remain active only for long-term follow-up of participants; or if the remaining research activities are limited to analysis of individually-identifiable private information.)
- I understand that the IRB reserves the right to audit an ongoing study at any time.
- I understand that I am responsible for maintaining copies of all records related to this study in accordance with the IRB and sponsor guidelines.
- I assure that research will only begin after I have received notification of final IRB approval.

     Signature of Principal Investigator _____ **Date** (mm/dd/yyyy): 9192011

Section E: CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI)

1. **Is there any real, potential, or perceived conflict of interest on the part of any study personnel** *(e.g., financial or business interest, stock or stock options, proprietary interest, inventorship, consultant to sponsor)*? ☐ **Yes** ☒ **No**
2. **If yes, please identify personnel and explain.** *Important Note: Please review the* **UGA Conflict of Interest Policy**. *Final IRB approval cannot be granted until all potential conflict matters are addressed.*

Section F: LAY PROJECT SUMMARY

Briefly describe in simple, non-technical language a summary of the study, its specific aim(s)/objective(s), and its significance or importance. *Response should be limited to 250 words and easily understood by a layperson.*

     The purpose of this study is to determine Undergraduate students' perceptions about their communication skills and the relationship between their communication skills and course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, study-abroad programs, and jobs. The objectives of this study are: 1. To determine if there is a relationship between students participation in undergraduate course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, study-abroad programs, and jobs has an impact with their confidence in their overall communication skills. 2. To determine if certain demographic factors show a relationship with the data found in objective number one.

Section G: HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

1. **Provide a general description of the targeted participants** *(e.g., healthy adults from the general population, children enrolled in an after-school program, adolescent females with scoliosis)*, **and indicate the estimated total number, targeted gender, and age.** *To add a row, bring cursor to outside of last row, and press "enter" key.*

Targeted Population	Total Number	Targeted Gender	Specify age or age range
UGA Undergraduate Students	100-200	n/a	18-30

2. **Identify the inclusion and exclusion criteria.** If two or more targeted populations, identify criteria for each.
   a. **List inclusion criteria.**
   b. **List exclusion criteria.**
3. **If the research will exclude a particular gender or minority group, please provide justification.**
4. **Will participants receive any incentives for their participation** (e.g., payments, gifts, compensation, reimbursement, services without charge, extra class credit)**?**   ☐ **Yes**   ☒ **No**
   a. **If yes, please describe.** For multiple sessions, include scheme to pro-rate incentives. N/A
   b. **If offering extra class credit, describe a comparable non-research alternative for receiving incentive.** N/A

Section H: RECRUITMENT AND ELIGIBILITY OF PARTICIPANTS

1. **Describe how potential participants will be initially identified** (e.g., public records, private records, etc.). **All students** Enrolled in ALDR 3900, AGCM 1200, ALDR 4710, AGED 4350, AGCM 4000.
2. **Describe when, where, and how participants will be initially contacted.** In class during normal lecture hours.
3. **Advertisements, flyers, and any other materials that will be used to recruit participants must be reviewed and approved before their use.** Check all that apply below and submit the applicable recruitment material/s**.**
   ☒ **No Advertising**   ☐ **Bulletin boards**   ☐ **Electronic media (e.g., listserv, emails)**   ☐ **Letters**
   ☐ **Print ads/flyers (e.g., newspaper)**   ☐ **Radio/TV**   ☐ **Phone call**   ☐ **Other** *(please describe)*
4. **Describe any follow-up recruitment procedures.** N/A
5. **Describe how eligibility based on the above inclusion/exclusion criteria will be determined** (e.g., self-report via a screening questionnaire, hospital records, school records, additional tests/exams, etc.)**.** N/A

Section I: RESEARCH, DESIGN, METHODS AND PROCEDURES

1. **Describe the research design and methods of data collection.**   This is a descriptive study that will look at Undergraduate student's perception of communication abilities and their relation to college course work, extra-curricular activities, internships, jobs, and student abroad programs. We will collect data using the attached survey in multiple undergraduate classes at the University of Georgia. The surveys will be distributed during regular class hours and will be collected the same class period. After the data is collected from all the participants the researchers will enter the data and perform statistical analyses to fulfill the research objectives outlined in Section F.
2. **If applicable, identify specific factors or variables and treatment conditions or groups (include control groups).** N/A
3. **Indicate the number of research participants that will be assigned to each condition or group, if applicable.** 100-200
4. **Describe in detail, and in sequence, all study procedures, tests, and any treatments/research interventions. Include any follow-up(s).** *Important Note: If procedures are long and complicated, use a table, flowchart or diagram to outline the study procedures from beginning to end.* Described in item 1.
5. **Describe the proposed data analysis plan and, if applicable, any statistical methods for the study.** The researchers will use SPSS to analyze the quantitative data. Analysis will include but not be limited to means and standard deviations, correlations, and Cronbach alpha.
6. **Anticipated duration of participation.**   a. Number of visits or contacts: 1
                                               b. Length of each visit: 30 minutes
                                               c. Total duration of participation: 30 minutes

Section J: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

List and describe all the instruments (interview guides, questionnaires, surveys, etc.) to be used for this study. Attach a copy of all instruments that are properly identified and with corresponding numbers written on them. *To add a row, bring cursor to outside of last row, and press "enter" key.*

Number	Instrument	Brief Description	Identify group(s) that will complete
1	Questionnaire	Questionnaire with 4 sections covering communication confidence, extra-curricular activities, jobs, study-abroad programs, and internships.	Students in ALDR 3900, AGCM 1200, ALDR 4710, AGED 4350, AGCM 4000

Section K: RISKS AND BENEFITS

1. Risks and/or discomforts
Describe any reasonably foreseeable psychological, social, legal, economic or physical risks and/or discomforts from all research procedures, and the corresponding measures to minimize these. *Important Note: If there is more than one study procedure, please identify the procedure followed by the responses for both (a) and (b).*
a. **Risks and/or discomforts.** n/a
b. **Measures to minimize the risks and discomforts to participants.** n/a

2. Benefits
a. **Describe any potential direct benefits to study participants. If none, indicate so**. *Important Note: Please do not include compensation/payment/extra credit in this section, as these are "incentives" and not "benefits" of participation in research; any incentives must be described in Section G.4.* n/a
b. **Describe the potential benefits to society or humankind.** The results of this study may show the value to being more involved in courses @ UGA; completing internships; and participating in extra-curricular activities as it relate to communication skills among undergraduate students.

3. Risk/Benefit Analysis
a. **Indicate how the risks to the participants are reasonable in relation to anticipated benefits, if any, to participants and the importance of the knowledge that may reasonably be expected to result from the study** *(i.e., How do the benefits of the study outweigh the risks, if not directly to the participants then to society or humankind?).* n/a

4. Sensitive or Illegal Activities
a. **Will study collect any information that if disclosed could potentially have adverse consequences for participants or damage their financial standing, employability, insurability, or reputation** *(includes but not limited to sexual attitudes, preferences, or practices; HIV/AIDS or other sexually transmitted diseases; use of alcohol, drugs, or other addictive products; illegal conduct; an individual's psychological well-being or mental health; and genetic information)*? No
b. **If yes, explain how the researchers will protect this information from any inadvertent disclosure.**

5. Reportable Information
a. **Is it reasonably foreseeable that the study will collect or be privy to information that State or Federal law requires to be reported to other officials** *(e.g., child or elder abuse)* **or ethically might require action** *(e.g., suicidal ideation, intent to hurt self or others)*? No
b. **If yes, please explain and include a discussion of the reporting requirements in the consent document(s).**

Section L: DATA SECURITY AND FUTURE USE OF INFORMATION

1. Data Security
Check the box that applies.
☒ **Anonymous** – The data and/or specimens will not be labeled with any individually-identifiable information (e.g., name, SSN, medical record number, home address, telephone number, email address, etc.), or labeled with a code that the research team can link to individually-identifiable information.

☐ **Confidential –** The responses/information may potentially be linked/traced back to an individual participant, for example, by the researcher/s (like in face-to-face interviews, focus groups). **If necessary, provide additional pertinent information.**

☐ **Confidential – Indirect identifiers.** The data and/or specimens will be labeled with a code that the research team can link to individually-identifiable information. If the data and/or specimens will be coded, describe below how the key to the code will be securely maintained.

    ☐ **Paper records will be used.** The key to the code will be secured in a locked container (such as a file cabinet or drawer) in a locked room. The coded data and/or specimens will be maintained in a different location.

    ☐ **Computer/electronic files will be used.** The key to the code will be in an encrypted and/or password protected file. The coded data file will be maintained on a separate computer/server.

    ☐ **Other (please specify), or provide additional pertinent information.**

☐ **Confidential – Direct Identifiers.** The data and/or specimens will be directly labeled with the individually-identifiable information.

    ☐ **Paper records will be used.** The information will be secured in a locked container (such as a file cabinet or drawer) in a locked room.

    ☐ **Computer/electronic files will be used.** The information will be stored in an encrypted and/or password protected file.

    ☐ **Other (please specify), or provide additional pertinent information.**

If "Confidential" is marked, please answer all the following:

    Explain why it is necessary to keep direct or indirect identifiers.

    Identify who will have access to the individually-identifiable information and/or the key to the code.

☐ **Public.** Information will be individually-identifiable when published, presented, or made available to the public.

2. Future Use of Information

If individually-identifiable information and/or codes will be retained after completion of data collection, describe how the information will be handled and stored to ensure confidentiality. *Check all that apply.*

    ☒ **All data files will be stripped of individually-identifiable information and/or the key to the code destroyed.**

    ☒ **All specimens will be stripped of individually-identifiable information and/or the key to the code destroyed.**

    ☐ **Individually-identifiable information and/or codes linking the data or specimens to individual identifiers will be retained. *If this box is checked, describe:***

        a. Retention period.

        b. Justification for retention.

        c. Procedure for removing or destroying the direct/indirect identifiers, if applicable.

    ☐ **Audio and/or video recordings (if applicable) will be transcribed/analyzed and then destroyed or modified to eliminate the possibility that study participants could be identified.**

    ☐ **Audio and/or video recordings (if applicable) will be retained. *If this box is checked, describe:***

        a. Retention period.

        b. Justification for retention.

    ☐ **Other (please specify), or provide additional pertinent information.**

Section M: CONSENT PROCESS

Important Note: The IRB strongly recommends the use of consent templates that are available on the IRB website to ensure that all the elements of informed consent are included (per 45 CFR 116). If more than one consent document will be used, please name each accordingly.

☐ **The PI is attaching a copy of all consent documents that participants will sign.**

☒ **The PI is requesting that the IRB waive requirement to document informed consent.** A signed consent form may be waived if one of the following criteria is met, *check the box that applies.*

    ☐ 1. The only record linking the participant and the research would be the consent document and the principal risk would be potential harm resulting from a breach of confidentiality. Each participant will be asked whether the participant wants documentation linking the participant with the research, and the participant's wishes will govern; or

☒ 2. The research presents no more than minimal risk of harm to participants and involves no procedures for which written consent is normally required outside of the research context.

The consent script or cover letter that will be used in lieu of a consent form is attached. Yes

☐ **The PI is requesting that the IRB approve a consent procedure which does not include, or which alters, some or all of the elements of informed consent set forth in 45 CFR 116, or waive the requirement to obtain informed consent.** An informed consent may be waived if the IRB finds that all of the following have been met:

    1. The research involves no more than minimal risk to the participants;

    2. The waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the participants;

    3. The research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver or alteration; and,

    4. Whenever appropriate, the participants will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation.

Provide justification for requesting a waiver.

Describe how, where, and when informed consent will be obtained from research participants (or permission from parent/s or guardian/s and assent from minor participants), if applicable.

Section N: VULNERABLE AND/OR SPECIAL POPULATIONS

1. **Check if some or all of the targeted participants fall into the following groups.** *Important Note: Some targeted populations require compliance with additional Subparts and the completion of an Appendix or of specific section (see last column).*

Population Type	Required to Complete
☐ **Pregnant women, neonates, or fetuses**	Appendix for Subpart B
☐ **Prisoners**	Appendix for Subpart C
☐ **Minors**	
☐ **Mentally-disabled/cognitively-impaired/severe psychological disorders**	
☐ **Physically-disabled**	
☐ **Terminally ill**	
☐ **Economically/educationally-disadvantaged**	
☐ **A specific group based on religion, race, ethnicity, immigration status, language, or sexual orientation**	
☐ **UGA Psychology Research Pool/Other UGA students/employees**	
☐ **Other** (please describe)	

2. **Explain justification for including the group(s) checked above in this particular study.** Students are chosen because of the diversity in backgrounds. The classes have a high diversity rate and the study is reasearching what factors make a person a more confident commincator.

3. **Is there a working relationship between any researchers and the participants** (e.g., PI's own students or employees)**?** Yes

    a. If yes, please describe. Some students will be from the PI's class.

4. **Describe any additional safeguards to protect the rights and welfare of these participants and to minimize any possible coercion or undue influence.** *For example, amount of payment will be non-coercive for the financially disadvantaged, extra-careful evaluations of participants' understanding of the study, advocates to be involved in the consent process, or use flyers to recruit participants instead of directly approaching own staff or students.* Students will be able to refuse to participate without consequences. The surveys will be anonomyous and therefore we as instructors cannot give consequences to those students who decided not to participate.

Section O: COLLABORATIVE PROJECT OR OUTSIDE PERFORMANCE SITE

Check one of the two boxes below:

    ☒ **This project does not involve any collaboration with non-UGA researchers or performance in non-UGA facilities.**

    ☐ **This project involves collaboration with non-UGA researchers or performance in non-UGA facilities** (e.g., local public school, participants' workplace, hospital)**.** ***If this box is checked**, list **all** sites at which you will conduct this research.* **Attach authorization/permission and/or current IRB approval.** *Checkboxes below are not clickable so place "X" before or over the box. To add a row, bring cursor to outside of last row, press "enter" key, and copy/paste the previous cells.*

Name of Institution	Location (County/State/Country)	Authorization/permission letter and/or current IRB approval.	
		☐ Attached	☐ Pending
		☐ Attached	☐ **P**ending

IMPORTANT NOTE: **If none of the following applies to your research, this is the END of the application form.**

Section P: METHODS AND PROCEDURES THAT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Check all that apply. *Important Note: The items listed below are **NOT** an inclusive list of methods and procedures that may be used in research studies. Some procedures require the completion of an Appendix or of specific sections (see last column).*

Method/Procedure   **Required to Complete**
☒ **Student research (For student's thesis/dissertation/others)** .... Section Q (below)
☐ **Deception, concealment, or incomplete disclosure**... Section R (below)
☐ **Internet research**.. Section S (below)
☐ **Blood sampling/collection** .... Section T (below)
☐ **Clinical trial (Drugs, biologics, or devices)**
☐ **Genetic analyses**
☐ **Data/Tissue repository**
☐ **HIPAA (Protected health information)**
☐ **DXA/X-RAY**
☐ **MRI/EEG/ECG/NIRS/Ultrasound**
☐ **Other** (please describe)

Section Q: STUDENT RESEARCH

Important Note: The IRB recommends submission for IRB review only after the appropriate committee has conducted the necessary scientific review and approved the research proposal.
1. This application is being submitted for: ☐ Undergraduate Honors Thesis   ☐ Doctoral Dissertation Research
                                                        ☒ Masters Thesis Research   ☐ Other (please describe)
2. Has the student's thesis/dissertation committee approved this research? ☒ **Yes**   ☐ **No**

Section R: DECEPTION, CONCEALMENT, OR INCOMPLETE DISCLOSURE

1. Describe the deception, concealment, or incomplete disclosure; explain why it is necessary, and how you will debrief the participants. *Important Note: The consent form should include the following statement: "In order to make this study a valid one, some information about (my participation or the study) will be withheld until completion of the study."*

2. Debriefing Form is attached. ☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No;** If no, please explain.

Section S: INTERNET RESEARCH

If data will be collected, transmitted, and/or stored via the internet, the level of security should be appropriate to the level of risk. Indicate the measures that will be taken to ensure security of data transmitted over the internet. *Check all that apply.*
☐ A mechanism will be used to strip off the IP addresses for data submitted via e-mail.
☐ The data will be transmitted in encrypted format.
☐ Firewall technology will be used to protect the research computer from unauthorized access.
☐ Hardware storing the data will be accessible only to authorized users with log-in privileges.
☐ Other (please describe), or provide additional pertinent information.

Section T: BLOOD SAMPLING / COLLECTION

If blood will be collected for the purpose of this research, please respond to all the following:

1. **Route/method of collection** (e.g., by finger stick, heel stick, venipuncture)**:**
2. **Frequency of collection** (e.g., 2 times per week, for 3 weeks)**:**
3. **Volume of blood for each collection** (in milliliters)**:**
4. **Total volume to be collected** (in milliliters)**:**
5. **Are participants healthy, non-pregnant adults who weigh at least 110 pounds?** (Choose YES or NO)
   a. **If no, indicate if amount collected will exceed the lesser of 50 ml or 3 ml per kg in an 8-week period and if collection will occur more frequently than 2 times per week.**
6. **Will participants fast prior to blood collection(s)?** (Choose YES or NO)
   a. **If yes, describe how informed consent will be obtained prior to fasting.**