Running Head: RETENTION, RACE, FAITH OF MINORITY STUDENTS

Comment [AK1]: The running head appears on all subsequent pages absent the words 'Running head:' (e.g., 'RUNNING HEAD IS ALL CAPITAL LETTERS')(Chapter 2, 2.01, p. 23) (Figure 2.1, p. 41).

Comment [AK2]: The title page should include a running head, which is a shortened title at the top of the page and is flush left in the header on the title page (Chapter 8, 8.03, p. 229) (Figure 2.1, p. 41).

Comment [AK3]: The preferred font for APA papers is 12-pt Times New Roman (Chapter 8, 8.03, p. 228).

Retention Rates, Race, and Faith amongst Minority Students at University X

John A. Student

University X

Abstract

The research of this qualitative study contained four focused groups composed of minority ethnicities to examine their college experiences at a predominantly White institution, specifically University X. The purpose of the study was fourfold: (a) to analyze retention rates of freshman, minority/ethnic students at University X, (b) to examine the role race plays on minority students' experiences at predominantly White institutions, specifically University X, (c) to discuss the numerous activities and programs University X has targeted toward the four minority/ethnic groups and Christians, and (d) to identify the role faith has on the university's campus toward minority ethnic groups. The four minority/ethnic groups examined in this study were African-American, Asian-Pacific American, Chicano/Latino, and Canadians.

Comment [AK4]: Abstracts are typically between 150 and 250 words (Chapter 2, 2.04, p. 27) (Figure 2.1, p. 41).

Retention Rates, Race, and Faith amongst Minority Students at University X

Minority students enrolling in postsecondary institutions have increased over the years and by the year 2010, 46% of the nation's school-age youth will be students of color; however, ethnic minorities still remain undereducated despite the growing numbers in education (Castellanos, Cole & Jones, 2002). For years minorities have been considered as not receiving the same quality of education and experiences in school.   Minority students' enrollment into postsecondary institutions has increased dramatically from decades ago, but still lingers behind the enrollment of Caucasian students. For example, in Carter and Wilson's study (as cited in Castellanos, Cole, & Jones, 2002) almost 43% of White high school graduates ages 18 to 24 attend college, compared to 36% of African Americans and 33% of Latinos. Minority students retention at predominantly white institutions, specifically University X is a problem because minorities' retention rates and experiences at University X are the same, maybe slightly different, but significantly the same, which should not be the case since this is an evangelical school. The research questions of this study are: 1) Why are retention rates at University X the same as other state non-evangelical institutions, if this is such a Christian institution? 2) Why are minority/ethnic student experiences on University X's campus not significantly different at all times than those at a non-evangelical state institution? This study is important from a psychologist perspective because it analyzes the psychological state and experiences of minority students at a predominantly white institution and how and/or if retention rates, race and faith affects those aspects of minority students any differently at University X. The study is also important from a Christian perspective being that it is conducted at University X and majority of the students/faculty/staff profess to be Christians, however, the actions shown at University X and by University X may sometimes be contradictory to their proclamation.

Comment [AK5]: A comma should go here.

Comment [AK6]: This passage is a bit awkward. Rewrite so that it reads better.

Comment [AK7]: This is a run-on sentence.

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Retention Rates & its Risk Factors of Freshman Minority Students

The retention rates of minority students at colleges and universities have been a concern for educators for an elongated time. Precollege characteristics of the minority can be useful in predicting student retention. Students are more likely to stay in school when they are actively involved in campus activities and feel a sense of community in the institution (Hoffman & Lowitzki, 2005). Thus far, schools have implemented many types of activities and programs to target minority students; University X has various departments and offices targeted towards minority students, which will be discussed later. Furthermore, undergraduate representation of ethnic minority students at four-year institutions continue to be lugubrious with African Americans constituting 12.3%, Hispanic students constituting 8.7%, and Native Americans accounting for less than 1% of all higher education students. Reports from institutions of higher education throughout the nation show that student retention rates over the years have ranged from as high as 50% to as low as 33% (Berger 1992). Many of these studies have been based on traditional, white undergraduate students, as well as nontraditional students, i.e. older, minorities, from low-income or working-class backgrounds, who entered residential four-year institutions as freshman. Beal & Lee, as well as Cope & Hannah studies (as cited in Berger, 1992) stated the factors that contribute to retention rates suggested by other studies are personality traits, socioeconomic status, high school academic performance, undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA), family support, size and support of the academic institution, peer relationships, and last but not least the extent and types of faculty-students. Bynum & Thompson's and Thomas' study (as cited in Berger, 1992) found those previous stated factors contributed to retention as well as personal life circumstances (single parent home, nuclear or extended family responsibilities, employment while attending school). Gonzalez stated in his study that nearly half of students

entering two-year colleges and more than one-fourth of students entering four-year colleges or universities depart from their institutions by the end of their first year. However, the premature departure rates for minority students are higher than the departure rates for their White counterparts in both two-year and four-year postsecondary institutions (Gonzalez, 2001).

> Comment [AK9]: In most writing, excessively long paragraphs should be avoided.

There are general forces that psychologists may contribute to retention rates as well and not just factors. The three particular forces that account for student outcomes are: cognitive, social, and institutional.

> Comment [AK10]: Unclear. Rewrite so that your intended meaning is more clear to the reader.

The ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report (2003) stated:

The cognitive factors form the academic ability –the strengths and weaknesses –of the student, such as level of proficiency in writing, reading, and mathematics. The social factors include the student's ability to interact effectively with other persons, cultural history, and personal attitudes, form a second set of external factors that characterize the individual. The last set of factors, the institutional, refers to the practices, strategies, and culture of the college or university, in either an unintended and intended way (p. 77).

> Comment [AK11]: For a quote that contains more than 40 words display it as a block (left justified) quotation by starting the quote on its own line and indent the entire quote a half-inch from the left margin and cite the source (Surname, year, p. #) in parentheses following the quote punctuation (Chapter 6, pp. 170-172).

Retention Rates & Its Risk Factors at University X

Shockingly the retention rates and its risk factors are the same at University X as they are at other state institutions. Being that University X is an evangelical school with Christian principles integrated into its foundation, mission statement, courses, etc. one would conclude that it would be different and better than other state institutions. University X is different and better in many aspects compared to other state institutions but not when it comes down to retention and minority experiences. After all, the founder of the university always said, "If it's Christian, it ought to be better," then why is that statement not true to the campus' retention rates and

minority experiences? The risk factors of retention are generally the same at University X as they are at any other state institution, such as grade point average, family support, socioeconomic status, etc. The other difference that may be a risk factor is religious background. For example, if a minority student came from a different religious background other than Christian, more specifically Southern Baptist or if a minority student came from a more charismatic background compared to a less charismatic background like University X.

Minority Students' Experiences based upon Race

Minority experiences at predominantly White institutions are characterized by alienation, matriculation, discrimination, etc. The Daniel study used the philosophical approach of the critical race theory (CRT). Its key components relevant to our study include the use of narratives to understand people's experiences; exploration of the ways institutional structures and policies perpetuates racial/ethnic educational inequalities; emphasis on the importance of viewing policies within a cultural and historical context, and focus on how race and racism are intertwined into structures and policies (Daniel, 2007). The Walsh study (as cited in Gonzalez, 2001) stated, "[a]lienation refers to experiencing estrangement in a particular environment or situation." The Sleeter & McLaren study (as cited in Gonzalez, 2001) stated, "[m]arginalization refers to experiencing repression or stigmatization or being placed in a position or marginal importance, influence, or power. Discrimination is when an individual is treated differently due to their race/ethnic background, sex, age, socioeconomic status, etc. Gonzalez found in his study that minority/ethnic students can experience alienation and marginalization due to race in three asymmetrical systems of representation: the social world, the physical world, and the epistemological world. Gonzalez defined the social world as "a system of representations which includes the racial and ethnic makeup of individuals and groups on campus, the power

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relationships that exist between and within these groups, and the language utilized between and within those groups." From his study the students experienced marginalization and alienation from the lack of their race among students and faculty/staff, which is what we believe our minority/ethnic students at University X will experience. Gonzalez definition of the physical world was a system of representations, such as campus buildings architecture, physical symbols on campus, like flyers and posters. Within his study, the way alienation and marginalization were experienced was through the lack of the participating students' race being represented in course offerings (Gonzalez, 2001). This is a problem that minority students at University X will also face because there are not course offerings, neither posters nor flyers predominantly around campus focusing on these four minority/ethnic groups. The last asymmetrical system Gonzalez used was the epistemological world, and this was defined by "a system of representation which includes the knowledge that exists and is exchanged within various social spaces on campus." The students in Gonzalez study experienced marginalization and alienation due to the lack of knowledge about their race/ethnicity or background existing and being exchanged on campus (Gonzalez, 2001). This is a problem that University X students will experience based upon their race.

Minority Student Experiences at University X because of Race

Minority/ethnic students' experiences at University X are not as bad as those at a state non-evangelical institution; however, they are not significantly different either. A 2003 article stated "an institution is responsible for the healthy development and achievement of its student body regardless of race and ethnicity" (Lett & Wright, 2003). University X student body is predominantly alright, at least from what is evident; however there are still some implications that arise, such as last year's presidential election period, experiences of bi-racial couples, and

> **Comment [AK16]:** When quoting another work within the paper include author, year, and page citation or paragraph number.

> **Comment [AK17]:** Avoid using first person in formal writing.

> **Comment [AK18]:** When quoting another work within the paper include author, year, and page citation or paragraph number.

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discrimination from students/faculty/staff members. Majority of students at University X profess

to be Christians, and if that is the case the experiences of minorities and students from different

ethnicities should be better than those at a secular university. Many of the professors and staff

members proclaim to be Christians and that they love everyone, however, they discriminate

toward certain minority/ethnic groups in their classrooms. Race and racism are still problems

wherever one goes, even if it is not as evident, as seen at University X. Green stated in his study,

"unfortunately, predominantly white institutions of higher learning have tended to reflect the

values of other white institutions, which have historically excluded black and other minority

Americans" (Green, 1971).

Minority Activities and Programs

The approach to putting more activities and programs on predominantly white college

campuses is increasing more rapidly every day. The demand for many colleges to add programs

and activities for minority students is beginning to be requested by the minority student

population. Many colleges do not have a variety of activities and programs to keep minority

students occupied while they pursue their degree and career while in college. However, many

universities in the U.S. today are joining together with the "student care" staff to create many

programs to help minority students. These programs were designed to make the students feel

accepted and appreciated at the school they are attending. Many studies have been done to test if

these programs are helpful or a major hindrance to minority students. But many researchers have

found otherwise, that the programs and activities that are available for the students are actually

an aid to them. They reflect the opinions of the study body's attitude towards them. It also is a

benefit to school faculty because it allows them to evaluate the students' behavior towards the

programs that they have made available. Green's study showed that it can also give them an idea

on what needs to be changed to better the participation of the students, which is needed so

programs for minority students can continue to be improving (Green 2007).

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For instance, the Student Care Office at University X offers not only minority students

but all students counseling, crisis intervention, and life skills programs. All of these programs are

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helpful to any minority student who may need help coping and adjusting with being in college.

Two of the valuable programs that may benefit minority students are counseling and mentoring,

which were designed to better students experiences on campus. In these programs students are

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allowed the opportunity to connect with the counselors. The counselors are willing to help and

also work with the student towards daily progress with their problems. Another department that

is willing to help many minority students and has plenty of programs available is University X's

Center for Multicultural Enrichment (Center4ME). These help the students grow comfortable

> **Comment [AK30]:** Choose a better word here.

with others while also learning the surroundings of the college campus. The mentor must help

the minority student see why college is an exciting but also a learning experience. They can also

share with the student the importance of getting involved in extracurricular activities at school

and taking advantage of the programs that are available for their benefits. Author Vernon Hurte

believes that "mentoring programs positively influence student retention and success, and

research has suggested that there is a positive relationship between participation in mentoring

programs and the 'persistence rates' of minority students" (Hurte 2002).

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Through this office there are numerous programs and activities that many minority

students may be able to participate in. Their purpose is to serve students of every minority/ethnic

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background. This means that whatever the needs of the students may be they are willing to help

fulfill them. Many programs such as the "A.S.S.I.S.T" program and the "BLACK INITATIVE"

program are two of the many programs that University X has to offer to minority students. The

programs allow students to get involved on campus and meet other minority students. The students are given the chance to learn about other cultures and the importance of that specific culture, such as Latino month through CENTER4ME. University X is truly working with these different offices to improve the programs for minority students. Along with the many programs that have been added to improve many institutions, are the activities that are available to minority students. An organization like "Smile for Africa" is a non-profit organization that is ran by African minority students who work to improve Africa. The students hold fundraisers, and events to raise money to help poor families in Africa. This gives them the chance to do something they enjoy and reflects their heritage and culture. There are Spanish clubs and convocations for Latino students, which are held to give students the opportunity to participate with others within their culture. Other minority students such as Japanese and Canadians participate in events like "Taste of the Nations," which allows minority students and others to experience other cultures through different foods. Implementing these programs at any college will decrease the retention rates of minority students and positively affect the minority students' experiences, especially if the institution is a predominantly white institution, such as University X. The more minority students that attend any institution are a call for more programs, which must be available to students to keep their interest. Even allowing freshmen minority students to participate in pre-college programs will help them adjust to school and the different groups of people that are around them. The programs were created to give the students an opportunity to attend college a couple weeks before the actual semester starts to get a head start on their journey as a college student. This helps the student learn the campus, classroom settings, other students and professors. According to authors Steven Robbins and Laura Smith "[t]he program was designed to affect students on three levels: implementation, immediate, and intermediate goals"

> **Comment [AK33]:** This passage is a bit awkward. Rewrite so that it reads better.

which simply shows that students come to college to learn new things and to set new goals that will help better their futures (Robbins & Smith, 1993). These programs are well needed to help students, especially minorities with truly finding out their purpose in life while being away at school.

Funds have been given from the government to help pay for these programs just to make sure that students are getting what they need to succeed in college. Incorporating these activities and programs into the college school system is helping improve the once increasing rate of discrimination and race on many campuses. Adding these programs and extra activities will help keep the interest of minority students and the retention rate at many schools from rising. Studies have shown that having these programs available for the students is what will help improve their purpose as a successful student. It will also help other students understand and appreciate the culture and significance of each minority student (Barry& Sedlacek, 1999).

Minority students at one point did not feel welcome by other students or staff that was not their race, which was causing the retention rate to decrease rapidly. Minority students were simply leaving predominantly white institutions because of the lack of respect they were receiving from the student body and staff. And over time this began to change because of minority students' ability to stand up and express how they feel about their college campuses. Their boldness has helped them improve and now more programs and activities have been created to keep minority students in college. The participation of other students and faculty members pushing these programs to be a success and on-going will continue to increase the retention rate in higher education. Programs and the academic achievement of minority students go hand and hand because they both help minority students become a better student. The rates of retention will continue to decrease as long as more programs and activities for minorities are

added to more campuses. The goal of every campus should be to connect with all of the students, therefore impacting every students life must be a priority of the campus faculty.

Role on Faith

Minority ethnic groups at many colleges may experience many different things and complications; however the role of faith at University X decreases these experiences on their campus. University X tries to encourage their students through Christian based activities and programs that will empower them in every aspect of their lives. There are so many other ways to keep the interest of the student body and University X has used this to retain the population of their student body. University X's goal is to train champions for Christ which simply challenges the student to go into the world and share the gift of salvation with everyone. Through bible teaching classes, to the interaction of students in their dorm during hall meetings. University X is raising their students up to conquer the world through their faith in Jesus Christ. The doctrinal statement from the Spiritual Life Department at University X wants to provide opportunities for the University X family to pursue Christ-likeness, obeying the Great Commission through living the Great Commandment" this gives the entire school the chance to pursue God themselves and impact others lives as well. Through faith these things are possible because University X believes in the power of God and what He can do. This gives the college campus the opportunity to let others know that there is hope and that it only comes from God. Having these things available at more college universities might change the affect of many students outcome while in college. Many students may need some spiritual emphasis on problems to see the situation differently. The key to breaking the cycle of the rise retention throughout college campuses and negative minority student experiences is to add different programs and activities that accommodate the entire student body.

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> **Comment [AK41]:** This is a sentence fragment.

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> **Comment [AK43]:** Choose a better word here.

> **Comment [AK44]:** Most of the time, affect is a verb and effect is a noun. Exceptions are rare.

Introducing the student body to faith in God can help students cope with school and continue out strong. Having faith can motivate one to doing what is right and will affect their purpose in life. This may not be the preference to many students but sharing the importance of it with them can make a difference. According to Alan Seidman "[n]umerous programs can help recruit, retain, and graduate minority students" this means that any area that can be added in school programs to keep the rate of retention from should be added (Seidman 2005). There should be a variety of different programs available for the student body to keep them challenged to do better. And challenging the student body in pursuing a relationship after God should not be a problem because of the diverse group of people that make up a college campus. Serving the student body as a whole is important but focusing on the needs of every student is important also. This helps satisfy each student in an area they may think that that college campus may need.

However, adding a spiritual based program to the agenda of a college campus may not be serving all of the student body but some, that is still very important because the opinion of all the student body matters. Authors Jamie Merisotis and Kirstin McCarthy believed that serving and contributing to each of the student bodies interest is best, to keep the campus in great condition and will not leave any questions of if every student has been taken care of (Merisotis & McCarthy 2005) The support of the student body is needed to maintain a great campus and adding more programs a college campus is what students need to see to show that what they want has been given to them. According to authors Zajacova, Lynch, and Espensnade students must have self motivation to get to where they reach their goal of success (Zajacova &Lynch &Espensnade 2005). Which is true but the help from a university that cares can make a big difference. This is why the student body and staff must work together to contain a successful school. Which University X has tried to do by sharing the love of Christ with each student.

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Comment [AK50]: Use present tense.

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Which has made a difference in how things are done and the turnout after changes may have been made. Implementing these things will bring the retention rate down and bring the graduation rate back up.

Methods

Research Rational

Minority student's retention rates and experiences at predominantly White institutions have been negative for decades. However, the current approaches have been drawn and utilized but there is still a high percentage in retention rates and a negative connotation with their experiences. This study will assess the retention rates of minority students at predominantly White institutions, as well as its contributing factors, and implement ways to decrease retention rates and improve minority student's experiences on campus. We will be doing an idiographic qualitative study for the whole school year.

Participants

The participants will be taken from four minority/ethnic groups: African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Canadian (even though they are not an ethnic group, they are a minority group at University X) from a sample of University X freshman population. Two individuals from each group will be taken, male and female. All eight individuals will be selected to participate in this study because they met the following criteria, similar to those of the Gonzalez study: 1) they will be of one of the minority ethnic groups being studied; 2) they will be first-generation college students, freshman; 3) prior to their university enrollment, the individuals will have lived in predominantly minority communities; 4) the individuals will have professed to be Christians and attended church services on a regular basis. We chose this criterion because

students possessing these characteristics show higher levels of departure from colleges and universities. The students will be compensated with free tutoring for their entire school year that they participate in our study, as a way to help them with their academics.

Data Collection

Following how Gonzalez followed Erickson's criteria for validity, our goal will be to gain a sufficient amount of time studying and/or interacting with the phenomenon through investigation, collect a variety of data, obtain enough psychological access to acquire an effective level of empathetic understanding, and construct an account that seems authentic or has a feel of verisimilitude.

Surveys

The first survey will be administered to each participant at the beginning of the study to acquire about their perspectives toward retention, race, and faith at University X. The survey will consist of five straight-forward short questions. The second survey will also be administered to each participant at the end of their first semester to acquire about their sense of belonging on campus based on a five-point scale, and will also be short questions. The surveys will help measure the participants' perspectives toward retention, race, and faith at University X, as well as help us to see if they feel better after their first semester about being a minority on University X's campus.

Observations

Observations will occur approximately once a month (totaling ten) and will involve observing the participants' daily activities, throughout a six-to-eight hour period. We will meet the participants in their dorm room or outside of their residence halls and observe them as they go to class, met friends for lunch, and participate in student organizations meetings. Other places for observation will include hall meeting, prayer groups, convocation, study session and tutoring areas, the computer lab, classrooms, the Tilley Center (student union), gym, and workplace.

Interviews

Biweekly audiotaped interviews (totaling twenty) will be conducted in the dorm rooms of participants without roommates being present, yet they will be semi-structured. We will conduct the interviews at the dorm room during the first and second semesters of each individual. The purposes of the interviews are to receive a deeper understanding of the student's perspectives toward race versus faith on their campus. The interviews will be based on the funnel approach using open ended questions; the interview questions will be honest questions about race and faith at an evangelical school, specifically University X. The first semester interviews will be compared to the second semester to see if student's perspectives toward the university have positively changed or negatively changed.

Document Acquisition

In addition to the surveys, observations, and interviews, individual journals will be recorded online. The journal entries will be happen-stance; the individuals will be directed informally and asked to write about what happen to them on a particular day. Once a semester when there is a special event happening on campus, each individual will be asked to record in their journal online their experiences that day.

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Comment [AK64]: Use present tense.

Discussion

Limitations and Implications

The information utilized will be limited to University X, a lot of the data that will be collected such as the surveys, the interviews and the experiment will be conducted at the school. If research could have been taken at another institution it could have been compared to the results that were collected at University X. Such as, we will further our study at a Historical Black College/University (HBCU) and look and Caucasian students being the minority/ethnic group and compare and contrast the data. We will also further our study by continuing to perform this student on other minority/ethnic students at University X and as well as other state institution, evangelical and non-evangelical. Another major limitation is the option to limit our research to working with only freshmen minority students. The results of the experiment could be different if more minority students from different age groups and other backgrounds are used in the study. The study that we will conduct will be a case study, which lacks control and internal validity, even though we are not doing an experiment, we are not certain of all of the factors that can affect minority/ethnic student retention rates and experiences at a predominantly white institution. There is also the limitation of observer bias, due to the fact that we both are minority, African-American female students at University X. Due to our sample population, generalizations can not be made because not every minority/ethnic group will be included within our study.

Appendix

Survey

1. What is your classification as a student at University X?

a. Freshmen b. Sophomore c. Junior d. Senior

2. As a student which would you ethnic group would you classify yourself to be?

a. African American b. Hispanic/Latino c. Native American d. Other

3. On a scale from one to five, with five being the greatest and one being the lowest how would you rate the programs available for minority students at University X?

5. Very Effective 4.Somewhat Effective 3.Occasionally Effective 2. Very Little 1. None at All

4. With five being the greatest and one being the lowest how would you explain your own personal relationship with Christ through faith.

5. Very Effective 4.Somewhat Effective 3.Occasionally Effective 2. Very Little 1. None at All

5. How many times out of a semester has there been programs or activities available for your minority group. Answer according to the scale of one to five.

5. Very Effective 4.Somewhat Effective 3.Occasionally Effective 2. Very Little 1. None at All

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Prospectus Rubric

20 - Content

25 - Focus is clear and coherent. Logical and obvious flow of ideas. Assertions fully and appropriately supported by evidence. Good use of concept; appropriate choice of topic, examples, and style. Meets assignment guidelines and addresses appropriate material.

20 - Obvious focus, generally maintained. Generally logical flow of thought. Evidence supports most assertions well. Concept shows generally appropriate choice of topic, examples, and style. Basically meets assignment guidelines and addresses appropriate material.

15 - Weakly focused. Some leaps in logic or fallacious reasoning. Some assertions unsupported, or failure to distinguish between assertions and proof. Weak choice of topic, examples, and style. Does not meet assignment guidelines (but does not entirely fail to accomplish the objective)

10 - No clear focus. No clear flow of ideas. Poor or absent evidence for assertions; evidence supporting no clear point. Inappropriate choice of topic, examples, and style. Fails to meet assignment guidelines; fails to accomplish assignment objectives.

22- Structure

25 - Articulates a main point or topic early on; supports or amplifies topics throughout; draws appropriate conclusions from evidence. Clear structure with appropriate transitions where needed and use of headings. Focused and well organized paragraphs.

20 - Generally articulates a main point or topic early on; mostly supports or amplifies topics throughout; draws basically appropriate conclusions from evidence. Generally clear structure with appropriate transitions where needed. Paragraphs generally focused and well organized

15 - Contains a point, evidence, and conclusion but does not necessarily put them in the proper order or make them clearly visible. Salvageable structure with some attempt at transition. Paragraphs are mostly on topic though with some shifts and errors in focus.

10 - Missing major parts of the paper (intro, body, conclusion). Faulty structure with unclear connections between ideas and paragraphs; inadequate or absent transitions. Paragraphs have serious and persistent errors.

23 - Readability

25 - Contains only very minor grammar and punctuation errors or typos; errors must not seriously distract or harm clarity. Appropriate word usage for topic and assignment. Easily understandable; clearly expressed.

20 - Contains some grammar and punctuation errors or typos; errors may distract but must not seriously harm clarity. Generally appropriate word usage for topic and assignment. Generally understandable and clearly expressed.

15 - Contains significant and distracting grammar and punctuation errors or typos; errors may harm clarity (but not render the paper incomprehensible). Some errors in word usage for topic and assignment. Reader may have to work to understand; thought may seem muddled.

10 - Significant and distracting grammar and punctuation errors; errors harm clarity, distract, and make it impossible to comprehend parts of the paper. Inappropriate word usage. Point is unclear; reader cannot understand what writer means to say.

21 – APA Style

25 - Format conforms to APA Style guidelines. Appropriate citation in text (or in footnote) and on works cited page; smooth set-up of quotations, paraphrases, etc. Well chosen sources, appropriate for field of study, sufficient in number and adequate to prove assertions.

20 - Format generally conforms to APA Style guidelines. Generally correct and appropriate citation in text (or in footnote) and on works cited page; adequate set-up of quotations, paraphrases, etc. Generally well chosen sources, and appropriate for field of study, sufficient in number and mostly adequate to prove assertions.

15 - Recognizably attempts to conform to APA Style guidelines. Attempt at citation in text and on works cited page (if required); occasionally unclear set-up and format of quotations, paraphrases, etc. Some badly chosen or inappropriate sources; some missing evidence.

10 - Serious failure to conform to APA Style guidelines. Inadequate or missing citations in text (or in footnote) and on works cited page (if required); little or no set-up of quotations, paraphrases, etc. Student may plagiarize. Inappropriate, insufficient, and inadequate sources.