

Factors Influencing Students to Attend Summer
School at Texas Lutheran University

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of
Southwest Texas State University
In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements

For the Degree of
Master of Arts

By

Andres Dewayne Rischer, B.S.

San Marcos, Texas
December 1999

COPYRIGHT

By

Andres Dewayne Rischer

1999

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God, Stop Six,
Eastwood, The Southside, Como, Dunbar High School
(Class of 1991), Alonzo Jones, Shawanda Brown, Janet
Hutchinson, Beverly Woodson, Tamara Thornton, and
Beverly Henry-Wheeler. Also, a dedication in memory
of Drayton Andres Rischer (August 3, 1999) and my
grandfather, Herman Rischer, Sr. (September 16, 1999).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank God for his blessings, guidance, care, and merciful love;

To my Herman Jr., Joan Yaites Rischer, Lakisha, Fred, Lisa, Aarius, Darius, Jalyn Andrea, Bianca, Ryan, Courtney Carreathers, "TuTu," Anita Laster, Lemmie Yaites, Mathis and Haywood families, Orlando Thomas and family, Rance Simpson and family, La La Reed, and especially my grandmother, Mary Grace Rischer.

To Dr. Barbara G. Lyman, for her guidance, mentoring, patience, and support for my learning and development as a person and professional. You have been a San Marcos mother to me and I appreciate your mentoring;

To Dr. Emily Payne, for being a "devil's advocate" and pushing me to succeed at all costs;

To Dr. Jovita Ross-Gordon for her assistance as a committee member and "kudos" during the thesis defense;

To Texas Lutheran University, B.A.R.K., BSU, Kris Plaehn, Elaine Shields, Kerra Carson, Monica and

Jessica Dekkers, Frank Giesber, Pastor Greg Ronning,
Dr. Chatman, and Walter Seidenschwarz;

To all my mentors affiliated with SWT, as staff,
administrators, and former supervisors;

To my friends who have graduated from SWT;

To the SWT Graduate Opportunity Fellowship,
Residence Life, Recreational Sports, Dean of Students,
Multicultural Student Affairs, and Career Services;

To my youth at Safe Haven Boys & Girls Club,
Eastside Boys & Girls Club, San Marcos Mitchell
Opportunity Center, City of Plano Douglas Community
Center, Teresa Thompson, Nathan's Barber Shop (Fort
Worth), and Ms. Margaret Williams;

To my friends in Fort Worth, Arlington, Dallas,
San Marcos, Seguin, Austin, San Antonio, Houston, St.
Louis, Connecticut, New York, Florida, and Arizona;

To the Castillo, Priestly, Allen, and Bertrand
families;

To the Rischer, Yaites, and Brackens family
members;

And special thanks to Dr. Julian Haber for
believing in me when others said I would not graduate
from high school and would "at best" become a janitor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
DEDICATION . . . . .	.iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	.v
TABLE OF CONTENTS. . . . .	.vii
LIST OF TABLES.	x
ABSTRACT.	xii
CHAPTER I: Introduction to the Study	
Summer School at TLU	3
Significance of the Study.	4
Research Questions of the Study.	5
Scope of the Study	6
Terminology.	7
Limitations.	8
Summary.	9
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review	
History of Summer Sessions . . . . .	.11
Student Motivations for Summer School	
Enrollment . . . . .	.12
Academic Reasons . . . . .	.14
Speeding progress towards graduation. .	.14
Easing course load. . . . .	.16
Removing academic probation status. .	.18
Other academic reasons. . . . .	.19
Financial Reasons. . . . .	.21
Costs . . . . .	.22
Employment-related financial reasons. .	.23
Other financially motivated reasons .	.24
Social Reasons . . . . .	.26
Summary. . . . .	.28

CHAPTER 3: Methods

Subjects	30
Instruments	32
Procedures	34
Participants' Rights	36
Analysis	37
Summary	38

CHAPTER 4: Presentation of the Data

Introduction	39
Part I: Background Information	40
Part II: Enrollment Information	51
RQ1: Academic Reasons	52
RQ2: Financial Reasons	54
RQ3: Social Reasons	56
RQ4: Other Reasons	57
Summary	62

CHAPTER 5: Conclusions and Implications

Introduction	63
Summary of Results	63
Discussion of Results	64
RQ1	64
Hastening progress towards degree completion	65
Easing regular semester course loads	66
Other academic related reasons for attending summer school	68
RQ2	71
RQ3	75
RQ4	77
"Other" academic factors	77
"Other" social factors	78
"Other" financial factors	78
Limitations of the Study	79
Limitations Arising from Some Survey Question Constructions	79
Ethnicity/race classification	80
Summer school registration status	80
Enrollment information	81

Regarding main reason for attending summer school.	83
Implications for Future Research and Practice	83
Research.	84
Practice.	86
Conclusions.	87
Summary.	88
REFERENCES.	89
APPENDIX A	
Summer Session Survey Instrument	95
APPENDIX B	
Matrix for Research Questions	99
APPENDIX C	
TLU Summer I Course List.	101
TLU Summer II Course List	102
VITA	103

LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE
Table 1. TLU Summer Sessions Enrollment, 1993-1998	4
Table 2. TLU Summer Session I Courses, 1999	30
Table 3. Respondents' Age	40
Table 4. Respondents' Gender	40
Table 5. Respondents' Classification	41
Table 6. Respondents' Ethnicity/Race	42
Table 7. Respondents' Financial Aid	42
Table 8. Grade Point Average	43
Table 9. Respondents' Permanent Address	44
Table 10 Respondents' Living in Seguin	44
Table 11 Respondents' Major	45
Table 12 Respondents' Career Choice	47
Table 13 Respondents' Work Hours per Week	48

Table 14	48
Attended Summer School prior to 1999	
Table 15	49
Respondents' Enrollment Status	
Table 16	50
Respondents' Spring Hours for 1999	
Table 17	50
Respondents' Summer Hours for 1999	
Table 18	54
Enrollment Information - Academic Reasons	
Table 19	56
Enrollment Information - Financial Reasons	
Table 20	57
Enrollment Information - Social Reasons	
Table 21	58
Enrollment Information - Other Reasons	
Table 22	58
Plan to Attend Summer School in 2000	
Table 23	60
Main Reasons for Summer 1999 Enrollment	
Table 24	61
Decided to Attend Summer School in 1999	

ABSTRACT

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS TO ATTEND SUMMER
SCHOOL AT TEXAS LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY**

by

**Andres Dewayne Rischer, B.S.
Southwest Texas State University
December 1999**

Supervising Professor: Dr. Barbara G. Lyman

In the late 1800s, summer sessions at colleges and universities were developed to provide financial and operating advancement for the institution. Over the years, summer school has become an avenue for students to progress as students, professionals, and adults.

The review of the literature suggests that students attend summer school to graduate in four years or less, to meet financial aid requirements, lessen the costs for the long-term semesters, and to be closer to friends.

The proposed study examined what factors influenced students to enroll in summer courses at Texas Lutheran University (TLU). The study sample

consisted of 128 TLU students enrolled, at the main campus, in summer school in 1999. A 35-item survey questionnaire was administered to selected students. Over 90% of the studied population cited academic factors as their reason for attending summer school. Students stated that they wanted to speed up the progress towards graduation, graduate on time, and ease their course load during the long-term semesters. A small number of students indicated social and financial influences for attending summer school. Conclusions and implications for further research and practice are presented.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to the Study

Summer school sessions were introduced to higher education in 1891 (Young & McDougall, 1988). Harper proposed the idea of students' attending classes in the summer to increase the level of operations at the University of Chicago. Samson (1985) states that universities have adopted the summer school element for various reasons. Samson's research (1985) identified the following missions and goals for summer school:

- contribute to the academic quality and efforts of an institution,
- provide a period of time for faculty to create research work for their college as well as the environment of higher education as a whole,
- help expand the opportunities of students,
- utilize an institution's faculty,
- provide additional income for faculty and the institution.

Chandler and Weller (1991) conducted an empirical study as to why students attend summer school and identified three major reasons. First, Chandler and Weller reported students attended summer sessions for academic reasons. Students wanted or needed to improve their grade point averages, make up failed or incomplete work, attend shorter course periods, graduate in four years or less, attend small classes, and work toward business and teaching credentials (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Keller, 1982; Moore, 1976; Patterson, Sedlack, & Tracey, 1981). During summer sessions, students sometimes also had internships and were registered with their respective universities (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Keller, 1982). Secondly, students had a desire for greater independence. This independence motivated some students to spend the summer in school away from home and their parents. Students also sometimes wanted to be with friends and lovers (Keller, 1982). Lastly, financial reasons played a part in encouraging students to enroll in summer school. Students needed to meet requirements set forth by their financial aid guidelines (Chandler & Weller, 1991). Further, students sometimes needed to fulfill their housing contract agreements. On- and

off-campus housing assignments may require students to live in their quarters during the summer. Thus students chose to enroll in summer sessions.

Summer School at Texas Lutheran University

Texas Lutheran University (TLU) is a privately funded, coeducational liberal arts institution located in Seguin, Texas. TLU was founded in 1861. The student population represents an enrollment slightly over 1300. TLU offers both Bachelors of Science and Bachelors of Arts degrees (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).

TLU began offering summer school in the 1960s, adopting summer school for reasons similar to the foregoing (Kris Plaehn, personal communication, May 26, 1999). At TLU, the purpose of summer sessions is to provide additional avenues for students to excel and take advantage of learning, growth, and spiritual development. TLU offers two five-week summer sessions for students. From 1993 to 1998, Summer Session I enrolled over 250 students each year, averaging 284. During 1993 to 1998, Summer Session II averaged 199 students per year. In 1997, Summer Session II enrollment reached 255. In 1994 through 1997, TLU offered a summer voucher program that

allowed selected students to receive tuition remission for one or two summer courses.

Table 1.

TLU Summer Session Enrollment 1993-1998

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Session I</u>	<u>Session II</u>	<u>Total</u>
1998	248	175	423
1997	340	255	595
1996	335	239	674
1995	295	230	525
1994	287	146	433
1993	204	146	350
Average	284	198.5	500

Note. Records obtained from Kris Plaehn, TLU Registrar 1999.

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine reasons why students at TLU enroll in courses during the summer. There has not been a previous study at TLU determining influences on students' decisions to attend summer school. TLU has the potential to benefit from this study. If results are conclusive, the administration and registrar may want to improve academic and administrative services, increase financial aid funding, re-evaluate course curricula, provide more employment opportunities, and implement additional strategies to increase summer enrollment.

This study may provide additional information for other post-secondary institutions interested in promoting and increasing summer school attendance, especially private colleges and universities. This study may also provide essential data to assist other institutions with examining and developing summer school programs and services.

Research Questions of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine reasons why students at Texas Lutheran University enroll in courses during the summer. The research questions were reflected in a 35-item survey completed by students attending 1999 summer school sessions at TLU (see Chapter 3). Information gathered from the surveys provided data useful to TLU for planning future summer programming. The study was designed to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for academic reasons?
- RQ2: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for financial reasons?
- RQ3: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for social reasons?

- RQ4: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for other reasons?

Scope of the Study

The study was delimited to students enrolled in summer courses at TLU in 1999. Students in twelve courses (see Appendix) were surveyed out of a total of eighteen offered during Summer Session I. Courses included: Statistics, History World Religions, First Aid & Medical Self Help, New Testament Studies, Introduction to Psychology, American Literature I, Elementary Functions, American Minorities, Business Communications, College Algebra, Basic Drawing, and Accounting. Of these courses, there were five junior, three sophomore, and four freshmen level courses surveyed. It was assumed that those subjects who participated in the study answered the survey questions about their reasons for attending summer school honestly and accurately. All participants were informed that their responses would remain anonymous in order to help insure their accuracy and honesty. Over 125 students completed the surveys during Summer Sessions I and II.

Terminology

The following are key terms used in the present study and in literature pertaining to summer school attendance factors.

1. **Academic probation** - status of students whose cumulative grade point average is below 2.0 for sophomore, junior, and senior students; and below a 1.80 for freshmen students (*TLU Bulletin*, 1999).
2. **Course(s)** - classes offered by the college in order for students to obtain credit for graduation (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).
3. **Credit(s)** - semester hours earned after completing a course (Kris Plaehn, personal communication, June 1, 1999).
4. **Freshmen** - students with 0 to 26 hours credit (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).
5. **Financial aid** - money granted to a student to assist with paying of courses (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).
6. **Full-time students** - enrolled in 12 hours or more (*TLU Bulletin*, 1999).
7. **Juniors** - students with 60 to 89 hours credit (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).
8. **Part-time students** - enrolled in 11 hours or less (*TLU Bulletin*, 1999).
9. **Seniors** - students with more than 90 hours credit (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).
10. **Social reasons** - students who choose to be close to friends, peers, and lovers (Chandler & Weller, 1991).
11. **Sophomores** - students with 30 to 59 hours credit (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).

12. **Summer session(s)** - courses offered by colleges during June, July and August (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, the study was limited to students enrolled in summer sessions at TLU.

Secondly, the study was limited by students' honesty and accuracy when responding to the survey.

Thirdly, the study was limited by the extent of instructors' consent to allow students to complete surveys during Summer Session II. Thus, the sample consisted of students from selected courses offered by TLU (See Appendix C).

Fourth, the study was limited to students registering for Summer Session I and II. Students who completed surveys for Summer Session II were not enrolled in courses during Summer Session I. Also, no data was gathered from students who registered for Summer Session I, but who dropped prior to the administration of the surveys.

Fifth, the study was limited to courses taken at TLU's main campus in Seguin.

Summary

In Chapter 1 the study of students' motivation to attend summer school at TLU was introduced. This study evaluated the extent to which students attend summer school for academic purposes, financial reasons, social purposes, or other reasons. Students completed a 35-question survey. The sample included students who enrolled in courses at TLU during Summer Sessions I and II.

In addition, Chapter 1 provided an introduction and discussed the significance of the study, and presented the research questions of the study, scope and significance of the study, terminology, and limitations of study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

For many years, college and university students have had the liberty of taking courses during the summer. Summer school has a history of being shorter, costing less than fall and spring sessions, and allowing students to accelerate progress towards receiving their degrees in four years or less.

"Summer programs have historically appealed to students who want to expedite their academic progress or desire to attend school at a time when classes are smaller and instructors are able to give more individual attention" (Keller, 1982, p. 349). Over the years, not much research has been done to study student motivations for attending summer school. This chapter reviews literature describing influences that motivated students to go to summer school.

History of Summer Sessions

In 1891 Harper introduced the idea of students' attending summer in order to increase the level of operations for colleges and universities (Young & McDougall, 1988). Samson (1985) claimed that summer school contributed to the academic quality and efforts of an institution. Secondly, summer sessions allowed faculty to engage in research for their college and professional development. Additionally, summer programming expanded the academic and career opportunities of students. Finally, utilization of an institution's faculty provided additional income for faculty and the institution (Samson, 1985).

In contemporary times, most universities provide six- and eight-week courses that meet four or five days per week, for as long as two hours per day or more. Students can enroll in courses and still have the opportunity to enjoy the summer and work part-time (Dodge, 1991).

In 1932, Reeves conducted a study with thirty-five universities to understand why they perceived a need to maintain summer sessions. Twenty-five of the universities offered summer sessions to serve a demand requested by a large group of students. Secondly,

eleven of the colleges felt there was a need to keep the university operating twelve months during the year and to compete academically with other schools. Only one school reported offering classes during the summer to gain financial profit (Reeves, 1932).

Student Motivations for Summer School Enrollment

Dodge (1991) reported that students enrolled in summer school for various reasons. Many studies have concluded that students attend school for academic, financial, and social reasons (Brooke, 1989; Chandler & Weller, 1991; DeLoughry, 1991; Keller, 1982). Dodge (1991) found that:

Some opt to study for the entire summer and get three or four classes out of the way.

Students find it easier to schedule required courses during the summer than to get into classes during the regular year. Students who have changed their majors say taking summer courses is the only way they graduate on time with their classmates. Many students are spending their summer in classrooms because they can't work at campus jobs in the fall and spring semesters and still take a full course load.

Some students say they find it easier to concentrate because they take only one or two classes at a time. (p. A25)

In addition, for some, summer courses were a chance to attend classes while campus was less crowded and intimidating (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Dodge, 1991). Chandler and Weller conducted an empirical study as to why students attended summer school. The study was conducted at the University of Eastern Illinois and involved a study sample of 171 students. Chandler and Weller identified nineteen reasons why students attended summer school at Eastern Illinois. Some reasons included to "graduate on time", "meet prerequisites", "graduate early", "repeat class", "improve grade point average", and "see what summer school is like."

Chandler and Weller's (1991) study revealed that sophomores reasons for enrolling in summer school were heavily based on academic issues - graduating on time, meeting curriculum goals, lightening academic load for the fall semester, and graduating in four years - more so than for seniors, juniors, and freshmen.

The research cited in the foregoing section identified three major reasons why students attended

summer school. Students attended summer sessions for academic reasons (1991). Secondly, students enrolled in summer school because of finances. Lastly, students pursued summer school studies for social reasons.

Academic Reasons

Among their academic reasons for attending summer school, students tended to identify three academic related reasons most often. These included speeding progress towards graduation, easing regular semester course load, and removing academic probation status.

Speeding progress towards graduation.

The most frequently identified academic reason for attending school cited in the literature was to hasten progress toward graduation. Schoenfeld (1967) reported a study looking at factors for summer school enrollment at the University of Minnesota. The study revealed that 83% of the university's summer students were in school for academic reasons. Thirty-three percent of this group wanted to "speed up their academic progress."

At the University of Miami, Keller (1982) investigated what influenced students to attend summer

school. Over 735 students completed a survey.

Approximately 66% of the students attended summer school to accelerate progress toward their degrees.

"Students are most likely to be attracted by appeals that focus on the economic advantages of summer school attendance - hastening the time it takes to complete a degree and join the workforce" (Keller, 1982, p. 351).

In a study reported by Moore (1976) and conducted at Bowling Green University, 2,200 students, 40% of the summer enrollment population, were in summer school to accelerate their progress toward a degree.

Brooke (1989) conducted a study at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, evaluating motivations and experiences of students attending summer school. There were 418 students involved in the study. Students were enrolled in eighteen arts and education courses. Brooke found that 296 (71%) students were in school to speed up progress toward receiving their degree.

Additional studies (College Board, 1997; Dodge, 1991) indicate students attended summer school to shorten their time required to earn a degree by taking courses during the summer. By taking courses in the summer, some students reported that they were able to

complete their degree in four years (College Board, 1997; Margolin, 1989).

Easing course load.

The second most frequently cited academic reason for attending summer school was to ease course load during the regular semesters. At TLU, students can enroll in a minimum of 12 hours to be considered as full-time students. Generally, for fall and spring semesters, students have 12 weeks of classroom studies (Kris Plaehn, August 30, 1999). Summer enrolled students have two five-week summer sessions to complete their studies. Summer school allows students to complete two or more courses from their degree requirements (Dodge, 1991). Therefore, some students use the summer as an opportunity to get ahead of their studies so that they can devote more time during the fall and spring semester to such priorities as campus involvement, social interaction, and employment.

Brooke (1989) found that 212 (52%) student respondents in her study enrolled in summer school classes because they wanted to ease course load for long-term semesters. These students identified the desire to complete courses so that they could free up

more time for other activities during the fall and spring semesters.

Chandler and Weller (1991, p. 71) reported a significant number of students wanted to "lighten academic load during the regular semester." In a list of 19 reasons for enrolling in summer school, "lighten academic load during the regular semester" was ranked fourth. Schoenfeld (1967) reported that:

A Wisconsin study found that first year freshmen attending summer school prior to their fall semester were likely to enroll in summer courses to reduce their credit load than freshmen students entering the fall for their first semester of course work. Thus it would seem that entering freshmen think of summer study in terms of an easier fall semester rather than an earlier graduation. A second study confirmed the freshmen preference for reducing academic load was most heavily supported by sophomores. Juniors and seniors listed making up lost credits most frequently as their reason for summer attendance. (p. 52)

Summer school creates an avenue for students to complete their degrees at a faster pace, yet still

have time to engage in other social and academic activities.

Removing academic probation status.

The third most frequently identified academic reason for attending summer school was for students to use the summer as a time to remove themselves from academic probation status and return to good academic standing. Moore's (1976) study at Bowling Green University reported that 15 percent of these students enrolled in summer school to make up failed work. A study conducted by Brooke (1989) found that 88 (21%) were attending summer school to make up a dropped or failed course.

Students are placed on academic probation when their grade point averages do not meet the requirements set by the institution (Kris Plaehn, personal communication, August 30, 1999). At TLU, freshmen students who do not carry a grade point average of 1.8 at the end of their first year are placed on academic probation. For sophomore students, their grade point average must be at or above a 2.0 in order to avoid academic probation (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998). Students who do not meet these requirements for two successive semester are suspended from TLU and

are not allowed to re-enroll until they have transferred credits from another institution with a necessary grade point average for their classification (TLU Bulletin, 1998).

Students fearing academic probation often enroll in summer school to meet the requirements for good academic standing set forth by their institutions. Students who do not comply with the procedures of their institution limit their chances to receive a degree.

Other academic reasons.

In addition to the three academic factors discussed previously, studies have identified other academic reasons for attending summer school.

Chandler and Weller (1991) also found that students wanted or needed to improve their grade point averages, make up failed or incomplete work, attend shorter course periods, attend small classes, or work toward business and teaching credentials (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Keller, 1982; Moore, 1976; Patterson, Sedlack, & Tracey, 1981). Some students had summer internships and were registered as students to receive credit from their respective university (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Keller, 1982).

In the University of Minnesota study conducted by Schoenfeld, it was reported that 12% "were working toward a degree through summer study," and another 12% "were making up missed courses" (Schoenfeld, 1967, p. 51).

The study at the University of Miami conducted by Keller (1982) included a study proportion of 25% who indicated they attended summer school because they wanted to maintain normal progress toward a four-year graduation, better prepare themselves for their major area of study, and take extra courses needed for advancement in their profession. Other influences for attending summer school included making up failed credits, broadening academic background, working toward a teaching credential, enrolling in smaller classes, and taking a course from a particular professor (Keller, 1982).

In Brooke's (1998) study, respondents indicated sixteen reasons as motivations for attending summer school. The fourth ranked reason from Brooke's study was because students "enjoy the summer learning experience" (p.13). There were 152 (37.7%) students out of 418 cited this reason for summer enrollment at the University of Alberta. Only 20 (5%) students were

registered for summer school to take a particular instructor (Brooke, 1989).

Margolin (1989) reported that students who work 12 to 15 hours per week do better academically than their non-working peers. Students who worked part time raise their self-esteem, developed better time management, and became better students. According to Bingham (1987), additional part-time employment on-campus is an effective tool to allow students to remain connected to the university and faculty (Bingham, 1987). For many students to continue working on campus and attend summer school only added to their growth as a student and professional (Margolin, 1989).

Financial Reasons

Financial reasons play a part in encouraging students to enroll in summer school. College is an expensive investment. Not all students and families are able to afford college costs without the assistance of federal grants or loans (Blumenstyk, 1993). Students sometimes need to attend summer school in order to meet requirements set forth by

their financial aid guidelines (Chandler & Weller, 1991).

Costs.

Over the past years, higher education has increased in costs, for both private and public institutions (Evangelauf, 1993; Gose, 1998). In 1993-94, students at private four-year institutions were paying an average of \$11,025, six percent more than in 1992-93, while public four year colleges increased eight percent to \$2,527 average tuition (Evangelauf, 1993).

For the 1998-99 academic year, tuition continued to rise. For private four-year colleges, the average tuition paid was \$14,508 (Gose, 1998). This was a five percent increase from the previous year. For the same period, four-year public institutions increased four percent to an average tuition rate of \$3,243 (Gose, 1998).

The estimated tuition cost for students at TLU during the 1998-99 school year was \$12,000. Students paid an average of \$15,000 for their total cost at TLU (*TLU Catalog*, 1999). However, the average total cost at four-year private institutions was \$22,553 during the 1998-99 school year (Gose, 1998). The average

total award paid to each student at TLU during 1998-99 was approximately \$9,000. Of this \$9,000, the average loan amount given to a student was \$3,600 and the average scholarship/grant amount was \$4,900 (Carol Hamilton, personal communication, August 9, 1999). During the summer terms, scholarships and grants are not available for students to use towards their education. However, students are able to qualify for loans if they need financial assistance for summer study.

Employment-related financial reasons.

In previous research, students have identified employment-related reasons for attending summer school. Chandler and Weller (1991) identified nineteen reasons why students attended summer school at Eastern Illinois. Reasons of "maintaining their college job" and "use of scholarship/grant fund" were ranked tenth and twelfth, respectively. Among the reasons, "Getting out of working at home" was number sixteen (Chandler & Weller, 1991, p.76).

In Moore's study (1982), students indicated that they were unable to find jobs in their hometown, but they were able to maintain employment at their college work place. "Many students stayed on or near their

campuses during the summer because they either already have a job or because it may be easier to find one where they go to college than at home" (Collison, 1992, p. A27). Dodge (1991) found that parents encouraged their children to attend summer school because it would be easier to find a job on-campus.

Schoenfeld (1967) reviewed a study at the University of Southern California and found that 33% of its undergraduates relied on summer employment in order to finance their summer education. Schoenfeld also found that students at the Wisconsin University held campus employment positions and enrolled in one summer course so they could reduce long semester costs. The University of Wisconsin encouraged its students' to maintain summer employment to finance college costs (Schoenfeld, 1967).

Other financially motivated reasons.

In the research, students cited reasons related to financial assistance from the school in order to attend summer classes (Bingham, 1987; DeLoughry, 1991; Margolin, 1989). Financial motivations to attend summer school can vary from student to student. Some students were required to attend summer sessions in order to meet requirements set forth by school or

federal funding guidelines. Students were allotted a certain amount of financial aid that needed to be used up prior to the fall semester. So students enrolled in summer school and kept their on-campus employment to receive and use up their allotted financial aid (Judy Noland, personal communication, June 24, 1999).

In order to maintain financial aid, students must maintain their correct classification each long semester (Judy Noland, personal communication, June 24, 1999). For example, students who enter TLU during their second year of college study must be registered as sophomore students. If not, students become ineligible to receive financial aid. Consequently, students sometimes have to enroll in summer school to make up lost academic hours or gain needed credits necessary to meet such financial aid requirements. When students lose credits from failed courses, it is possible for their grade point average to drop below the minimum (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998). Students then become ineligible for financial aid and need to enroll in summer courses to improve or raise their grade point average. Also, students could not qualify for larger amounts of loan funds (Judy Noland, personal communication, June 24, 1999).

Most guidelines for receiving financial aid include being a full-time student and maintaining a pre-established grade point average (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998). Financial aid is money granted to students to assist with the payment of college costs (College Board, 1997; Margolin, 1989; West, 1963). Financial aid helps student receive funding through loans and grants as means for students to pursue or continue their education (Bingham, 1982). Financial aid has opened the doors of learning to thousands of students (DeLoughry, 1991). Summer school often makes it possible to qualify for or retain financial aid for college study.

Students have been influenced to attend summer school because parents encouraged them to seek jobs at their college. Parents suggested that the economy was weak, so it would be best for their child to remain at college during the summer and attend school (Dodge, 1991).

Social Reasons

Social reasons that students included for attending summer school include being with friends, family, boyfriend or girlfriend. Some reported that

they wanted to stay in the town or city of the college.

Chandler and Weller (1991) reported that some students' desire for independence led to summer school attendance. This desire for independence motivated students to be away from home and their parents. In addition, some studies concluded that students wanted to be with friends and saw attending summer school as a means to accomplish this (Chandler & Weller, 1991). Students sometimes expressed an interest in getting away from home (Chandler & Weller; Keller, 1982). "Students enjoy the freedom they have at college and don't want to go home to their parents" (Collison, 1992, p. A27). Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors were found to place more importance on this reason than senior students (Chandler & Weller, 1991). "It would be reasonable to infer that sophomores who are beginning to break the bonds associated with home would be more likely to attach more importance to this issue than would seniors or graduate students" (Chandler & Weller, 1991, p. 81). In Chandler and Weller's (1991) study, students were asked to identify "social reasons" as a factor for attending summer school. "Social reasons" had a mean score of 2.06 and

was ranked 14 out of 19 factors influencing summer school enrollment.

In Keller's study (1982), he found that very few students were enrolled in summer school because of "social reasons." Only 7 percent of 735 students claimed to enroll in summer school to spend the summer where their college was located (Keller, 1982).

College is an avenue for learning and gaining maturity for students. As students learn to become adults, they often seek a life away from home and family. Students are eager to graduate, become professionals, and live in the real world without their parents' assistance (Collison, 1992). Summer school helps students achieve their goals of becoming adults and career people.

Summary

Students attend summer school for various reasons. Some reasons include academic, financial and social factors. Most prominent in the research are academic reasons. Academic reasons given for attending summer school include graduating in four years or less, lightening academic load for the fall and spring semesters, removing academic probation status, making up failed credits, and attending

smaller classes. Studies reported in the literature also indicate that many students attend summer school for financial reasons. Financial reasons cited in the literature include satisfying requirements set forth by the financial guidelines, therefore students must enroll in summer courses. A final category of reasons reported in the literature is that of social reasons. These play a relatively minor role. They include students attending summer sessions to be with friends or gain some form of independence by being away from home.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

The purpose of the study was to explore reasons expressed by Texas Lutheran University (TLU) students for attending summer sessions. The following sections explain the subjects, instruments and procedures, and analysis for the study.

Subjects

The sample consisted of 128 TLU students enrolled in summer school. Students completed surveys in the courses for which TLU professors granted permission for the surveys to be administered (see Table 2).

Table 2
Summer Session I Courses

Courses	Prefix
American Literature I	ENG 238
American Minorities	SOC 236
Basic Drawing in Colorado*	ART 131
Business Communications	BA 378
College Algebra	MATH 133
Elementary Functions	MATH 138
First Aid & Medical Self Help	KIN 122
History World Religions	THEO 334
Intro to Psychology	PSY 131
New Testament Studies	THEO 333

Note. *Course was cancelled, but 3 students were granted enrollment access via independent study.

The survey was administered in 12 of the total of 18 Summer Session I 1999 courses offered at TLU. Of these courses, five were freshmen level, three were sophomore level, and four were junior level.

The subject sample for Summer Session I was 114 out of a total available population of 213 enrolled students. For Summer Session II, 14 students were surveyed from a total available sample of 60. These students were surveyed during their registration for Summer Session II which was conducted on Tuesday, July 6, 1999. Thus, a total of 128 surveys were administered, with 114 from Summer Session I and 14 students from Summer Session II.

All of the surveys completed were determined to be complete and usable. Data were collected with the assistance of the Registrar's Office. Kris Plaehn, the Director of Registrar's Office, provided information regarding the history of courses and students attending summer school at TLU. She provided enrollment information for Summer Session I and II, as referred to throughout this document.

Instrument

The instrument employed in this study was a 35-item written survey questionnaire divided into two major sections, the first encompassing demographic information and the second primarily requesting reasons for attending summer school (see Appendix A).

Survey questions 1 through 15 were designed to gather general information about the students' age, ethnicity, classification, place of residence, financial aid status, and grade point average. In addition, the background questions inquired about students' future or potential occupation, work hours per week, previous enrollment status, and current enrollment status. Survey questions 16 through 35 addressed why students attended summer school, when they decided to enroll, and if they intended to enroll in summer school the following year.

A matrix was developed to illustrate the relation of research questions to the survey questions (see Appendix B). The items in the main portion of the survey, the enrollment reasons section, were formulated to answer the following research questions regarding student motivations for attending summer school at TLU:

- RQ1. To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for academic reasons?
Survey questions 16, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 31 correspond to research question number 1.
- RQ2. To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for financial reasons?
Survey questions 17, 18, 19, 23, and 27 correspond to research question number 2.
- RQ3. To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for social reasons?
Survey questions 20, 25, and 29 correspond to research question number 3.
- RQ4. To what extent do TLU students attending summer school report for other reasons?
Survey question number 32 corresponds to research question 4.

The questions for the survey were adapted from previous studies conducted at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada (Brooke, 1989) and the University of Eastern Illinois (Chandler & Weller, 1991) as described below. Brooke (1989) examined students' motivations for and experiences of summer learning at the University of Alberta. Chandler and

Weller (1991) identified factors influencing students to enroll in summer school.

Questions 1 through 4, 10 and 11, 13 through 16, 21, 24, 26, 28, and 31 were taken from the University of Alberta study and used in their original wording and format (Brooke, 1989). Questions 17 through 20, 23, 25, 27, 29, and 32 were based on those in the University of Eastern Illinois study (Chandler & Weller, 1991). The present study's questions were modeled from answer choices available for respondents used in Chandler and Weller's study, but were revised into the survey format necessary for the present study. The principal investigator for this study developed questions 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 33, 34, and 35, in order to obtain additional kinds of information not sought from respondents in earlier studies.

Procedures

Data collection took place in the summer of 1999 at Texas Lutheran University (TLU). TLU offered 18 courses during Summer Session I (see Appendix C) and 14 courses during Summer Session II (see Appendix C) at TLU's main campus located in Seguin.

Data collection for Session I included an arrangement with 12 summer professors to administer the surveys within their courses. The courses, listed earlier in this chapter, represented a range of disciplines, including mathematics, psychology, literature, accounting, religion, art, and health. Surveys were administered at the beginning of class sessions in the respective courses by the researcher, from June 23 to June 30, 1999. Three time periods were available for students to enroll in courses. The courses began in the morning at 7:30, 9:30, and 11. All courses were 120 minutes in length (see Appendix C).

Data collection for Summer Session II took place at TLU's administration building, Beck Center, on Tuesday, July 6, 1999, from 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. The research investigator set up a table and as students approached the registration area, students registering for Summer Session II courses were asked if they had attended summer Session I and completed the survey for this study during that session. If students indicated they had not previously completed the survey, then they were asked to complete the survey for Summer Session II analysis. Summer Session II courses

included Principles of Marketing, Basic Biology, History of Women in the United States, Principles of Accounting, American Literature II, English Composition, American History II, Calculus for Business & Economics, Principles of Management, Biological Systems II, Principles of Nutrition, World Literature II, and Applications Software. However, unlike Summer Session I when students were administered surveys within courses they were taking, Summer Session II respondents completed the survey during registration for this session.

Participants' Rights

At the beginning of each survey questionnaire, students were provided a written summary describing the purpose of the survey and a statement informing students that by completing the survey they were giving consent to participate in the study. Further, the summary included a reminder that responses would have no impact or influence on students' grades. Thus, the surveys were completed on a voluntary basis. Students completed the surveys anonymously; they were assured that they would not be identified in any publication of the results of the study. Further,

students were asked if they had already completed the survey in one class, not to complete any duplicates.

Analysis

Results obtained from multiple choice questions were examined in terms of percentages of responses and cumulative percentages for each multiple-choice question. For open-ended questions, 9, 12, 32, and 34, responses were listed, reviewed, and organized into categories as appropriate. For instance, student responses for Question 32 and 34, were categorized and analyzed into the three main factors identified in the literature as influences for attending summer school. The three main factors considered were academic, financial, and social. Reasons such as improving one's grade point average and graduating on time were categorized as academic reasons. Financial reasons included maintaining on campus employment and meeting financial aid requirements. Social reasons were to get away from home and remain closer to friends.

There were some responses that were identified as "Other" factors, when they did not appear to fit readily into the three main categories of reasons for attending summer school. For example, students

indicated that they were in summer school to meet new friends, improve English speaking skills, and wanted to do something new. Descriptive statistics provided the number of students who answered each question and the percentage of given responses. Tables were developed to illustrate the descriptive statistics for responses to questionnaire items.

Summary

The focus of this chapter was to discuss the materials and methods necessary for this study as well as the strategy for data analysis. The section includes selection of subjects, instruments, procedures for the data collection, and data analysis. A 35-item questionnaire was used to analyze student responses. The survey was divided into two sections, one on background and another on enrollment information. A total of 128 surveys were completed by students enrolled in Summer Sessions I and II (1999) at TLU, in Seguin, Texas. The chapter also presents descriptive statistics from the open-ended and multiple choice survey questions.

CHAPTER 4

Presentation of the Data

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine student perceptions of factors which influenced them to attend summer school at Texas Lutheran University (TLU). A total of 128 Summer Session I and II students completed survey questionnaires. The survey sample included 114 Summer Session I students and 14 Summer Session II students. Of students who responded to the survey, 100% completed usable questionnaires.

The results of the survey are reported in separate sections in accordance with the major subdivisions of the survey itself: background and enrollment information. The results are also presented in correspondence with the research questions guiding the study. It should be noted that four of the survey questions asked respondents to indicate all applicable responses. Therefore, question percentages of responses total more than 100%.

Part I: Background Information

Tables 3 to 8 present frequency and percentages of responses concerning participants' age, gender, classification, ethnicity/race, financial aid status, and grade point average.

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate their age. A majority of 96 (75%) students stated that they were between the ages of 17-22, 26 (20%) between 23-30, 1 (1%) between 31-40, 2 (2%) between 41-50, and 3 (2%) over fifty (see Table 3).

Table 3
Respondents' Age

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
17-22		96	75.0
23-30		26	20.0
31-40		1	1.0
41-50		2	2.0
over 50		3	2.0

Question 2 asked students to indicate their gender. The majority, 72 (56%), of respondents were female while 56 (44%) were male (see Table 4).

Table 4
Respondents' Gender

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Gender			
Male		56	44.0
Female		72	56.0

Question 3 asked respondents to indicate their classification as a student (see Table 5). The largest group was 48 seniors (38%), followed by 42 juniors (33%), 26 sophomores (20%), and 8 freshmen (9%). The majority of students in summer school were juniors and seniors, 90 combined (71%).

Table 5
Respondents' Classifications

Variable	<u>N</u>	Frequency	Percentage
	128		
Freshman		12	9.0
Sophomore		26	20.0
Junior		42	33.0
Senior		48	38.0

Question 4 asked students to categorize their ethnicity as African American, Caucasian, Hispanic, International, or Other. A majority of 87 (68%) students indicated that they were Caucasian, 22 (17%) were Hispanic, 9 (7%) were International, 8 (6%) were African American, and 2 (2%) indicated Other (see Table 6). The latter two respondents indicated that they were Japanese.

Table 6
Respondents' Ethnicity/Race

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Caucasian		87	68.0
Hispanic		22	17.0
International		9	7.0
African American		8	6.0
Other		2	2.0

Question 5 asked students to indicate if they receive financial aid. The majority, of approximately two-thirds (n=83, 65%), students responded "Yes" while approximately one-third (n=45, 35%) responded "No" (see Table 7).

Table 7
Respondents' Financial Aid

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Yes		83	65.0
No		45	35.0

Question 6 asked students to indicate their grade point average (GPA). The largest group of students, 42 (33%), reported a GPA between 2.51 and 3.00, followed by 36 students (28%) with a GPA between 2.01 and 2.50. Twenty-two students (17%) had a GPA above 3.50, 19 students (15%) had a GPA between 3.01 and 3.50, and 9 students (7%) below 2.0 (see Table 8). Thus, most students, 78 (61%) reported GPA's between

2.01 and 3.00, 41 (32%) at or above 3.01, and only 9 (7%) students below a 2.0.

Table 8
Respondents' Grade Point Averages

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Above 3.50		22	17.0
3.50-3.01		19	15.0
3.00-2.51		42	33.0
2.50-2.01		36	28.0
Below 2.00		9	7.0

Tables 9 through 15 present frequency and percentage of responses concerning participants' permanent residence, current housing status, career choice following graduation, the number of hours per week respondents' work. In addition, frequency and percentages of responses concerning current summer session enrollment status, academic hours credited from Spring Semester 1999, and academic hours accumulated at the end of the summer can be found in Tables 9 through 15.

Question 7 asked students to indicate their permanent residence. Respondents' choices included living within Seguin, outside Seguin but within commuting distance to TLU, or outside Seguin and beyond commuting distance to TLU. Forty-nine (38%) students indicated that they live within the city of

Seguin, 46 (36%) outside Seguin but within commuting distance, and 33 (26%) live outside Seguin and beyond commuting distance to TLU.

Table 9
Respondents' Permanent Addresses

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Within Seguin		49	38.0
Outside Seguin w/in commuting distance		46	36.0
Outside Seguin beyond commuting distance		33	26.0

Those students whose permanent address is within the city of Seguin were asked to respond to question 8 (see Table 9). Question 8 asked if students live in TLU campus housing or off-campus. The majority, 34 (69%), of respondents indicated that they live off-campus, while 15 respondents (31%) said they live in TLU campus housing (see Table 10).

Table 10
Respondents' Living in Seguin

Variable	<u>N</u> 49	Frequency	Percentage
In TLU campus housing		15	31.0
Off-campus		34	69.0

Question 9 asked students to indicate their current major. There were a total of 28 different majors represented in the responses. One-hundred-

nineteen students had only one major, while nine students cited they had two majors. Of these, four students indicated they were combining a major in business with a major in a related area. Thirteen were undecided about their major. Table 11 lists the major indicated by students.

Table 11
Respondents' Majors

Variable	<u>N</u>	Frequency	Percentage
One Major	119		
Accounting		2	1.0
Agriculture		1	1.0
Art		5	4.0
Athletic Training		1	1.0
Biology		8	7.0
Business Administration		9	8.0
Chemistry		1	1.0
Communications		5	4.0
Computer Science		6	5.0
Economics		1	1.0
Education		2	1.0
Elementary Education		6	5.0
English as a Second Language		1	1.0
Finance		1	1.0
History		1	1.0
Kinesiology		9	8.0
Management		5	4.0
Marketing		6	5.0
Music		4	3.0
Political Science		3	3.0
Psychology		14	12.0
Sports Management		2	1.0
Sports Medicine		2	1.0
Social Work		8	7.0
Theatre		1	1.0
Theology		2	1.0
Undecided		13	11.0

Two Majors	9	
Business & Communications	1	11.0
Business & International Studies	1	11.0
Business & Spanish	1	11.0
Business Administration & Management	1	11.0
Computer Science & Physics	1	11.0
English & Physics	1	11.0
Kinesiology & Sports Medicine	1	11.0
Music & Communications	1	11.0
Political Science & Economics	1	11.0

Question 10 asked students to categorize their career choice following graduation as related to either government, teaching or higher education, business or industry, self-employment, or other. Forty-six (36%) students, the largest proportion, indicated business or industry as their career choice, followed by 42 students (33%) who indicated teaching or higher education, and 27 (21%) indicated Other. There were 8 (6%) students who indicated self-employment, and 5 (4%) indicated government as their career choice (see Table 12). Among those who specified "Other" career choices, 3 each (18%) indicated "graduate school" and "undecided" as their answers while 2 (12%) indicated plans to study for the ministry. Eight remaining respondents each listed unique responses, ranging from plans to attend law school to becoming a flight attendant.

Table 12
Respondents' Career Choices

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Business/industry		46	36.0
Teaching/higher education		42	33.0
Other		27	21.0
Self-employed		8	6.0
Government		5	4.0
Other*	17		
Art Production		1	6.0
Flight Attendant		1	6.0
Graduate School		3	18.0
Graphic Design School		1	6.0
Law School		1	6.0
Medical School		1	6.0
Military Enrollment		1	6.0
Work in Non-Profit Org.		1	6.0
Personal Trainer		1	6.0
Seminary School		2	12.0
Undecided		3	18.0

Note. *List of career choices written in by students.

Question 11 asked students to identify the number of hours per week that they work. Table 13 illustrates that the largest group of students, 35 (28%), work between 20 and 25 hours per week. The second largest group, 33 (26%), work between 1 and 20 hours per week, while 31 (24%) do not work. Lastly, 28 (22%) students work 35 hours or more hours per week. Further, the table shows that 96 (76%) students, or three-fourth, worked at least 1 hour per week and attended summer school; however, 31 (24%) were not employed while attending summer session.

Table 13
Respondents' Work Hours per Week

Variable	<u>N</u> 127*	Frequency	Percentage
35 hours or more		28	22.0
between 20-35 hours		35	28.0
between 1-20 hours		33	26.0
none		31	24.0

Note. One did not respond.

Question 12 asked students to indicate prior college summer school attendance. Sixty-five (51%) had not attended summer school prior to 1999, while 63 (49%) students had attended summer school prior to this year's session (see Table 14).

Table 14
Attended Summer School Prior to 1999

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
yes		63	49.0
no		65	51.0

Question 13 asked respondents' about their current summer session registration status. Most of the students were undergraduates, 112 (88%), followed by six (5%) International, five (4%) unclassified students, four (3%) were visiting undergraduates, and one (1%) registered as an audit student (see Table 15).

Table 15
Respondents' Enrollment Status

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Undergraduate student		112	88.0
International student		6	5.0
Unclassified student		5	4.0
Visiting student		4	3.0
Audit student		1	1.0

Question 14 asked students to indicate the number of 3 credit courses they were registered for during the spring 1999 semester. A majority of 92 (72%) students were registered for more than three courses, followed by 12 (13%) students registered for three courses, while 10 (8%) were not registered for courses during spring 1999. Nine (9%) students were registered for two courses and 5 (5%) were registered for one course. Students enrolled in four or more 3-credit courses are considered full-time students. Ninety-two (72%) students were enrolled full-time in the spring of 1999. Further, 26 (27%) students were part-time because they were enrolled in three or fewer than three 3-credit courses (see Table 16).

Table 16
Respondents' Spring Hours for 1999

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
None		10	8.0
One course		5	4.0
Two courses		9	7.0
Three courses		12	9.0
More than three courses		92	72.0

Question 15 asked students to indicate the number of 3 credit courses registered for during the entire Summer Session 1999. The largest group of students, 45 (35%), were enrolled in two courses, while 43 (45%) were enrolled in one course only, 18 (14%) in three courses, and 17 (13%) in more than three courses (see Table 17). Five (4%) students were not enrolled at TLU. These students were registered as visiting or audit students.

Table 17
Respondents' Summer Hours for 1999

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
None		5	4.0
One course		43	34.0
Two courses		45	35.0
Three courses		18	14.0
More than three courses		17	13.0

The first portion of the survey requested background information from students participating in this study. The background information requested

included students age, classification, gender, ethnicity/race, grade point average, financial aid recipient, permanent address, major, and career choice. The survey also requested number of hours worked per week, and spring and summer enrollment status. Responses to the Background Information section indicated that the typical respondent was between the ages of 17-22, female, senior, and Caucasian. Additionally, the typical respondent was receiving financial aid, and carried a grade point average between 2.51 and 3.00. Most students lived within Seguin, within commuting distance of TLU's campus. Further, the typical student was full-time, an undergraduate with one major, and planning a career in business/industry. Finally, most students worked 20 to 35 hours per week, did not attend summer school prior to 1999, and were in summer school to complete two courses.

Part II: Enrollment Information

Questions 16 through 31 asked students what reasons influenced them to attend summer school. Students were able to select from a list of 16 factors. The sections presented this data will be

divided in relation to the four research questions developed for this study.

RQ1: Academic Reasons

Research Question 1 asked the following: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for academic reasons? Table 18 lists responses to research questions pertaining to academic reasons that influenced students to attend Summer School at TLU. Question 16 asked students if they attended summer session because they expected the class size to be small. The majority, 77 students (60%) responded "No" while 51 students (40%) responded "Yes." Question 21 asked students if they attended summer session to pick up a dropped course. One-hundred-four students (81%), the largest group, indicated "No" and 24 students (19%) indicated "Yes." Question 22 asked students if they attended summer session to take a course that was offered only at this time. The vast majority, 113 (88%) students indicated "No," while only 15 (12%) students indicated "Yes." Question 24 asked students if they attended summer session in order to be able to receive instruction from a particular professor. The

largest group of students, 107 (84%) indicated "No" while 21 (16%) indicated "Yes."

Question 26 asked students if they attended summer session to ease course load during regular semesters. Seventy-three (57%) responded "Yes" while 55 (43%) responded "No."

Question 28 asked students if they attended summer session to speed up completion of their degree. The majority, 100 (78%), of students said "Yes," while 28 (22%) said "No." Questions 26 and 28 were the only two questions where a majority of students indicated that the academic related reason provided in the question had indeed motivated the students to attend summer school.

Question 30 asked students if they attended summer session to pick up a failed course. There were 109 (88%) students who indicated "No" while 19 (15%) students indicated "Yes." Question 31 asked students if they attended summer courses because they enjoyed the summer learning experience. Thirty-eight (30%) responded "Yes" and ninety (70%) responded "No."

Table 18
Enrollment Information - Academic Reasons

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
16. Expected class to be small			
Yes		51	40.0
No		77	60.0
21. Pick up a dropped course			
Yes		24	19.0
No		104	81.0
22. Course offered only at this time			
Yes		15	12.0
No		113	88.0
24. Get a particular instructor			
Yes		21	16.0
No		107	84.0
26. Ease course load during regular session			
Yes		73	57.0
No		55	43.0
28. Speed up completion of degree			
Yes		100	78.0
No		28	22.0
30. Pick up failed course			
Yes		19	15.0
No		109	85.0
31. Enjoy summer learning experience			
Yes		38	30.0
No		90	70.0

RQ2: Financial Reasons

Research Question 2 asked the following: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for financial reasons? Table 19 lists responses to survey questions pertaining to financial reasons that influenced students to attend Summer School at TLU. Question 17 asked students if they attended summer session to reduce their cost of college expenses. The

largest group of students, 91 (71%) responded "No" while 37 (29%) said "Yes." Question 18 asked students if they attended summer session to use of their scholarship or grant funds. The majority, 121 (95%), of students indicated "No" while 7 (5%) indicated "Yes."

Question 19 asked students if they attended the summer session to maintain their on-campus employment. Seventeen (13%) students indicated that they wanted to maintain their on-campus employment while 111 (87%) responded "No," indicating not having any employment status with the university.

Question 23 asked students if they attended summer session to meet financial aid requirements. One-hundred-twenty-six (91%) said "No" while 12 (9%) responded "yes." Question 27 asked students if they attended summer school in order to maintain their housing during the summer (use up lease). Five (4%) indicated "Yes" while and 123 (96%) indicated "No." Thus, respondents' rejected financial related reasons for attending summer school which were provided by the survey.

Table 19
Enrollment Information - Financial Reasons

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
17. Reduce cost of college expenses			
Yes		37	29.0
No		91	71.0
18. Use up scholarship/grant			
Yes		7	5.0
No		121	95.0
19. Maintain on-campus employment			
Yes		17	13.0
No		111	87.0
23. Meet my financial aid requirements			
Yes		12	9.0
No		126	91.0
27. Maintain summer housing (Use up lease)			
Yes		5	4.0
No		123	96.0

RQ3: Social Reasons

Research Question 3 asked the following: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for social reasons? Table 20 lists responses to survey questions pertaining to social reasons that may have influenced students to attend Summer School at TLU. Question 20 asked students if they attended summer session to get away from home. Thirty-one (24%) responded "Yes" while 97 (76%) responded "No." Question 25 asked students if they attended summer session to get out of working at home. One-hundred-fourteen (89%) indicated that they did not attend summer school to get out of working at home; however,

14 (11%) students did. Question 29 asked students if they attended summer session to remain closer to their friends, a boyfriend, or a girlfriend. The majority, 105 students (82%) did not, while 23 (18%) were in summer school to be closer to friends, boyfriend, or girlfriend.

Table 20
Enrollment Information - Social Reasons

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
20. Get away from home			
Yes		31	24.0
No		97	76.0
25. Get out of working at home			
Yes		14	11.0
No		114	89.0
29. Remain closer to my friends			
Yes		23	18.0
No		105	82.0

RQ4: Other Reasons

Research Question 4 asked the following: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for other reasons? Question 32 asked students to indicate other reasons, if not listed in the survey, which influenced their decision to attend summer school (see Table 21). There were 14 students who indicated "Other reasons not listed," as illustrated in the table below.

Table 21
Enrollment Information - Other Reasons

Variable	<u>N</u> 14	Frequency	Percentage
Improve grade point average		3*	21.0
Get off academic probation		2*	14.0
Can't stay at home for summer		1***	7.0
Changed major, want to graduate on time		1*	7.0
Picked up two minors last year		1*	7.0
Felt summer courses would be easier		1*	7.0
Get to know more people		1***	7.0
Gain accounting experience		1*	7.0
Improve English speaking skills		1*	7.0
Wanted to do something new		1*	7.0

Note. *Academic reasons. ** Financial reasons.
 ***Social Reasons.

Question 33 asked students if they plan to attend summer school in the year 2000 (see Table 22). The results balance out nearly even with 63 (49%) students planning to attend Summer School in 2000 and 65 (51%) who do not.

Table 22
33. Plan to Attend Summer School in 2000

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
yes		63	49.0
no		65	51.0

Question 34 asked students to specify their main reason for attending summer school (see Table 23). Fourteen students did not respond to the question. Thus, the frequencies and percentages are based on a

response total of 114. A large number, 34 (30%) students, stated that they enrolled in summer school to speed up the completion of their degree. Twenty-four (21%) students wanted "to graduate on time," 22 (19%) wanted "to ease their course load during the regular session," and seven (6%) "wanted to improve grade point average."

However, five (4%) students enrolled in classes because a "course was offered only during the summer," four (4%) students each wanted "to pick up a failed course" and "get off academic probation," respectively. Three students (3%) "wanted to get away from home," and another three (3%) "wanted to become eligible to play an athletic sport at TLU."

The following reasons were indicated by one student each as the main reason for attending summer school: "to maintain their financial aid," "become eligible for financial aid," "enjoy the summer learning experience," "maintain on-campus employment," "to live on campus," "pick up transfer credits," "pick up dropped course," "and to improve English speaking skills."

Table 23
Main Reasons for Summer 1999 Enrollment

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
<u>No Response</u>		14	11.0
<u>Response</u>		114	89.0
	114		
Speed up graduation		34*	30.0
Graduate on time		24*	21.0
Ease course Load		22*	19.0
Improve GPA		7*	6.0
Course offered at this time		5*	4.0
Pick up failed course		4*	4.0
Get off academic probation		4*	4.0
Get away from home		3***	3.0
Become eligible for athletics		3*	3.0
Maintain financial aid		1**	1.0
Become eligible for financial aid		1**	1.0
Enjoy summer session learning experience		1*	1.0
Maintain on-campus employment		1**	1.0
To live on-campus		1***	1.0
Pick up transfer credits		1*	1.0
Pick up dropped course		1*	1.0
To improve English speaking skills		1*	1.0

Note. *Academic reasons. ** Financial Reasons.
 *** Social Reasons.

Question 35 asked students to indicate when they made their decision to attend the 1999 summer school session (see Table 24). The largest proportion of students, 51 (40%), made their decision during January, February, or March of 1999; 45 (35%) chose between April or May of 1999, and 22 (17%) during August through December of 1998. There were 6 (5%) students who decided in June of 1999 and 4 (3%) at

another time. At TLU the time between August and December is considered a fall semester term, while spring semester term run between January and May. In this study, there were 96 (75%) students who made their decision to attend summer school during the spring semester of 1999, versus 22 (17%) who had decided earlier, i.e., in the fall of 1998.

Table 24
35. Decided to Attend Summer School in 1999

Variable	<u>N</u> 128	Frequency	Percentage
Aug.-Dec. 1998		22	17.0
Jan.-Feb.-March 1999		51	40.0
Apr.-May 1999		45	35.0
June 1999		6	5.0
At Another time		4	3.0

The second portion of the survey was designed to determine summer enrollment influences for students at TLU. There were 17 responses that students could choose from to help determine their motivation for enrolling in summer school. The last of the Enrollment Information section asked students to identify one main reason for taking summer courses during the 1999 term. Additionally, students were asked to indicate future summer school enrollment plans and the time during which they decided to enroll in summer school for the 1999 term.

Summary

One-hundred-twenty-eight surveys were completed for this study. Data obtained from the surveys were reported according to the two sections: background information and enrollment information. This chapter offered a summary of the data reported from the surveys. The data show that many students attend summer sessions at TLU for academic reasons, particularly to graduate on time and speed up completion of their degree. Fewer proportions attend summer school for financial or for social reasons.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusions and Implications

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine factors influencing students to attend summer school at Texas Lutheran University (TLU). A 35-item survey questionnaire was completed by 128 students enrolled in summer courses at TLU in Seguin, Texas. The sample consisted of students from TLU's Summer Sessions I and II, collectively.

Summary of Results

The results of this study indicated that TLU students enroll in summer school primarily for academic reasons. There were 107 (94%) students who identified academic factors as their reason for attending classes in the summer (see Table 23).

According to survey results financial and social reasons were not considerable influences for attending summer school. Only 7 of 114 students identified financial and social factors for attending summer school. Of those seven, three indicated that they

were in summer school to get away from home and two were taking a course offered only during the summer (see Table 23).

Discussion of Results

RQ1: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for academic reasons?

Survey results revealed that the majority of students attend summer school for academic rather than for financial or social reasons. Evaluation of student responses as to their main reason for enrollment showed that 107 (94%) cited academic factors as their reason for attending summer school at TLU. The more specific reasons included to speed up graduation (34 students, 30%), graduate on time (24 students, 21%), ease course load (22 students, 19%), and improve grade point average (7 students, 6%). Five students (4%) wanted to take a course offered only during summer session, 4 students (3%) wanted to pick up a failed course, and 4 students (3%) wanted to get off academic probation. Additional main reasons included becoming eligible for athletics, picking up transfer credits, picking up dropped courses, and improving English speaking skills.

Hastening progress towards degree completion.

Responses to survey questions 26 and 28 (see Appendix A) also showed that the greater number of students attended summer school for academic reasons. From a sample of 128, 100 (78%) students indicated they were in summer school at TLU to speed up completion of their degrees. Keller's (1992) study at the University of Miami revealed that the majority of their students attended summer school to speed up progress towards their degrees. According to Keller's study, over 940 (66%) out of 1,430 students enrolled in summer school for this reason. Keller found that students were ready to complete school so that they could enter the real world. Wanting to graduate earlier than would otherwise be possible seems to be the major influence for students enrolling in summer school. Students are eager to graduate in four years or less. Chandler and Weller (1991) found that students hoped to graduate early so that they could begin to work and make money. Brooke's (1989) study revealed that 296 out of 418 (71%) students were in summer school to speed up the progress toward their degrees. The findings of the present study concur with those of previous research in that earlier

studies revealed that a majority of students said they were attending summer school to speed progress towards graduation.

Easing regular semester course loads.

Question 26 asked students if they attended summer school to ease their course load during the regular session. There were 73 (57%) students who responded affirmatively that they were attending Summer School 1999 to ease their course load during regular sessions. During the regular session, students enrolled in 12 hours or more are considered full-time students. Students with fewer than 12 hours are considered part-time students (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998). At TLU, regular term semesters are 12-weeks and students may prefer to take lighter course loads over a longer period of time. For example, students may wish to work or to engage in campus leadership activities. Students may be able to take a lighter regular semester course load as a result of having taken summer courses. Students can enroll in the minimum amount to be considered a full-time student and have more time for other activities.

Dodge (1991) stated that students find it easier to take courses during the summer than in the fall and

spring semesters. Summer courses are often more relaxing, smaller in class size, and professors may appear more approachable under such circumstances. Although summer course loads are heavier with class assignments, the sessions are shorter, and students can complete courses at a faster pace. Dodge (1991) found that students chose summer school to complete three or four courses. Students claimed that it is easier to complete the limited number of courses taken in the summer than during the fall and spring terms. "Students can take courses and still have time for a vacation or part-time job" (Dodge, 1991, p. A24).

Brooke's (1989) study revealed that 212 (52%) were taking classes to ease course load for the regular school session. Chandler and Weller (1991) reported that students are attracted to the opportunity to lighten their course load during the regular terms by enrolling in summer classes. The present study involved 48 (38%) seniors. Of those 48, twenty-four (50%) were in summer school to speed up progress towards their degrees or to graduate on time. Further, seven (15%) of the seniors wanted to ease their course load for the fall and spring semester.

Brooke (1989) found that 139 of 418 students at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Canada, attended summer school because they enjoyed the summer learning experience. The University of Alberta study revealed that 152 students out of 418 attended summer school to fulfill their enjoyment for summer learning experiences in the classroom. In the present study, 38 (30%) respondents indicated that they were in summer school because they enjoyed the summer learning experiences.

Other academic related reasons for attending summer school.

Students who were in summer school to improve their grade point averages and pick up failed or dropped courses feared being placed on academic probation at TLU. Further, four students indicated that they were attending courses so that they could be removed from academic probation. At TLU, in order to have good academic standing, first year students must have a cumulative grade point average of 1.80 or higher. Second year students must have a grade point average of 2.0 (TLU Catalog, 1999). If students do not meet these requirements, then they will be placed on academic probation. In this study, 9 (7%) students

indicated their grade point averages to be 2.0 or lower. Of those nine students, three were freshmen and three were sophomores. One freshman indicated that s/he was in summer school to make up a failed course. Another freshman wanted to be removed from academic probation. One of the sophomores wanted to raise her or his grade point average that was due to dropping and failing courses, while another wanted to get off academic probation.

Students placed on probation must earn the required grade point average for their classification as a student during their upcoming semester, including summer. For some students getting off probation means attending classes during the summer term in order to raise their grade point average (*TLU Catalog*, 1999). Students on academic probation who do not satisfy the grade point average requirements will be suspended from TLU until they raise the grade point average by transferring course credits from another institution (*TLU Catalog*, 1999). Thus, the threat of possible suspension following a semester on academic probation is a strong incentive for students to attend summer school.

In summary, statistics for this study show that students are motivated to attend summer school most often for academic reasons. Many are attempting to graduate in four years or less. Students are possibly anxious to enter the career world and profit from the investment made towards their education. That is, students attend summer school to speed up progress towards graduation very possibly because of the financial incentives of entering the work force full time (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Dodge, 1991). Dodge (1991) also reported that students who changed their major took summer courses so that they could graduate on time with their peers. In addition, summer school allows students to remain connected to college learning, especially those students on academic probation. Those on academic probation could benefit from the smaller classes and the assistance perhaps more readily available from professors during summer session courses, since professors are seen at least four days per week (Chandler & Weller, 1991).

RQ2: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school because of financial reasons?

Finance was not a major influence for students attending summer school at TLU. Only two (2%) students identified finance as their main reason for attending summer School at TLU (see Table 23). These students indicated that they wanted to maintain financial aid and become eligible for financial aid. Other studies identified finance as a less significant factor than academic reasons but nevertheless a considerable influence for summer enrollment. Chandler and Weller's (1991) study identified the following factors as financial influences: maintaining on-campus employment, getting out of working at home, and using up scholarship funds. Meanwhile in this study, seven students indicated that they were in summer school at TLU to use up their scholarship/grant funds. However, as stated above, only two students in the current study cited financial concerns as their main reason for attending summer school.

The largest financial factor represented in the present study was reducing college expenses, for which there were 37 (29%) responses. There were 7 (5%) students who wanted to use up scholarships and/or

grants, 12 (9%) needed to meet financial aid requirements, and only 5 (4%) wanted to maintain their housing for the summer due to their leasing contracts.

College attendance can be very expensive (Blumenstyk, 1993). Not all students can have their parents pay for their education until graduation (Blumenstyk, 1993; Gove, 1998). Over the past years, tuition and other college expenses have increased significantly (DeLoughry, 1991; Dodge, 1991; Evangelauf, 1993; Gose, 1998). Summer school at TLU is less expensive in the sense that smaller amounts are paid than during the regular semester because students are registered for fewer classes in the summer than in the fall and spring terms (Carol Hamilton, personal communication, August 9, 1999).

In this study, 63 (50%) students out of 127 (one did not respond) work 20 hours or more per week. Twenty-eight of those students work 35 hours or more. Employment evidently helps to subsidize college fees and costs as has been found in earlier studies (Chandler & Weller, 1991; Dodge, 1991). If students complete their degrees in less time, they may reduce their need for loans and avoid increasing tuition costs (Carol Hamilton, personal communication, August

9, 1999). Loans borrowed by students in order to pay for college fees usually consist of low interest funding that must be repaid, generally after graduation (*TLU Bulletin*, 1998).

In 1993-94, students at private four-year colleges were paying average tuition of \$11,025, six percent more than in 1992-93 (Evangelauf, 1993). In 1998-99, for both private and public colleges, the average cost of tuition increased four percent over the previous year (Gose, 1998). Tuition for private colleges, considered separate from public institutions, increased five percent, averaging \$14,508 for 1998-99 (Gose, 1998). For the 1998-99 academic year, the average tuition cost at TLU was slightly under \$12,000 (*TLU Catalog*, 1999). For the whole academic year, TLU students paid an average of \$15,000, including room and board (Carol Hamilton, personal communication, August 9, 1999). The average total cost at four-year private universities was \$22,553, for 1998-99 (Gose, 1998).

During the 1998-99 school year, 1,115 TLU students received some form of financial aid, including loans, grants, and/or scholarships. Of those students, 978 (87%) were recipients of grants or

scholarships. The average total award of financial aid per student was \$9,000 (Carol Hamilton, personal communication, August 9, 1999). The average loan amount granted per student was \$3,600, while the average scholarship/grant amount was \$4,900. Remaining balances were paid by the student or his or her parent, sometimes through additional loans granted by banks or credit unions (Blumenstyk, 1993).

In this study, 83 (65%) students were receiving some form of financial aid, while 48 (35%) were not receiving financial aid. One student said that in order to maintain his or her financial aid, s/he needed to take courses in the summer. Another student indicated that s/he needed accrue enough hours to become eligible for financial aid, so that was a main reason for taking summer courses. Carol Hamilton, TLU's Assistant Director of Financial Aid, reported that those students who attended summer school for financial aid reasons often do so in order to become eligible for financial aid (personal communication, August 9, 1999). In order to become eligible for loans during the following fall semester, students need to have completed the necessary hours stated for their registered status. Scholarships and grants are

not available in summer but only during fall and spring terms. However, if students complete the required number of hours necessary for their classification, then they become eligible for state loans of which funds can be used to pay for summer courses.

In summary, in the present study, financial reasons were not a major influence for summer enrollment. Of the few students who cited financial reason for attending summer school those students wanted to either maintain or become eligible for financial aid.

RQ3: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school because of social reasons?

According to the results of the present study, social factors were not a major influence for students to enroll in summer school at TLU. Only four of 114 students said that social factors influenced them to attend summer school. Three students said that their reason for being in summer school was to get away from home and one indicated that s/he wanted to live on-campus during the summer. In the present study, Question 20 asked students if they attended summer

school to get away from home, with 31 (24%) respondents indicating a desire to be away from home and 97 (76%) not considering this as a reason.

Question 25 asked if students attended summer school to avoid working at home. Only 14 (11%) wanted to get out of working at home while 114 (89%) were not concerned with this issue. Dodge (1991) reported that students found it difficult to work and take courses during the fall and spring semesters. In this study, 96 (76%) students worked and attended summer school (see Table 12). Lastly, Question 29 asked if students attended summer school to remain closer to friends. Twenty-three (18%) responded "Yes" while 105 (82%) responded "No."

Summer school gives students the chance to continue learning how to live away from home and be independent. The relatively few students who cited social reasons for attending summer school indicated that they wanted to be away from home and work on-campus.

RQ4: To what extent do TLU students report attending summer school for other reasons?

The Enrollment Information section questions identified 17 factors for summer school attendance. Question 32 asked students to indicate "Other" factors not listed in survey questions 16 through 31 (see Appendix A). There were ten additional factors cited by 14 students (see Table 21).

"Other" academic factors.

From the list of additional factors identified by this study's respondents' (see Question 32), the following 7 reasons reported by students could be categorized as academic factors: "improve grade point average," "get off academic probation," "changing of major, picked up two minors," "felt summer courses would be easier," "gain accounting experience," and "improve English speaking skills." In all, 11 students reported factors relating to academic reasons, which made up 79% of the responses to Question 32.

The largest number of students, 3 (21%), indicated they were in school to improve their grade point average, followed by 2 (14%) TLU students wanting to get off probation. These reasons were

considered academic factors for this study. Chandler and Weller (1991) reported improving grade point average was a factor in their study at the University of Eastern Illinois. They found that to "improve grade point average" was ranked seventh on a list of 19 factors for attending summer school. In Keller's (1982) study, 144 (10%) students out of 1,438 indicated that attending summer school to improve their grade point average was "very important," while 230 (16%) indicated it was at least "moderately important."

"Other" social factors.

Only three students (21%) indicated reasons related to social factors. These factors included that students could not stay at home for summer because their family was overseas in Europe, wanted to get to know more people because they were transfer students at TLU, and wanted to do something new during the summer time.

"Other" financial factors.

No "Other" reasons cited by students could be categorized as financial reasons.

Limitations of the Study

The researcher was not able to gather data from students enrolled in Summer Session I during the first week of classes. Some students withdrew from courses during the first week of Session I. These students were therefore not available as part of the sample.

Session II surveys were completed by 14 students on registration day, Tuesday, July 6, 1999, which was held the day before classes began for Summer Session II. The researcher did not determine what classes students were enrolled in for Summer Session II. For Summer Session I, 114 students responded to the survey during one of the class sessions in which they were enrolled.

Limitations Arising from Some Survey Question

Constructions

As students completed the survey it was assumed that respondents would be able to interpret the purpose and meaning of each question. All respondents had the opportunity to ask questions to the researcher regarding clarification for each question. Yet, after completion of the study, it was determined that some questions could have been reworded to clarify the nature of the information being requested.

Question regarding ethnicity/racial
classification.

Question 4 asked student to classify themselves as African American, Hispanic, International, Caucasian, or Other. Because of a minimal number of Asian students on campus (10 in 1998-99, according to the registrar), this category was not employed on the student survey questionnaire. TLU's campus has a larger Asian-related presence among its International students (45 in 1998-99, according to the registrar). For future studies, this category should be included even if the Asian American population is minimal.

Question regarding summer school registration
status.

Question 13 asked students to classify themselves as an undergraduate, audit, visiting undergraduate, international, or unclassified student. Students could have classified themselves as undergraduate or visiting undergraduate students. Therefore, some overlapping of categories may have occurred. In addition, respondents may not have known what an unclassified student is. Unclassified students were those from TLU's Extended Learning program. Students

affiliated with the Extended Learning programs are primarily adult, non-traditional learners.

Questions regarding enrollment information.

For the present study, questions 16 through 31, the main portion of the survey, were listed as reasons influencing students to attend summer school. Those questions were chosen from previous studies researched in the past. However, students from the present study indicated the following responses: improve grade point average, graduate on time, and get off academic probation. For future study consideration, the reasons stated above should be included in the main portion of the study.

Question 17 asked to students if they were registered for a course to reduce college expenses. Students wanting to reduce college expenses may be concerned with speeding up completion towards their degree. Therefore, Question 17 could have been reworded to ask students to explain their reasons for wanting to reduce college expenses (i.e., to graduate in four years or less). Further, from the question it may have been unclear that the respondent needed to identify long-term expenses for college payment.

Question 19 asked students if they attended summer school to maintain on-campus employment. The question should have allowed students to specify if their on-campus employment is part of their financial aid, work study package.

Question 20 asked students if they attend summer school to get away from home. Two or three additional questions could have been designed from Question 20. Respondents would have been able to indicate if want to get away from home because they want to be away from their home environment, family, or friends. For some, particularly the international students, their home may be too far away and travel costs are very expensive.

Question 25 asked students if they attended summer school to get out of working at home. The question does not identify reasons for not wanting to work at home. Some responses may have included that students could not find a job at home, and make more money in the city or town of their college, or did not want to perform work responsibilities required by their parents (i.e., babysitting, farm or field work, family business).

Question regarding main reason for attending
summer school.

Question 34 asked students to identify their main reason for attending summer school. If the instructions with the question had asked students to select one reason from the list of factors cited in Questions 16 through 31, then evaluating students' responses would have been clearer, more precise, and consistent.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

Because a study of this nature has not been conducted at TLU, this research provides a basis for future comparative analysis and research. Responses from this study have provided a format for future studies. Further, the study provided valuable information that TLU administration may use to evaluate their summer programming. Information from this research may be valuable to other colleges and universities, especially small, private institution, wanting to improve their summer school recruitment and retention.

Research.

TLU has not conducted any studies researching the effectiveness and services of their summer school programming. Over 90% of the survey respondents for the present study said they rely on summer school for academic reasons, many citing a desire to speed up their progress towards graduation. By speeding up progress towards graduation, students will enter the job market sooner after completing high school. Future studies evaluating the length of students' preparation and the university's ability to help students grow as professionals in given amounts of time could help TLU in making decisions on increasing and improving summer programming. The following includes a list of future studies that could be considered at TLU:

1. A study to determine factors influencing the decision of students who do not attend summer school.
2. A study employing a different methodology that uses a different sample, different procedures, and uses different questions to evaluate the goals of the study. Studies of summer school enrollment factors could

- evaluate students during the fall or spring semesters, prior to possible future summer school enrollment. Different methods could also incorporate focus groups or interviews.
3. A study grouping survey responses according to variables considered in the background information section, to find the differences between groups classified according to age, gender, classification, grade point average, and financial aid.
 4. A study to compare enrollment rates of 1994-97 summer school students to that of those who attended summer school after 1997. During 1994-97, TLU offered a voucher program whereby students received one summer course free.
 5. A study to determine if students who attend one or more summer sessions are actually graduating in less time than students who do not attend summer school.
 6. A study to determine if students learn more effectively during the summer terms compared to the fall and spring.

Practice.

The present study can be used as a starting point to further evaluate summer school programming at TLU. Although, this study was conducted at TLU, other private colleges may find this research useful in promoting its own summer school services. The administration may consider expanding summer course offerings since over 90% of the respondents were in summer school to speed up progress towards their degrees as well as graduate on time. The present study will allow TLU to engage in further studies determining students' satisfaction with the services provided during the summer. Further, TLU can evaluate its marketing strategies for encouraging students to enroll in summer courses. Since the majority of students made their decision to attend summer school during the spring semester, TLU may want to capitalize and market their summer courses to students early in the spring. Because half of the students are receiving financial aid, TLU may want to find ways to increase grant and scholarship funds students can use for summer study.

Conclusions

This study was designed to examine reasons why students attend summer school at TLU. There were 128 students involved in the study. There were 263 students enrolled in courses at TLU. The sample consisted of 48.6% of the available students for the study. The goal of the study was to determine the extent to which academic, social, financial, or other factors influence students to enroll in summer school. Over 90% of the respondents cited academic reasons as either a main or secondary reason. Specific academic factors included speeding up graduation, graduating on time, and easing course load for the long-term semesters.

TLU may consider offering more courses during the summer term so that more students will have the opportunity to take summer classes. A select few of the academic courses from each department are offered during summer session. Academic departments and schools may want to consider increasing the number and variety of courses to be offered in the future.

Summary

The focus of this chapter was to analyze the data gathered from this study with other studies and data done in the past. The study determined if students at TLU were motivated to attend summer based on reasons concluded from other studies. Other studies claimed that students were motivated to attend summer school because of academic, financial, and social reasons. In those studies, the authors concluded that students' main reason for enrolling in summer school was based on academic reasons: speeding up progress towards graduation and graduating on time. The present study concluded that over 50% of the sample population were taking courses in the summer "to speed up progress towards graduation" and "graduate on time."

REFERENCES

Aber, J. (1995). Getting a college degree: Testing out and other accredited short cuts. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books.

Bingham, F.B. (1987). Financial aid as a tool in the institutional marketing effort. Journal of Professional Services Marketing, 2(4), 119-125.

Blumenstyk, G. (1993, April 20). Alarms over the cost of financial aid. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A33-39.

Brooke, P. (1989). Summer session learning experiences at the University of Alberta. Edmonton: The University of Alberta, 1989 (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. 316 081).

Chandler, E.W., & Weller, R.B. (1991). An empirical investigation of student motivations to attend summer school. Journal of Marketing, 6(1), 69-86.

College Board (1997). College costs and financial aid handbook. New York: College Entrance Examination Board.

Collison, M.N. (1992, August 12). College becomes a safe haven for city students. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A27-A30.

DeLoughry, T. (1991, February 13). Student-aid funds help open door at Appalachian State U. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A19-23.

Dodge, S. (1991, August 7). More people are taking advantage of summer classes to refine their skills and get a jump on fall courses. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A23-26.

Evangelauf, J. (1993, September 29). Tuition for 1993-94 climbs sharply, outpacing inflation. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. A33-36.

Gose, B. (1998, November 16). Average tuition rises 4% in a year, more than twice the rate of

inflation. The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp.
A56-59.

Keller, M.J. (1982). Factors influencing
students' decision to attend summer school. College
Student Journal, 6(4), 348-352.

Lee, M.M. (1996). Westchester Community College
summer school survey, 1996. Session I and session II.
Valhalla, N.Y.: Westchester Community College, 1996
(ERIC Document Reproduction No. 401 988).

Margolin, J.B. (1989). Financing a college
education: The essential guide for the 90s. New York:
Plenum Press.

Moore, L. (1976). Improving summer enrollment.
Planning for Higher Education, 5(4/5), 2-6.

Patterson, A.M., Sedlack, W.E., Tracey, T.J.
(1981). Attitudes and characteristics of summer school
students. Southern College Personnel Association
Journal, 3, (2), 28-34.

Reeves, F.W. (1932). Summer sessions: In the liberal arts college. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Sansom, H. (1985). Summer education in the future. In Education in summer: 100 years at UW-Madison. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 264 752).

Schoenfeld, C. (1967). The American university in summer. Milwaukee, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press.

Texas Lutheran University Bulletin (Vol. 67, No. 2). (1998). Springfield, IL: Phillips Brothers Printing.

Texas Lutheran University Catalog (Vol. 69, No. 2). (1999). Springfield, IL: Phillips Brothers Printing.

West, E.D. (1963). Financial aid to the undergraduate: Issues and implications. Washington DC: Council on Education.

Young, R.J., & McDougall, W.P. (1988). Trends in university summer sessions. Journal of Higher Education, 59(1), 39-53.

APPENDIX A

Summer Session Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather information as part of a research project concerning summer school at TLU. You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your completing and returning the questionnaire will be taken as evidence of your willingness to participate and your consent to have the information used for the purposes of the study. Your responses to this survey will have no impact or influence towards your grade.

Part I. Background Information

Please circle the appropriate response that relates to you.

1. My age is a. 17-22 b. 23-30 c. 31-40 d. 41-50 e. over 50

2. My gender is: a. Male b. Female

3. My classification is: a. Fresh b. Soph c. Junior d. Senior

4. My ethnicity/race is

a. African American b. Hispanic c. International d. Caucasian
e. Other _____

5. I receive some form of financial aid a. yes b. no

6. My current GPA (Grade Point Average) is

a. Below 2.0 b. 2.01-2.50 c. 2.51-3.00 d. 3.01-3.50 e. above 3.50

7. My permanent residence is

- a. within the city of Seguin (if this is your answer go to question #8)
- b. outside Seguin but within commuting distance to TLU.
- c. outside Seguin and beyond commuting distance to TLU.

If you answered "a" to question #7

8. Do you live

- a. in TLU campus housing
- b. off-campus

9. My current major is (please specify) _____

10. My career choice following graduation relates to:

- a. government
- b. teaching or higher education
- c. business or industry
- d. self-employed
- e. other (please specify) _____

11. The number of hours per week that I work is

- a. 35 hours or more per week on average
- b. between 20 to 35 hours per week on average
- c. between 1 and 20 hours per week on average
- d. none - I am not currently employed

12. I last attended college level summer school in (please write year and institution) _____

13. This summer session I am registered as:
- an undergraduate student
 - an auditor
 - a visiting undergraduate student
 - an international student
 - an unclassified student
14. During the Spring 1999 semester, the number of 3 credit courses I was registered for was:
- none
 - one course
 - two courses
 - three courses
 - more than three courses
15. During the Summer session 1999 semester, the number of 3 credit courses I am registered for:
- none
 - one course
 - two courses
 - three courses
 - more than three courses

PART II. Enrollment Information

I am registered for a course (or courses) this summer session

- | | | |
|--|--------|-------|
| 16. because I expected the class size to be small | a. yes | b. no |
| 17. to reduce my cost of college expenses | yes | no |
| 18. to use up scholarship/grant funds | yes | no |
| 19. to maintain my on-campus employment | yes | no |
| 20. to get away from home | yes | no |
| 21. to pick up a dropped course | yes | no |
| 22. to take a course that was offered only at this time | yes | no |
| 23. to meet my financial aid requirements | yes | no |
| 24. to get a particular instructor | yes | no |
| 25. to get out of working at home | yes | no |
| 26. to ease my course load during the regular session | yes | no |
| 27. to maintain my housing during the summer (Use up lease) | yes | no |
| 28. to speed up completion of my degree | yes | no |
| 29. to remain closer to my friends, boyfriend, or girlfriend | yes | no |
| 30. to pick up a course that I failed | yes | no |
| 31. because I enjoy the summer learning experiences | yes | no |

32. for reasons not listed here (please describe) _____

33. I plan to attend Summer School in 2000

34. My main reason for deciding to attend summer school was (please specify)

35. My decision to attend summer school (in 1999) was made during:

- a. Aug.-Dec. 1998
- b. Jan.-Feb.-Mar. 1999
- c. Apr.-May 1999
- d. June 1999
- e. At another time not

APPENDIX B

MATRIX

Research Questions

Survey Questions

Research Questions	Survey Questions
	I am registered for a course or courses this summer...
1. To what extent do TLU students report attending school for academic reasons?	16. because I expected the class size to be small. 21. to pick up dropped courses. 22. to take a course that was offered only at this time. 24. to get a particular instructor. 26. to ease my course load during the regular session. 28. to speed up completion of my degree. 30. to pick up a course that I failed. 31. because I enjoy the summer learning experience.
2. To what extent do TLU students report attending school for financial reasons?	17. to reduce my cost of college expenses. 18. to use up scholarship/grant funds. 19. to maintain my on-campus employment. 23. to meet my financial aid requirements. 27. to maintain my housing during the summer (Use up lease).
3. To what extent do TLU students report attending school for social reasons?	20. to get away from home. 25. to get out of working at home. 29. to remain closer to my friends, boyfriend, or girlfriend.
4. To what extent do TLU students report attending school for other reasons?	32. for reasons not listed here.

APPENDIX C

Summer 1999
Main Campus Summer Session I (May 26 – July 1)

1st Period (7:30 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1101	ART 131 Basic Drawing in Colorado & NM	CANCELED	
1112	ENG 231 World Literature I	WH 109	Metereau
1104	HIST 370 Texas & The Borderlands	WH 116	Gesick
1116	MATH 133 College Algebra	BC 205	Musgraves

2nd Period (9:30 a.m. -10:50 a.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1105	BA 231 Principles of Accounting I	WH 116	Huntsman
1123	BIO 147 Human Anatomy & Physiology I	CANCELED	
1114	COM 233 Media Institutions	CANCELED	
1113	ENG 238 American Literature I	WH 210	Schulze
1100	GEC 131 English Composition & Comm I	CANCELED	
1103	HIST 233 World Heritage I	WH 206	Mao
1110	KIN 122 First Aid & Medical Self Help	FC 101	Roswell
1126	PSY 131 Intro to Psychology	WH 109	Dicke
1107	SOC 130 Intro to Sociology	CANCELED	
1119	STAT 374 Statistics	BC 205	Abbasian
1128	THEO 334 History World Religions	WH 119	Beck

3rd Period (11:00 a.m. -12:20 a.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1106	BA 378 Business Communications	WH 116	Cook
1121	BIO 143 Biological Systems I	MS 203	Springs
1122	BIO 143L Lab also required meets MW 1:00-4:00p.m.		Springs
1115	COM 232 Intro to Symbolic Processes	CANCELED	
1120	CSCI 133 Applications Software	ASC Lab	Rivera
1102	HIST 131 American History I	CANCELED	
1109	KIN 121 Health Related Fitness	FC 101	Springs
1117	MATH 138 Elementary Functions	BC 205	Musgraves
1118	MATH 231 Calculus I	CANCELED	
1108	SOC 236 American Minorities	WH 206	Guy
1129	THEO 333 New Testament Studies	WH 109	Beck

To be announced

1125	THEO 439A Internship in Youth Ministry	TBA	Koenig
------	--	-----	--------

Instructor permission/signature required

Courses meet five days a week (unless indicated otherwise). TLU reserves the right to set a minimum of number of students for courses to make.

Summer 1999
Main Campus Summer Session II (July 7 – August 11)

1st Period (7:30 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1206	BA 337 Principles of Marketing	WH 116	Lockard
1212	BIO 130* Basic Biology (meets M-R)	MS 203	Jonas
1213	*BIO 130L lab also required meets MW 1:00-4:00p.m.		
1204	HIST 371 History of Women in the U.S.	WH 119	Hardman

2nd Period (9:30 a.m. -10:50 a.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1205	BA 232 Principles of Accounting II	WH 116	Cook
1216	BIO 148* Human Anatomy & Physiology II	CANCELED	
1218	BIO 242* Microbiology	CANCELED	
1209	ENG 239 American Literature II	WH 210	Bednar
1200	GEC 132 English Composition & Comm II	WH 206	Randolph
1202	HIST 132 American History II	WH 119	Hardman
1210	MATH 136 Calculus for Business & Economics	BC 205	Rivera
1221	THEO 133 Introduction to Theology	CANCELED	

3rd Period (11:00 a.m. -12:20 p.m.)

<u>Call #</u>	<u>Course # and Title</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Instructor</u>
1201	ART 233 Basic Painting	CANCELED	
1207	BA 375 Principles of Management	WH 116	Lockard
1215	BIO 144* Biological Systems II	MS 203	Springs
1214	*BIO 144L also required meets TR 1:00-4:00p.m.		
1220	BIO 235 Principles of Nutrition	KS 209	Clapp
1208	ENG 232 World Literature II	WH 210	Woodruff-Wieding
1211	CSCI 133 Applications Software	ASC Lab	Rivera
1203	HIST 234 World Heritage II	CANCELED	
1225	POLS 231 American Politics I	CANCELED	
1229	PSY 236 Developmental Psychology	CANCELED	

To be announced

1224	THEO 439B Internship in Youth Ministry	TBA	Koenig
------	--	-----	--------

Instructor permission required

Courses meet five days a week (unless indicated otherwise). TLU reserves the right to set a minimum number of students for courses to make.

Courses available at the Randolph Center in summer include:

BA 231 Prin Accounting I	BA 472 Human Resource Mngmt	CSCI 379 Special Topic
BA 339 Legal Enviro of Business	BA 480 Governmental Accntg	GEOG 134 Cult Geography
BA 376 Managerial Accounting	BA 375 Prin of Management	CHEM 133 Intro Chemistry
BA 433 Intl Financial Mngmt	STAT 374 Statistics	BA 337 Prin of Marketing
ART 136 Art Appreciation	SOC 236 American Minorities	

These are evening courses that meet one or two nights per week for four hours per night. See Randolph Center summer schedule for further information on costs and registration.

VITA

Andres Dewayne Rischer was born in Fort Worth, Texas, on May 7, 1973, the son of Herman Rischer, Jr., and Joan Yaites Rischer. After completing his work at Dunbar High School, Fort Worth, Texas, in 1991, he entered Southwest Texas State University (SWT) in San Marcos, Texas. He received the degree of Bachelors of Science from SWT. During the following years, he was employed as Director of Campus Programming at Texas Lutheran University, in Seguin, Texas. In January 1997, he entered the Graduate School at SWT, for his Masters of Art Degree in Developmental & Adult Education.

Permanent Address: 3501 Richardson Court
Fort Worth, Texas 76119

This thesis was typed by Andres Dewayne Rischer.