ABSTRACT

Title of Document:	COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS
	Christine Yip, M.A., 2007
Directed By:	Dr. Marsha Guenzler-Stevens, Department of Counseling and Personnel Services

The purpose of this thesis was to examine the student-parent relationship by understanding communication patterns of undergraduate students and their parents. Topics discussed, frequency, initiation, methods of communication, and student satisfaction were investigated and analyzed across race, gender, and age. There were 539 usable respondents (females $n = 331$, males $n = 182$) between the ages of 18 and 24 from a Mid-Atlantic university.

Students most frequently discussed physical health issues, career planning, living situations, friends, and current financial situations with their parents. More than two-thirds of respondents did not discuss the topics of alcohol and sex. Students and parents both initiated communication an average of five times a week, and cell phone was the most common method of communication. Regarding satisfaction, more than two-thirds of respondents were "satisfied" or "strongly satisfied" with the frequency, methods used by parents, frequency of parent-initiated communication, quality of advice, and level of sharing.

COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OF
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS

By

Christine Yip

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Advisory Committee:
Marsha A. Guenzler-Stevens, Affiliate Assistant Professor, Chair
Marylu K. McEwen, Associate Professor
Linda M. Clement, Affiliate Assistant Professor
Vivian S. Boyd, Associate Professor

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The College Parents of America (2006) conducted a national survey to learn more about parent-student communication and connection. Of the 525 parents surveyed nationally, 74% communicated with their students two or three times a week and one in three parents communicated with their students at least once a day. Ninety percent of parents used cell phones to communicate with their student and 58% used email on a regular basis to correspond with their children. Seventy-five percent of parents also visited their student on campus at least once or twice a semester. When asked how heavily involved parents were in comparison to their own parents, 42% said much more involved (Rainey, 2006).

The popular media has been quick to label these parents "helicopter parents" – a term now used to describe parents with a "habit of hovering – hyper-involved – over their children's lives" (Pope, 2005, para. 1). This view of the pushy, interfering parent is not shared by all institutions. At George Washington University, the Director of Parent Services, Rodney L. Johnson, said "his staff welcomes what are referred to as 'helicopter parents'…they hover, they come down, they go back and hover. They're parents who are involved, but not intrusively. Often the students who do best, their parents are involved" (Hoover, 2004, para. 40). Today's college students and parents are more connected than ever before. Preliminary findings from a study conducted at Middlebury College reveal that "there's more mutuality than what we've been led to believe – not just helicopter parents who are over-involved and hyper-engaged" (Hofer & Kennedy, 2006, p. 2). Students want to communicate with their parents just as much as parents want to stay

involved (Hofer & Kennedy). Taking a brief look at the role of parents in the history of higher education will give some insight on the current relationship between undergraduate students and their parents.

History of In Loco Parentis

Students that matriculated into colleges and universities between the Colonial Period to the late 1950s experienced the functioning of in loco parentis (Thelin, 2003). College administrators and faculty took on the role of parents and offered students supervision regarding student conduct and moral development (Thelin). Parents left the responsibility with the institution and as a result, colleges and universities were able to make and enforce rules and policies as if they were parents (Nuss, 2003). Administrators and faculty disciplined students using strict and authoritarian methods (Nuss).

In the early 1960s, the Supreme Court recognized that students above the age of 18 are legal adults; students did not need to relinquish their constitutional rights by accepting student status (Thelin, 2003). After in loco parentis was eliminated, student affairs professionals were seen less as parents or disciplinarians and more as educators and mentors (Nuss, 2003). Students were given more autonomy, more choice, and more freedom. Eradicating in loco parentis indicated that students were to be seen as independent persons in institutions of higher learning. The idea of having parental control or discipline was no longer necessary. Not long after the elimination of in loco parentis, another piece of legislation was passed that helped to shape how colleges and universities see students and the role of their parents.

History of FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] of 1974, also referred to as the Buckley Amendment, was developed to protect student educational records (Barr, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). As a result, institutions receiving federal funds are prohibited from releasing any records or files without written consent (Barr). Students of this generation, frequently called Baby Boomers, rallied for this amendment; they wanted to be treated as adults and to be given the same rights. They didn't want their report cards and other educational records sent home to their parents. Still in effect today, college administrators, faculty, and staff are unable to give out student schedules, grades, and other personal information without the written consent of that student, not even as student's parents (Barr).

However, in 1998, The Higher Education Amendments added a section for parental notification. If any student under the age of 21 violates any law or institutional policy regarding alcohol or drugs, the college or university may disclose the information to their parent (Barr, 2003). This exception allows parents to play a more active and informed role in their student's life. Communication between students and parents is increasing and this legislation aids in promoting parental involvement (Wilson, 2004). A number of other factors also help to explain increased student-parent communication and the following section will address each of those trends.

Baby Boomers and Millennials

One trend is attributed to the changing parent-child relationship between many baby boomer parents and their millennial children (Ullom & Faulkner, 2005). The new relation between parent and child now resembles more of a partnership. Baby boomer parents are used to being involved (Jacobson, 2003; Johnson, 2004). There is a "clear trend on the part of parents to program their students' lives from an early age where nearly all activities are now planned and supervised by adults, as opposed to informal self-organizing play…" (Ullom & Faulkner, p. 22). They're used to carting their children around from dance practice to soccer practice to a community service event. As a result, there is a much stronger bond and greater communication between parents and students now than in previous generations (Pope, 2005; Ullom & Faulkner).

Demographic Shift

Along with the increasing parental involvement, there is a demographic shift where the number of students applying to colleges is increasing while the number of colleges and universities available are staying the same (Jacobson, 2003). This leads many traditionally elite institutions, and even small private colleges and flagship state universities, to be more selective in their acceptance. This change took parents by surprise and in response they're taking charge of their child's application process. Forty-one percent of parents say that they were heavily involved in their child's college search and selection process, with 69% of them helping to draft their child's college application and 85% helping their student decide which schools to apply (College Parents of

America, 2006). The news media has played a role in promoting this issue of admission into good schools (Jacobson). There is a lot of attention on a handful of colleges, making them seem like the ideal place and making admissions seem like a high stakes ordeal. Hector Martinez, director of college guidance at the Webb schools, states that "if families could see that there are 1600 colleges out there and not just 16, I think they wouldn't be so anxious" (Jacobson, para. 27). Parents worry about their students getting admitted and in turn, spend more time and effort communicating and working with their student on the entire college search process.

Rise In Tuition Rates

Besides the difficulty of getting into elite institutions, there is a rise in tuition rates (Hoover, 2004; Jackson & Murphy, 2005; Johnson, 2004; Mullendore, Banahan, & Ramsey, 2005; Pope; 2005). "The cost of higher education has increased at a level disproportionate to the consumer price index" (Jackson & Murphy, p. 53). Along with a higher price tag, there is a change in consumer culture with an emphasis on customer service. "Customer service has become a defining force in most transactions including the university-student relationship" (Jackson & Murphy, p. 53) and parents are expecting a level of service commensurate with rising tuition rates (Johnson). Parents want to know that colleges and universities will provide care and services for their students and as a result, students do not hesitate to call their parents if they need something resolved at school. Parents are demanding more and more involvement and feel the act of paying tuition entitles them to a certain kind of outcome (Johnson).

Technological Advances

The increased involvement from parents is made easier with all the new technological advances (Jackson & Murphy, 2005; Pope, 2005). Today's student walks around and has constant access to a cell phone, laptop, email, and instant messenger (Pope). Parents are able to easily reach their student at any given moment of the day. Networks like Facebook and MySpace work to keep students connected at all times. Some colleges, such as University of Alabama, even have their own networks for first-year students and their parents (Epstein, 2005). The technology that makes life easier is also making it easier for students and parents to communicate more frequently.

Statement of Problem

With the changing demographic, rise in tuition, and the new technological advances, college administrators believe that student-parent communication is becoming more common and recurrent (Hofer & Kennedy, 2006; Pope, 2005). As students and parents communicate more frequently, institutions encounter more phone calls from parents who are taking on problems that should be handled by their sons and daughters (Johnson, 2004). Over the past several years, colleges and universities are learning to work with parents who won't hesitate to interject on behalf of their children when something on campus isn't to their liking (Young, 2003). Institutions are hearing from parents on a daily basis and many universities across the country are developing Parent and Family Offices to effectively deal with increased student-parent communication and parental involvement (Breckel, 2006). Contrary to popular belief, students want their parents to stay involved; they seek parental advice and guidance (Hofer & Kennedy). This notion of increased student-parent communication is frequently illustrated in popular

media (Hoover, 2004; Johnson; Pope, 2005; Wills, 2005; Young) but has not received the same amount of attention in research. The purpose of this study is to examine the student-parent relationship by understanding the communication patterns of undergraduate students and their parents. This descriptive study will investigate the following research questions:

1. What topics are undergraduate students discussing with their parent(s)?

2. How frequently are undergraduate students communicating with their parent(s)?

3. Who initiated the student-parent conversation, students or parent(s)?

4. What methods are undergraduate students and their parent(s) using to communicate with each other?

5. Do the topics, frequency, and methods of communication in student-parent relationships differ by race, gender, and age?

6. How satisfied are students with their parent-student communication?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, *parent(s)* is defined as biological or adoptive mothers or fathers, as well as a person that has taken on the role of legal guardian. *Student-parent communication* is defined by any verbal or written interaction between students and their parent(s). Verbal and written interaction can occur in-person, over the phone, through text message, email, postal mail, instant messenger, networking sites, and blogging. *Frequency of communication* is defined as the number of times per week a student and his or her parent(s) communicate.

Significance and Usefulness of Study

The data collected from this study will be useful because of the increased parental involvement within college campuses. Although universities are noticing a trend in more parent-student communication and involvement, little is known about what areas parent(s) are actually involved in or which topics are actually being discussed (Hofer & Kennedy, 2006; Trice, 2002). Additionally, there is little research on the frequency of parent-student communication and whether the students or parents are initiating these conversations (Hofer & Kennedy). Understanding what topics are actually discussed between parent(s) and students will help various university officials in orientation, residence life, career centers, and faculty prepare useful programming, orientation sessions, newsletters, and information.

Knowing the descriptive qualities of parent-student communication, such as topics discussed, frequency, and methods used, will hopefully assist in contributing to a solid foundation of knowledge surrounding the increasing involvement of parents. Colleges and universities will be able to use these data in numerous ways to enhance programming, change policy, and revamp partnerships with parents to reach students in new and innovative ways. This study will help university administrators, staff, and faculty to know where student-parent dialogue may be needed. In understanding which topics are not frequently discussed, colleges and universities can encourage parents and students to initiate these conversations prior to college and during the college years. By examining the various topics, frequency, initiation, and means of communication by race, gender, and age, college administrators, staff, and faculty will better understand their various student populations and how to approach or assist students with issues.

Since it is believed that increased parental involvement is related to the shift in demographics, it's critical to learn more about parent and student communication as Millennials will be the dominating population for the next 15-20-years (Howe & Strauss, 2000). To better understand today's students and parents, it is important to further examine existing literature that addresses the historical role of parents and students in higher education, as well as parent-child relationships. The following chapter will review relevant literature.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter reviews the literature on student-parent relationships. It addresses the historical role of colleges in student-parent relationships, the current legislation that affects parental involvement, and today's millennial student population. It also provides two theoretical frameworks by looking at attachment theory and parenting styles, as these two theories are often referenced in studies on student-parent relationships. The literature review will examine parental involvement and college adjustment, topics discussed by students and parents, and the frequency of student-parent communication and the role of technology.

In Loco Parentis

In the Colonial Period, students matriculating into higher education found themselves dealing with in loco parentis (Thelin, 2003). During this time, students were seen as immature adolescents that needed supervision, counsel, and guidance (Nuss, 2003). While students were at school, parents trusted the colleges and universities to play the role as parent. Thus, administrators and faculty served as *sere gate parents* who made and enforced rules, policies and regulations. Faculty were able to use the dormitory settings to exercise supervision and parental concern for their students (Nuss). As a type of discipline, in loco parentis was considered paternalistic, strict, and authoritarian (Nuss).

In the late 1950s and early 1960s, in loco parentis was challenged by concerns over civil liberties of college students (Nuss, 2003). Finally in the early 1960s, in loco parentis was abolished and the Supreme Court recognized that for the most part, students

above the age of 18 are legal adults and do not have to abandon their constitutional rights by accepting student status (Nuss). In 1961, Dixon v. Alabama State Board of Education declared that the due process requires notice and some opportunity for a hearing before students at a tax-supported university can be expelled for misconduct (Nuss). From that point forward, student affairs professionals were seen more as educators rather than parents or disciplinarians and students were seen more as young adults. One of the ironies of this new parental involvement and student-parent communication is that parents of today's college students were members of the generation that helped to usher in the end of in loco parentis on campus (Shapiro, 2002). Following the end of in loco parentis came The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

In 1974, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), also known as the Buckley Amendment, was developed to protect student educational records (Barr, 2003, U.S. Department of Education, 2002). FERPA applies to any public or private educational agency or institution that receives federal funding (Barr). As a result, institutions cannot release any records or files without written consent. If someone needs information to be released, the request must include the reason for the release and the parties to whom the records may be released. College students are legally considered adults, therefore, colleges and universities may not release any of their educational records without their consent, not even to their parents.

However, there are exceptions to the rule of prior written consent. Schools may disclose directory information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, parents and

students can request that directory information not be disclosed. School officials with legitimate educational interest may access records. In situations concerning financial aid, appropriate parties may ask for student information. Additionally, schools may disclose student records to organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school and specified officials for audit or evaluative purposes. In emergency situations, appropriate officials may access personal student files. In the case of judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena, schools must disclose student records (Barr, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

In 1998, the Higher Education Amendments added a new exception, Parental Notification. Parents fought successfully for changes in FERPA so they can be notified of some student conduct issues (Wilson, 2004). Under Parental Notification, higher education institutions can disclose to a parent or legal guardian information regarding violation of any law or institutional rule or policy related to alcohol or drugs. This amendment applies to any student under the age of 21 and an institution is given the right to determine if the student is in violation of the rules of the institution (Barr, 2003). Parental involvement is encouraged further as policies allow schools to notify parents when their child has committed a drug or alcohol violation (Wilson). This change in FERPA, initiated by parents, helps to shed some light on the changing demographics of today's college students and their parents.

<center>*Millennials*</center>

Pop Culture Trends

Today's traditional-aged college students are called Millennials. They were born between the 1980s and the 2000s. Like any other generation before them, the Millennials

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grew up with a distinct pop culture that shapes who they are and the way they approach life. Perhaps the most important trend to note is the computer and technology that has been available to Millennials from the day they were born (Coomes, 2004). Although older Millennial students may not have grown up with regular Internet or email access, they did begin to use these advances regularly in their high school years. The majority of Millennials grew up with personal computers, Internet access, email addresses, and instant messenging [IM]. In addition to computers, there were also a number of gaming platforms that include: Super Nintendo, Gameboy, Sony Playstation, X-box, and Gamecube. When it came to movies and television, Millennials started off with videotapes but quickly moved into DVDs. In regards to music, there were cassette tapes, then CDs, and now MP3s. Many Millennials have always had technology readily available and as a result, today's college students have grown up with conflicting messages regarding downloading and copyright issues (Coomes). With the use of technology, there are related ethical issues that should be considered while student affairs professionals work with Millennial students.

Another pop culture trend that has influenced Millennial students is the notion of "Grrrl Power" (Coomes, 2004, p. 27). Millennials have grown up with images of strong, independent, and capable women. As consumers, girls grew up knowing and understanding that numerous companies marketed products for them; they grew up knowing and understanding that they are confident consumers. In the media, movies, and magazines, young girls are seeing and learning the importance of their voice (Coomes).

Perhaps the most common and popular trend to discuss is the ability for Millennials to "reach out and touch someone – constantly" (Coomes, 2004, p. 28).

Millennials drive the cell phone market, and in turn, companies provide trendy designer wraps, specialized ring tones, and camera phones. Millennials stay in virtual contact constantly by using email, IM, and cell phones. It is common to see college students walking around campus with their iPods, cell phones, PDAs or Blackberry's. To respond to the trends often related to Millennial students, universities come cable-ready and equipped with Internet connection (Coomes). In fact, many universities are going wireless so that students can access email and Internet anywhere on campus. Professors are learning to use more technology in the classroom and administrators and staff are expected to respond quickly to emails (Coomes). With technology to keep them connected, Millennials are used to immediate responses (Coomes).

Characteristics of Millennials

In addition to pop culture trends, Millennials also have a set of seven distinct characteristics that define their generation: special, sheltered, confident, conventional, team-oriented, achieving, and pressured (DeBard, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2003).

Special. Millennials grow up believing they are special; this is in response to their parents' attention. Millennials feel vital to their parents' sense of purpose (DeBard, 2004). Children grew up receiving trophies for participation rather than victory. As a civic generation, Millennials saw their coming of age as good and empowering, thus, they see themselves as special. They have high expectations and they're also able to meet high expectations (DeBard; Howe & Strauss, 2003).

Sheltered. In addition to feeling special, Millennials have been sheltered their whole lives. Parents of Millennials have sheltered their children from the moment they were born by posting "Baby on Board" signs and implementing child safety rules (Howe

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& Strauss, 2000). Millennials have been encouraged to follow the rules and they expect the rules to be clearly communicated and enforced. In the classroom, faculty are able to meet these expectations by providing a course syllabus that clearly states the assignments and projects for the semester. Parents of Millennials have organized their children's lives from childhood to young adulthood by choosing child care options, after school programs, music and dance lessons, arts programs, and sport practices (Howe & Strauss). Millennials grew up with structure, they expect structure, and they trust and count on authority.

Confident. After being sheltered and feeling special, Millennials are also confident (DeBard, 2004). They expect good news and are encouraged to believe in themselves. The messages about being special combined with awards and recognition for good work leads Millennials to have an optimistic view of their future. They are confident that they can meet and exceed the expectations set for them (DeBard). These expectations have been set by parents, by society, by peers, and by themselves.

Conventional. Millennials are perhaps one of the most conventional generations (DeBard, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000). They accept the social rules that have been imposed on them because the Baby Boomer parents who defined the rules have the resources to reward those students who follow and conform (DeBard; Howe & Strauss). Despite growing up in an era of "unconditional amnesty" (DeBard, p. 35), Baby Boomer parents promoted tougher policies in regards to school security, drug enforcement, issuing of driver's license, music labeling, and television ratings for content (Howe & Strauss; Wilson, 2004). The relationship between students and parents in this realm

follows a "do as we say, not as we did" mantra (Howe & Strauss). "Millennials have learned that one of the best ways of getting along is to go along" (DeBard, p. 37).

Team-oriented. One of the ways Millennials choose to "get along" is to work as a team. This generation enjoys congregating and they want to cooperate and be perceived as cooperative (DeBard, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000). They like to band in a collective action to join noble causes or to simply work on academic projects. However, Millennials prefer assignments and projects that are highly structured to avoid disappointment. With the imposition of rules and structure, Millennials are encouraged to comply rather than to take risks. By working in a group, Millennials feel there is less chance for individual failure. However, when group conflict emerges, Millennials want to know there is a safety net – a parent or authority figure who will help them deal with the difficulties or disagreements (DeBard).

Achieving. This generation of students has a need for achievement (DeBard, 2004). Millennials expect to receive high grades for compliance. In fact, they are happy to follow the rules as long as compliance is rewarded and those rewards are noted and clear beforehand. They expect to achieve their goals and strive to be the best. Millennials also have high respect for "heroes" in society and they make every effort to do the same (DeBard).

Pressured. Finally, it is no surprise that with all the rules, expectations, and hopes of achievement, Millennials are highly pressured (DeBard, 2004; Howe & Strauss, 2000). This generation feels pressure to perform excellently every time. Their Baby Boomer parents have pressured them as children to be the best they can be, partly because their achievement will be a reflection of the parenting (DeBard). Millennials rely on structure

and they trust their parents to lay the path to success. By respecting conformity and conventionality imposed by their parents, Millennials are able to relieve the pressure of having to be innovative (DeBard). Many Millennial students expect their parents to stay actively involved even into their college years (Wilson, 2004).

As a whole, Millennials are seen as optimistic, confident, and achievement-oriented generation. They are interested and engaged in civic issues and they strive to emulate their heroes (DeBard, 2004). By relying on their parents, they have been able to make it to college. Thus, is it any wonder why they continue to rely on their parents' advice and guidance? It is important to note that these characteristics are not indicative of every Millennial student. Different racial or ethnic groups may or may not value some of the characteristics that define Millennials. Additionally, students and parents from lower and working class families may not have had the exposure to pop culture, extracurricular activities, or technology quite like middle and upper class students; more research needs to be focused on these Millennial student populations. Although these descriptions help student affairs professionals to understand today's traditional-aged college student on a broad scale, practitioners should not rely solely on these characteristics and forget to listen to students. With some understanding of Millennials in college, it is important to understand where they came from and in the context of primary and secondary schools. The next section will briefly explore the K-12 educational culture between schools and parents.

K-12

While considering the characteristics of the Millennial generation, it is important to briefly note the culture and messages parents have been receiving throughout their

child's K-12 education. In general, parents of Millennials have been told from the very beginning that parental involvement is key to the success of their child (Kochlar-Bryant, 2002; Tinkler, 2002). Legislators, principals, and teachers alike believe that parent participation leads to higher academic achievement (Tinkler). For many schools, communication is seen as a two-way process and teachers believe parents' voices should be heard and valued (Tinkler).

These beliefs and messages are coming from a number of legislative acts regarding education and increased parental involvement (Kochlar-Bryant, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2001). While students of the Millennial generation have been in K-12 education, three important acts in particular have emphasized the need for parent participation: 1) Improving America's Schools Act of 1993, 2) Individuals with Education Act of 1997, and 3) No Child Left Behind 2001 (Kochlar-Bryant; Shartrand, Kreider, & Erikson-Warfield, 1994).

In the Improving America's Schools Act of 1993, there was a desire to improve and strengthen the relationships among parents and teachers (Kochlar-Bryant, 2002). For elementary and secondary institutions, "schools must see it as part of their job to supply [information] and to assist all parents in becoming partners in their children's education. Both schools and parents must be encouraged to reach out to each other, for the sake of children" (Shartrand, Kreider, & Erikson-Warfield, 1994). The message was clear, schools were to involve parents and to provide all necessary information regarding their student. In the Individuals with Education Act of 1997, the same point was conveyed; the amendments emphasized the "importance of parent-professional partnerships and the

relationship between parent/family participation in the educational service delivery and outcomes" (Kochlar-Bryant, p. 9).

Legislation regarding the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2001) further contributed to the culture of increased parental involvement. This act "set forth very specific expectations regarding school-family communication and engagement…" (Kochlar-Bryant, 2002, p. 9). Although No Child Left Behind covers a variety of standards, several requirements are directed specifically toward enhancing parental participation. These "requirements include the following:

1. Schools shall implement programs with meaningful consultation with parents

2. The local educational agency (LEA) shall develop jointly with, agree on with, and distribute to, parents of participating children a written parent involvement policy

6. Schools will provide parents a description and explanation of the curriculum in use at the school, the forms of academic assessment used to measure student progress, and the proficiency levels students are expected to meet

9. The school will describe how it will address the importance of communication between teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a minimum, parent-teacher conferences in elementary schools, at least annually, during which the compact shall be discussed as the compact relates to the individual child's achievement; frequent reports to parents on their children's progress; and reasonable access to staff, opportunities to volunteer and participate in their child's class, and observation of classroom activities" (Kochlar-Bryant, pp. 9-10).

As the government, along with K-12 educators continue to encourage increased parent participation, there is a need for a more defined idea of parental involvement (Kochlar-Bryant, 2002; Shartrand, Kreider, & Erikson-Warfield, 1994; Tinkler, 2002). However, it is difficult to define because views and definitions are culturally dependent (Tinkler). In primary and secondary institutions, there is a definite trend to move family relationships to a deeper, more meaningful collaboration (Kochlar-Bryant) and this means that administrators need to acquire the skills and competencies to partner and effectively work with parents. These skill sets translate into higher education and understanding the culture of K-12 education improves the understanding behind increased parental involvement at colleges and universities. Many K-12 institutions have even recommended the implementation of a Parent Coordinator position, parent newsletters, and activities geared specifically toward parents' interests (Tinkler, 2002). These strategies are similar to initiatives in higher education and serve to promote parental engagement. To better understand the developmental process for Millennials as they proceed through childhood and into college life, the following section will touch on Erikson's psychosocial development theory, specifically examining the importance of adolescent crises and growth.

Erickson's Psychosocial Development Theory

Erikson's Psychosocial Development theory stresses development throughout the lifespan and contains eight "crises" or stages (Corey, 2005). Erikson believed that as a person developed, they would encounter a number of crises or tuning points in one's life. At these points, a person had the potential to move forward and resolve the conflicts or to regress and fail to master the developmental task (Corey). Although Erikson focuses on

the entire lifespan, for the purposes of this study, only three stages will be examined: industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, and intimacy vs. isolation.

During primary and secondary school, children between the ages of six and 12 encounter the psychosocial crises of industry vs. inferiority. While children are still developing their gender-role identities, this time is primarily spent achieving competence. Children in this stage are faced with the dilemma of learning basic tasks to succeed in school, or failing to do so and feeling inadequate (Corey, 2005). While parents typically play a major role in children's lives at this point, the psychosocial crisis must be resolved by the child in order for development to occur.

As children continue to get older and reach adolescence, the next stage of development is identity vs. role confusion. Between the ages of 12 and 18, children are transitioning between childhood and adulthood and begin to ask the question "Who am I?" This time is spent testing limits, roles, sexual identity, and ideals (Corey, 2005). Although this may vary depending on culture, ethnicity, or race, many adolescents begin breaking dependent ties to parents. The major goal of this stage is to achieve a clear sense of self, life goals, and life's meaning. Failure to do so will result in role confusion and will affect an individuals' ability to develop meaningful friendships (Corey).

Following this attempt to define one's role in life, adults face the challenge of intimacy vs. isolation. Adults in this stage are asking, "Who can I count on? And who can count on me?" (V.S. Boyd, personal communication, January 19, 2007). For a young adult, this may be the first chance to experience true intimacy, the type of intimacy needed for a long-term romantic relationship. The primary goal in this psychosocial

crises is to form intimate relationships and failure to do so will result in feelings of alienation and isolation (Corey, 2005).

A common thread throughout Erikson's theory is the notion of parental or guardian support in the earlier stages of life and a slow detachment as an individual grows older and begins to develop his or her own sense of self (Corey, 2005). By understanding psychosocial development, college administrators and staff are able to ask students the necessary questions to promote growth and development. During times of struggle, student affairs professionals could consider asking students: Do you depend on your parents? Have you learned to depend on yourself? Who else can I depend on besides my parents? Who will be there for me? How can I trust and open myself up to the possibility of pain or hurt? When I have a problem, who will I go to? Who should I go to? These are all questions that help both parties to build understanding of the issues and concerns surrounding college student development and the role of parental involvement. The subsequent section will discuss attachment theory and parenting styles, as these two theoretical frameworks are frequently referenced in the literature on student-parent communication and relationships. These two theories will provide an additional foundation in understanding student-parent relationships from childhood to young adulthood.

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is concerned with the role of enduring attachments in shaping the life course (Lopez, 1995) and childhood attachments remain valid constructs for college students transitioning into a new phase (Kenny, 1990). Ainsworth (1987) is responsible for the concept of an attachment figure as a secure base for an infant to

explore the world (Bretherton, 1992). As a result of her "strange situation" experiment,

Ainsworth developed three principal styles of attachment (Lopez). A fourth style was

later added by Main in 1985 (Lopez). The first style of attachment is secure; this is where

the infant experiences the caregiver as accessible and responsive. The secure base

supports exploratory behavior and helps the infant to form an internal working model of

the self as worthy and competent, while viewing others as responsive and dependable

(Ainsworth, 1987; Lopez, 1995). Secure attachment fosters autonomy (Kenny, 1987) and

"college students classified as secure report less distress and higher levels of social

support and are viewed by their peers as more ego-resilient, less anxious, and less

hostile" (Lopez, p. 404). Additionally, "secure adults make more appropriate use of self-

disclosure, reflective and empathic listening, and cooperative problem-solving strategies"

(Lopez, p. 404).

The second style of attachment is anxious-ambivalent; this is where the infant

experiences the caregiver as inconsistently responsive and helpful. The unpredictability

of love and support helps the child to form an internal working model of the self as

uncertain and fearful, while viewing others as potentially affirming yet unreliable

(Ainsworth, 1987; Lopez, 1995). Although most literature focuses on the benefits of a

child being secure, it could be predicted that an anxious-ambivalent child may have

difficulty in developing meaningful relationships or positive self-concept. The third style

of attachment is avoidant; this is where the infant attempts to solicit the caregiver's

protection, support and care, but is consistently rebuffed or rejected. This type of

behavior leads the child to develop an internal working model of the self as essentially

alone and unwanted, while viewing others as rejecting and untrustworthy (Ainsworth;

Lopez). In later years, Main added a fourth style of attachment, known as disorganized/disoriented (Lopez). These infants exhibited erratic combinations of avoidant and anxious responses, and Main found that the parents were often psychiatrically distressed (Lopez).

Attachment theorists believe that these various styles of attachment play out into the later years of life. In 1991, Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) developed four styles of adult attachment. Their first style is secure; this is a person with a positive view of themselves and of others. Clearly this style parallels the secure infant type. Their second style is preoccupied; this is a person with a negative view of self, but a positive view of others. Bartholomew and Horowitz (as cited in Lopez) felt this style may parallel the anxious-ambivalent attachment type. The third style is dismissing; this person would have a positive view of self, and a negative view of others. A dismissing person may have been an avoidant infant. Finally, the fourth style is fearful; a person who has a negative view of both self and others. This may parallel the disorganized/disoriented attachment type.

Seeing that attachment theory holds valid throughout the lifespan, college administrators and staff can use this knowledge to understand today's student-parent relationships and communication. Understanding parent-child attachment sheds light on why some students still feel a strong need to communicate with their parents on a regular basis. In addition to parent-child attachment, different parenting styles help to explain why some students feel more comfortable taking initiative, exploring options, taking on responsibility, and achieve high levels of competence. It is believed that parenting styles

contribute to student adjustment, self-development, and social development (Baumrind, 1991; Kim & Chung, 2003).

Parenting Styles

Baumrind (1971) labeled three types of parenting styles, finding that parental behavior and interaction elicited different outcomes for children. Parenting styles are determined by the amount of nurturance in child-rearing interactions and the amount of parental control over the child's activities and behaviors (Baumrind, 1991; Kim & Chung, 2003; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McHenry, 2000). The first is an authoritative parenting style where there is parental acceptance, autonomy granting, and behavioral control. Authoritative parents exhibit high levels of responsiveness and controlling behavior, while respecting their child's individuality. The environment is consistent, affectionate, responsive and supportive, which allows children of authoritative parents to have the highest levels of competence, achievement, social development and self-perception (Kim & Chung). Authoritative parents are careful to be controlling in an age-appropriate manner and to "balance between demands with explanations for standards of behaviors and warmth" (Kim & Chung, p. 482). An authoritative parenting style encourages student to feel confident and to feel prepared to take advantage of a wide variety of intellectually stimulating and demanding contexts (Strage & Brandt, 1999).

The second parenting style is authoritarian; this is where the parent is showing high levels of controlling behavior but low levels of responsiveness. An authoritarian parent likes to have firm control and strict standards of conduct, they expect absolute obedience and deference from their child. This type of parenting style allows for minimal personal freedom and autonomy, and provides little emotional warmth and

responsiveness to the child. Children of authoritarian parents often have low levels of school misconduct, drug use, and are obedient, but they also suffer from low achievement, poor self-perception, and high levels of psychological and somatic distress (Kim & Chung, 2003).

The third style is permissive parenting, which can be viewed as permissive non-directive or rejecting-neglecting. A permissive parent exerts minimal authority and control, failing to define appropriate limits and standards of acceptable behavior for one's child. Permissive-nondirective parents are responsive and warm, while a rejecting-neglecting parent is not responsive or demanding. Children of permissive parents tend to have poor academic competence and achievement, high involvement in delinquency, and low psychological functioning (Kim & Chung, 2003). Unfortunately, children of rejecting-neglecting parents tend to have the poorest developmental outcome (Kim & Chung). Although parenting styles have been researched and referenced in numerous studies (Baumrind, 1971, 1991; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McHenry, 2000; Kim & Chung, 2003; Strage & Brandt, 1991), these tendencies are generalizations that may not always apply to each and every parent-child relationship.

As further literature is examined, it will be clear that attachment theory and parenting styles are paramount to understanding the following studies on student-parent communication in a variety of populations. Although attachment theory and parenting styles provide frameworks for understanding student-parent relationships and communication patterns, it is important to consider additional identities such as race, gender, and socioeconomic status. These identities in combination with unique personalities add complexity to each relationship. While this study does not attempt to

measure college student attachment style or parenting style, these theories provide a context with which to comprehend parental involvement. Attachment theory and parenting styles play an integral role in understanding the amount of support and challenge present in *parent-child* relationships and how that later affects *student-parent* communication in the college environment.

<div align="center">*Parental Communication and College Adjustment*</div>

The parental communication literature will first be viewed in relation to undergraduates, more specifically first year students, senior students, women students, and students of different races or ethnicities. One way of viewing family environments is to consider the controlling and supportive messages passed between parents and children (Ritchie & Fitzpatrick, 1990). Each member of the family has standards for how messages will be communicated and when those standards are not met, people tend to be dissatisfied with the family relationship (Caughlin, 2003). Caughlin found that expressiveness and openness were both seen as positively relating to family satisfaction and communication. Undergraduate students develop best when their needs are met through mutually supportive interactions with their parents (Birch, O'Toole, & Kanu, 1997). The themes revolving around control, support, expressiveness, and openness are evident in the previous theoretical frameworks and will continue to illustrate importance in the literature reviewed.

Undergraduates

Kenny and Donaldson (1991) believe it is important to view individuals in the context of a family unit. While studying undergraduates, Lapsley, Rice, and Fitzgerald

(1990) found that adolescents with strong parental support adjust better than insecurely attached individuals. Adolescent identity was sensitive to parenting style and family communication patterns (Lapsley et al.; Caughlin, 2003). Students who were securely attached and sought more parental support were better adjusted psychologically (Kenny & Donaldson).

First-Year Students

In looking at how parental attachment and family structure explains psychological well-being during freshman year of college, Kenny and Donaldson (1991) found that first year college women obtained emotional support from an attachment figure when it was related to social competence and resulted in a decrease of stress. There's an importance in obtaining connectedness, while still fostering individual growth between parents and student (Kenny & Donaldson). Parental involvement was found to be most helpful in late adolescence when the family structure supports individuation. "The family can serve as an important social support for the individual" (Taub, 1997, p. 645) and parental involvement can have a positive relationship with adjustment to college (Wintre & Yaffe, 2000).

Senior Students

While most research on parental attachment and family support has focused on first-year students and their transition to college, Taub (1997) realized there was little research on parents and family beyond the first year. In response, Taub conducted a study looking at the responses of students based on their class year. Considering the developmental demands of the college years, students require different kinds of support,

such as social and academic support their freshman year and career support and advice their senior year (Kenny, 1990). Similarly, Taub's study revealed that although autonomy did increase significantly with class year, parental attachment did not decrease significantly. This may support Kenny's claim that as students head into their senior year, they still look for parental support, just in different areas.

Women and Men Students

College women, of any year, tend to be more connected and closely attached to their loved ones than their male peers (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Taub, 1995, 1997; Manttanah, Hancock, & Brand, 2004; Mueller & Powers, 1990). Females develop through attachments and relationships, especially with parents (Kenny & Donaldson; Samuolis, Layburn, & Schiaffino, 2001). Taub's study shows "that women students experience emotional independence from peers prior to emotional independence from parents in their achievement of autonomy" (p. 651). Women tend to value more open and ongoing discussion with parents about the university, while males value mutual reciprocity of respect (Wintre & Yaffe, 2000). In general, "women who described themselves as more attached to their parents also reported higher levels of social competence and psychological well-being" (Kenny & Donaldson, p. 484). As psychosocial development is discussed later in this paper, it will be important to remember that women and men may vary on their level of attachment (Kenny & Donaldson; Taub).

Race/Ethnicity

The role of parental involvement is different across cultures and therefore important to consider. Significance of family support and parental attachment has primarily been studied in White populations (Henton, Lamke, Murphy, & Haynes, 1980; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Taub, 1997). Cultural differences (Taub) play a role in how students interact with parents and more importantly, how students respond or view their relationship with family. White women, Latinas, and African American women felt that their parents fostered and supported the growth of autonomy more than Asian American women (Taub). More research is needed to explore different generations, as families that have been in the US longer might reflect a more "dominant culture" model of family support and parental attachment whereas foreign-born or first-generation parents might reflect a different pattern or patterns (Taub).

Kim and Chung's (2003) noted that parenting styles may have a different meaning for Asian students; in western countries, strict conduct and authoritarian behaviors may seem like there is a lack of love, however, Asian students may understand the strict rules to mean care, respect, and affection. In Tang's (2002) study of parental involvement and career development in Asian students, he found that parental influence was evident and strong for Asian American and Chinese students in their actual career choices. Additionally, Asian American students tended to comply with their parents' preferences not only because of traditional values (e.g., filial piety) but also because of the responsibility to shoulder parents' expectation that the child will bring fame to the family (Tang). In studying Asian American students, it is critical to note that these students are

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not homogenous, and more research is needed on the various sub-groups: Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Malaysian, and Cambodian (Kim & Chung).

When understanding parental involvement, practitioners must remember cultural differences among students. More research needs to be done on students of color, international students, and other marginalized groups, particularly in relation to student-parent communication. Additional research could help practitioners and educators to better understand the dynamics, constructs, and issues surrounding non-White Millennial students.

Balance of Parental Involvement and Student Autonomy

Contrary to the theories that support close family ties, Erikson and Chickering originally felt that severing parental ties indicated "competent" adult status (Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russel, 1994). Although Chickering (Chickering & Reisser, 1993) has since revised his original theory of psychosocial development, current literature and media would have us believe that parents need to be kept at arm's length, especially in the university setting (Pope, 2005). Schwartz and Buboltz (2004) investigated the relationship between attachment to parents and psychological separation in college students. They found that for students to separate successfully, individuals may have to establish trust with peers and decrease trust with parents. Although it is important to note the benefits of parental involvement, it is also essential to understand that excessive amounts of perceived emotional support from parents may inhibit the development of autonomy in college students (Taub, 1995). Students who received too much protection from parents had a more difficult time adjusting to college (Orrego & Rodriguez, 2001). There is a balance between support and "…parent-child over-

involvement…which was found to be related to college student depression" (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991, p. 480). Connectedness between parents and children, as well as individuation, is critical for adaptive functioning and student development (Kenny & Donaldson).

<div align="center">*Topics Discussed by Students and Parents*</div>

In addition to examining the literature on attachment and parenting styles in relation to college adjustment, it is also informative to understand what topics students and parents are discussing and how frequent conversations may affect student behavior. In looking at the student-parent communication literature, several topics were repeatedly studied. This section will address the student-parent communication in areas of health, including alcohol and sex behaviors, academics, and finances.

Health

Birch, O'Toole, and Kanu (1997) surveyed students from five universities to gain their perspectives on health discussions with parents and to learn what topics were most important in promoting student health. Fifty-six percent of students believed that health discussions are important in promoting their own health. Students reported the following as the most important topics to discuss with parents: a) sex, b) drugs, c) alcohol, and d) HIV/AIDS. University and college educators can promote and encourage better student-parent discussions by implementing programs where parents can be honest and students can be treated as adults (Birch et al.).

Alcohol. Numerous researchers have studied the relationship between parental communication and alcohol knowledge and use (Baumrind, 1991; Booth-Butterfield &

Sidelinger, 1998; Brody, Flor, Hollet-Wright, & McCoy, 1998; Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Reifman, Barnes, Dintcheff, Farrell, & Uhteg, 1998). In relation to parenting style, students with authoritative parents were least likely to have drug problems and most likely to achieve optimal competence. Optimal competence was viewed as a balance of agency and communion, agency being a drive for independence and communion as a sense of feeling included and connected (Baumrind). Authoritative families were able to shield their students from risk-taking behaviors without losing assertiveness and optimism like those in authoritarian families (Baumrind). Authoritative parenting was defined as high in responsiveness and demandingness (Baumrind), and frequent, bi-directional parent-child discussions led to lower alcohol use (Brody et al.).

In addition to communication, Reifman, Barnes, Dintcheff, Farrell, and Uhteg (1998) studied parental and peer influences on adolescent drinking. They examined how parents and peers affect adolescent drinking through two types of social influence: modeling and social control. Deakin and Cohen (1986) also looked at parental modeling as a predictor for adolescent drinking behavior. Although parental modeling sometimes led to mixed messages, parental monitoring and control was an important factor in deterring heavy drinking (Reifman et al.). Enhancing parent-child communication is a good intervention, but knowing where and how adolescents spent their free time is key (Reifman et al.).

The more communication between parents and students, the more likely students acted safely in regards to alcohol (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998). Discussion between parent and child, where input was mutual, allows the child to take ownership rather than feel like rules were externally imposed (Brody, Flor, Hollett-Wright, &

McCoy, 1998). It is important to note that parents had an inaccurate view of college drinking and many parents expected college officials to monitor and enforce the drinking laws – reminiscent of the days of in loco parentis (Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Nuss, 2003). Parents' lack of knowledge could indicate minimal student-parent communication, and as indicated, this communication is vital in influencing students' alcohol use (Baumrind, 1991; Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger; Brody et al.; Deakin & Cohen; Reifman, Barnes, Dintcheff, Farrell, & Uhteg, 1998).

Sexual behavior. Parent-student communication in relation to safer sex behaviors among college students have also been widely studied (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Lehr, Dolorio, Dudley, & Lipana, 2000; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Rafaeeli & Green, 2003). Mueller and Powers specifically looked at the parental communication style in sex discussions and its influence on student sexual behavior. There was a significant relationship between communication styles and sexual activity, contraceptive use, and accuracy of knowledge. Friendly, attentive, and open communication styles resulted in lower numbers of sexual activity and higher contraceptive use in college (Mueller & Powers). Open communication between parents and students led to increased discussion, even with risky topics, such as sexual behavior (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger; Mueller & Powers).

Race and gender were also important factors that influenced sexual behaviors (Lehr, Dilorio, Dudley, & Lipana, 2000). For White students, the relationship between mother-adolescent communication and age of initiation of sexual intercourse may be curvilinear, thus, students who reported the most open and the least open were most likely to initiate sex at an earlier age (Lehr et al.). Latino parents discussed sex-related

topics less than other ethnic groups and within the Latino community, relationships and values were discussed more frequently than protection and facts (Rafaeeli & Green, 2003). Interestingly, females typically knew more accurate sex information than their male counterparts. Perhaps this is a result of females engaging in more discussions with their parents than males (Mueller & Powers, 1990; Mattanah, Hancock, & Brand, 2004). Adolescents typically wanted sex information sooner than parents thought and females typically wanted more psychological information while males wanted more factual information (Mueller & Powers).

Overall, increased communication between parents and students, led to safer sex practices in college students (Booth-Butterfield & Sidlinger, 1998). The more open and reciprocal the communication, the more likely parents and student shared similar attitudes toward sex. Parents typically viewed communication to be more open than students, thus it is crucial to consider students' perceptions (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger). As noted with alcohol-related discussions, students who engaged in sex-related conversations with their parents were less likely to participate in risky sexual behavior and were more likely to use contraceptives (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger; Lehr, Dolorio, Dudley, & Lipana, 2000; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Rafaeeli & Green, 2003).

Academics

Based on Baumrind's (1971) work on parenting styles, Strage and Brandt (1999) studied authoritative parenting and academic adjustment and success in college students. The results of this study indicated that parenting style did hold valid constructs for college students. Authoritative parenting produced the most instrumentally competent students. Authoritative parenting directed students to gain a mastery orientation, which in

American institutions, lead to success in school (Strage & Brandt). The more autonomy, demands, and supports a parent provided, the more confident, persistent, and positively oriented were the students (Strage & Brandt; Strage, 2000). More importantly, students whose parents believed in their competence and expressed their support, performed better in school (Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russell, 1994). The relationship between parent characteristics and student outcomes was strong whether the student lived at home or not. However, the relationship between students and parents and college adjustment was strongest in the younger, freshman years and weaker during their senior years (Strage & Brandt).

Strage (2000) studied parenting practices and academic adjustment in relation to Asian, Hispanic, and White students. Since most research is done on White, middle-class, traditional-aged students, this study attempted to expand the research on different ethnic groups. White and Hispanic students were more likely to have authoritative parents than Asian students. Authoritative parenting provided students with more support and openness. Similar to her previous study, the more autonomy parents granted students, the better they performed in school (Strage).

Like other studies on student-parent communication, women students frequently reported higher levels of communication with mothers than men students (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991, 1992; Manttanah, Hancock, & Brand, 2004; Mueller & Powers, 1990). Women reported better academic adjustment than men, however, men reported better personal-emotional adjustment than women (Manttanah et al.). Despite the differences in adjustment area, both men and women needed healthy secure relationships to develop and adjust positively in college. "This study supports that a healthy level of secure

attachment and separation-individuation are predictive of positive academic, social, and personal-emotional adjustment in college" (Mantannah et al., p. 14). Although some of this research has examined various races and genders, more research could be done to explore more diverse socio-economic samples, as well as, considering interdependence and collectivism as valid constructs in college adjustment.

Finances

Another area of conversation for parents and students is finances and credit card knowledge. College students have low financial literacy and in the College Parents of America survey, 61% of parents expected finances to be the topic they would need to advise their child on most. Two studies have examined the relationship between college student credit card use and the role of parental involvement (Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001; Joo, Grable, & Bagwell, 2003). The researchers believed parental involvement was critical to student consumer socialization and at the time, little was known about parental involvement and college student credit card usage (Palmer et al.). They found that parents who served as co-obligors (co-signer on a credit card) led to lower credit card debt. On the other hand, parents who provided post-[credit card] acquisition financial support led to students with higher credit card debt (Palmer et al.) Students who knew their parents would bail them out of trouble were less likely to care about their debt and more likely to rack up a hefty balance. Pre-acquisition parental involvement discussions and parental behavior often assisted in lowering overall credit card debt (Joo et al.; Palmer et al.).

Pinto, Parente, and Mansfield (2005) took the research one step further and examined credit information provided by four socialization agents and the relationship between the socialization agents and the credit card usage of college students. The four

socialization agents included parents, peers, media, and schools. The results indicated that parents were the only statistically significant socialization agent (Pinto et al.). The more information students received from their parents, the lower the balance on student credit cards. Parents influenced students by allowing them to observe their own behavior, by interacting in the marketplace, and providing information. Pinto and colleagues mentioned that in 1974, Ward identified several learning mechanisms used to teach which included giving lectures, discussions about consumer behavior, prohibiting certain acts, serving as an example, and allowing children to learn from his or her own experiences. However, Ward's study does not specify the primary mode of communication (Pinto et al.). Like the studies on health, alcohol, sex, and academics, the more parents and students communicated, the more likely students would engage in safe behaviors and adjust better in college. Several articles (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Brody, Flor, Hollett-Wright, & McCoy, 1998; Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russell, 1994; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001; Pinto, Parente, & Mansfield, 2005; Reifman, Barnes, Dintcheff, Farrell, & Uhteg, 1998; Wintre & Yaffe, 2000) noted the importance of increased discussion between students and parents and the next section will review the frequency of student-parent communication and the role of technology.

Frequency of Student-Parent Communication and Technology Used

Before the regular use of cell phones, email, and IM, Noller and Bagi (1985) examined parent-adolescent communication across six process dimensions – frequency, initiation, self-disclosure, recognition, domination, satisfaction – and across 14 content areas. The 14 content areas included: social issues, interests, sex roles, sex roles in the family,

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philosophy of man, family philosophy of man, rules of society, relationships, sex attitudes, politics, sex information, problems of sexuality, general problems, and future plans. With both parents, adolescents mostly discussed interests, future plans, and general problems. These topics yielded the highest levels of self-disclosure and recognition. Adolescents initiated conversation, dominated and were most satisfied in these areas (Noller & Bagi). On the contrary, adolescents were least likely to discuss sex problems and information.

With regards to each parent, adolescents were more likely to discuss general problems, future plans, and politics with their fathers. These topics were typically initiated and dominated by the fathers (Noller & Bagi, 1985). There were also sex differences in family communication with regards to frequency of communication and the amount of self-disclosure. Women talked to mothers more frequently about sex attitudes and relationships than men. In general, women felt more comfortable disclosing about interests, family sex roles, relationships, sex information, sex problems, and general problems than their men counterparts (Noller & Bagi). Although Noller and Bagi mention the frequency of communication, the exact number of discussions were not revealed in the study.

Trice (2002) actually conducted a study to understand how new technology, specifically email, affected student communication with parents, particularly in times of stress. The sample used for Trice's study consisted of 48 first-year students (24 men and 24 women) enrolled in 100-level psychology courses at a mid-Atlantic state university. All participants were first semester freshman whose homes were more than two hours

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from campus, were 18 or 19 years old, were living away from home for the first time, and their parents had access to email.

After an initial orientation, participants completed Buri's Parental Authority Questionnaire which determined parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative, permissive) for each students' parents. Participants were required to engage in three activities over the course of the semester. First, participants were asked to make copies of all email they sent during a Monday through Friday period on two occasions; the first occasion being a "high stress" week – characterized by a midterm exams or freshman course registration, and the second occasion being a "low stress" week. Second, participants were asked to "edit their emails in the following ways: 1) to code their email with a participant identification number rather than their names; 2) to capture their email messages so that no names or email addresses of the recipients were present; 3) to remove specific names of individuals discussed in the text; and 4) to edit any other content they felt was private" (Trice, 2002, p. 3). The only emails analyzed were emails to parents. Finally, on the Monday following a recording week, students were asked to indicate any phone, visitation, or written letter communication with their parents, siblings, or friends from high school and participants were asked to complete two short stress measures. The first measure consisted of a global rating of weekly stress and the second measure asked the students to indicate the number of stressors they experienced (Trice).

After collecting email correspondence, Trice (2002) coded email messages for "six content areas: 1) statement of an academic problem; 2) statement of a social problem; 3) statement of a financial problem; 4) request for academic advice; 5) requests

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for social advice; and 6) requests for financial advice or assistance" (Trice, p. 4). Trice

felt it was important to separate statements of problems and requests for advice as these

differences determined which students were sharing concerns and which were asking for

parental help. Each email was coded by two raters and of the 579 messages, 569 received

exact agreement between both raters. The 10 disagreements were resolved by conference

and typically the problem was an indirect request for help that was coded differently

depending on the rater. In the end, those cases were scored as a request for help.

Trice (2002) found that students did in fact, contact home more in times of stress

(e.g. midterms and finals). While there were no differences in contact home by student

gender, students from authoritative parents made more contact with their parents than

students from authoritarian or permissive families. Students of authoritative families were

more likely to share with their parents while students from authoritarian families asked

for more advice on social and academic issues (Trice). The development of email

increased communication between parents and students. Trice states that before email,

students and parents typically made contact twice a week. With more access to

technology, students contacted their parents an average of six times a week via email and

twice a week via phone (Trice).

Although Trice's study reveals information about the exact frequency and type of

communication students had with parents, he did not specify if the phone used was a cell

phone or a dorm/apartment phone, which would have provided additional information

about another form of technology that is commonly used by Millennial college students.

The sample in this study was fairly homogenous and it would have been interesting to see

if there were differences in frequency or type of communication in regards to race,

gender, or age. Additionally, he did not examine a wide range of topics discussed with parents or other means of communication. Despite the limitations, Trice's article provides preliminary information on today's students and parents.

Summary

The existing literature shows that an extensive amount of research has been conducted on student-parent relationships in regards to parental attachment and parenting styles. These theories hold valid for college students and it is evident in numerous studies (Baumrind, 1991; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Rafaeeli & Green, 2003; Strage & Brandt, 1999; Strage, 2000; Taub, 1995, 1997) that securely attached students and students raised in authoritative families typically engage in more positive behaviors. These students are more comfortable discussing issues such as health, alcohol, sex, academics, and finances with their parents and hold an optimistic view of their relationships. The literature highlighted in this chapter reveals that more frequent communication between parents and students led to better adjusted students (Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Brody, Flor, Hollett-Wright, & McCoy, 1998; Cutrona, Cole, Colangelo, Assouline, & Russell, 1994; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001; Pinto, Parente, & Mansfield, 2005; Reifman, Barnes, Dintcheff, Farrell, & Uhteg, 1998; Wintre & Yaffe, 2000). Trice's (2002) research on email technology and student-parent communication provides a foundation for student affairs professionals to understand this new phenomenon of "helicopter parents" (Pope, 2005, para. 1) and Millennial students (Howe & Strauss, 2000).

This study attempts to contribute concrete, descriptive data regarding student-parent relationships and the communication patterns between students and their parents.

The next chapter highlights the methodology that will be used to collect and analyze this

data.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design, sample, instrumentation, procedures, and statistical analyses of the study.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine student-parent relationships by understanding the communication patterns between undergraduate students and their parents. This descriptive study investigated the following six research questions. Six independent hypotheses were used to address Research Question 5.

Research Question 1: What topics are undergraduate students discussing with their parent(s)?

Research Question 2: How frequently are undergraduate students communicating with their parent(s)?

Research Question 3: Who initiated the student-parent conversation, students or parent(s)?

Research Question 4: What methods are undergraduate students and their parents using to communicate with each other?

Research Question 5: Do the topics, frequency, and methods of communication in student-parent relationships differ by race, gender, and age?

Hypothesis 1: The topics that students ask their parents for advice on do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Hypothesis 2: The topics that students share with their parents do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Hypothesis 3: The frequency of student-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age.

Hypothesis 4: The frequency of parent-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age.

Hypothesis 5: The methods used by students to communicate with their parents do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Hypothesis 6: The methods used by parents to communicate with their students do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Research Question 6: How satisfied are students with their parent-student communication?

Research Design

The research for this study was a non-experimental, survey design. This investigation relied on descriptive statistics, independent samples *t* tests, ANOVAs, and chi-square analyses to answer the above research questions and describe the communication patterns of students and their parent(s). Continuous data were summarized using measures of central tendency including mean, median, and mode. Additionally, percentages were computed directly from raw scores to provide information on categorical data. After determining the topics, frequency, initiation, and means of communication in student-parent relationships, chi-square analyses, ANOVAs, and *t* tests were conducted to compare whether the differences among several groups were statistically significant: racial/ethnic groups, women and men, and students of different ages.

Sample

This study sampled 3000 undergraduate students of the 25,000 undergraduate college students between the ages of 18 and 24 at a large research university located in the Mid-Atlantic region. A proportional, stratified by race/ethnicity sampling strategy of undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24 were employed to better represent students in racial and ethnic minority groups. The stratified random sample consisted of 581 African American/Black students, 581 Asian American/Pacific Islander students, 580 Caucasian/White students, 581 Hispanic/Latino students, 580 "Unknown" students, and all Native American/American Indian students ($n = 97$).

Participants

A total of 570 students responded, although 31 respondents did not answer any questions after the informed consent form; therefore their data were discarded leaving 539 cases for analysis and a response rate of 17.9%. Although Caucasian/White students were only 19.3% of the 3000 students sampled, 175 responded to represent 34.2% of the participants. Asian American/Pacific Islander students were 19.4% of the total sample and 21.9% of the respondents in this study ($n = 112$). African American/Black students and Hispanic/Latino students each represented 19.4% of the total sample, and both groups represented only 13.7% of the respondents respectively ($n = 70$). Of the 3000 students sampled, 19.3% were identified as race "Unknown" students in the institutional database, however, in this study, 36 self-reported as Multiracial/Multiethnic (7.0%), 22 self-reported as Middle Eastern (4.3%), and 23 self-identified as "Other" (4.5%) for a total of 15.8% of the respondents in this study. The entire population of Native American students represented 3.2% of the total sample, but only 0.8% of the participants in this

study ($n = 4$). Twenty-seven respondents did not report their race. Based on this information, it is important to note that the participant responses were disproportionate to the sample as students of color are underrepresented and Caucasian/White students are overrepresented in this study.

Additionally, 331 of the respondents were women (64.5%) while 182 of the respondents were men (35.5%). Twenty-six respondents did not report their gender. Three hundred fifty-four of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 20-years old (69.0%) while 159 of the respondents were between the ages of 21 and 24 (31.0%). Twenty-six respondents did not report their age. Ages were collapsed into two groups for the following reasons: 1) 21 is considered the legal drinking age, 2) the researcher made the assumption that age correlated with academic class level, which may indicate that students in either age group (18-20 or 21-24) would be focused on different issues and communicate with parents differently, and 3) previous research on freshmen (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991) and seniors (Taub, 1997) suggests that it may be important to have freshmen in one group and seniors in another group as there may be distinct differences in their communication patterns (Table 3.1). It is also important to note that respondents with missing demographic information were used in other computations except those related to race, gender, and age.

Table 3.1

Demographics of Usable Respondents (N = 539)

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Race	African American	70	13.7%
	Asian American	112	21.9%
	Caucasian	175	34.2%
	Latino/a	70	13.7%
	Middle Eastern	22	4.3%
	Multiracial/Multiethnic	36	7.0%
	Native American	4	0.8%
	Other	23	4.5%
	Missing	27	
Gender	Male	182	35.5%
	Female	331	64.5%
	Transgender	0	0%
	Missing	26	
Age	18-year old	110	21.4%
	19-year old	123	23.9%
	20-year old	121	23.7%
	21-year old	98	19%
	22-year old	45	8.7%
	23-year old	10	1.9%
	24-year old	6	1.2%
	Missing	26	

Although not used for analysis purposes, it may be important to note that 252 of

the respondents lived in a residence hall (46.8%), 460 have siblings (85.3%), 13 were

international students (2.5%), 424 were not first generation college student (78.7%), and

426 were either middle class or upper-middle class (79%). There were 43.8% of students

who were born in the US and had at least one of their grandparents and both of their

parents born in the States as well. The class levels represented in this study were fairly

evenly distributed with 123 freshmen (22.8%), 130 sophomores (24.1%), 146 juniors

(27.1%), and 114 seniors (21.2%). Twenty-six (4.8%) respondents did not report their

class level. Please refer to Appendix D for frequencies and percentages of ancillary demographic information.

Instrumentation

The instrument for this study (Appendix C) was self-designed as there was no existing instrumentation appropriate for this study. The 21 items for this instrument were developed and supported by available literature, popular media, and current campus situations. Since little research has explored student-parent communication in its descriptive form (Trice, 2002); items 1 through 7 addressed the methods, initiation, and frequency of communication between students and parent(s).

Although Trice (2002) focused only on students' use of email, items 1 and 4 in this instrument asked students to report on what methods they used to communicate with their parents and what methods their parents used, respectively. Ten methods were provided for each item: cell phone; text message; pay, home, or dorm phone; email; postal mail; instant messenger; blog; networking sites; in person; and other. The "Other" response allowed students to write in an answer. This item was based on a scale of 1 to 4 where (1) represented never and (4) represented often.

Hofer and Kennedy (2006) discussed in their preliminary findings that parents were not the only ones initiating frequent contact, thus, items 2 and 6 asked students to report their own initiation and their parent(s)' initiation of communication on a weekly basis. Both items provided a drop down menu of 10 answer choices, ranging from zero times a week to nine or more times a week.

Based on popular media coverage (Coomes, 2004; Epstein, 2005; Hoover; 2004; Jacobson, 2003; Johnson, 2004; Rainey, 2006; Shapiro, 2002; Willis, 2005) and

conversations with administrators, staff, and students, it was frequently reported that students were asking their parents for advice on a number of problems and issues. Further, in the literature regarding alcohol, sex, academics, and finances, researchers claim that parental involvement and communication help to decrease risky behavior (Birch, O'Toole, & Kanu, 1997; Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000; Joo, Grable, & Bagwell, 2003; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001). Thus, items 8 and 10 included a list of 30 topics possibly discussed by students and parents and asked students to report how often they asked for advice and how often they shared information with their parents. Topics were clustered into broad categories including academics, health, finances, social/personal adjustment, involvement, and an "Other" write-in option. Both items were based on a scale ranging from 1 to 4, where (1) represented never and (4) represented often.

To determine student satisfaction, items 3, 5, 7, 9 , and 11 asked students to report their satisfaction on the frequency of communication in general, methods used by parents, frequency of parent-initiated communication, quality of advice, and level of sharing, respectively. All items were based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly dissatisfied to (5) strongly satisfied.

Finally, items 12 through 21 asked demographic questions that included current residency (e.g. residence hall, family's home, off-campus apartment, etc.), current class level, international student status, first-generation student status, socioeconomic status, sibling status, age, race/ethnicity, gender, and citizenship/immigration status.

Validity

Content validity for this self-designed measure was assessed by two experts. Dr. Adrienne Hamcke Wicker and Brian Watkins serve as experts in the field of parents and students. Dr. Adrienne Hamcke Wicker is currently the Director of Off-Campus Housing at the Mid-Atlantic University under investigation and she serves as the Chair of the Assessing Campus Experiences Subgroup (ACES) for the Campus Assessment Working Group (CAWG). Brian Watkins is the Director of Parent and Family Services at the Mid-Atlantic University. Both Adrienne and Brian frequently have contact with parents and students, as well as experience in surveying and researching student-parent communication.

Feedback was provided on the language, answer options, and order of questions. Additionally, the instrument was piloted with a group of 20 student employees in the University Career Center at the Mid-Atlantic University used in this study. Data collected from the pilot test were discarded and only feedback and suggestions concerning the instrument were used. The order and placement of all items were a result of collaboration with Dr. Adrienne Hamcke Wicker, Brian Watkins, and the 20 student employees.

Procedures

After receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board, the sample was selected by the Office of the Registrar during the spring 2007 semester and 3000 undergraduate students' email addresses were requested. A proportional, stratified sample of undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24 was secured with students stratified by race including 581 African American/Black students, 581 Asian American/Pacific Islander students, 580 Caucasian/White students, 581 Hispanic/Latino

students, 580 "Unknown" students, and all Native American/American Indian students (*n* = 97). Surveys were sent in chunks of 20 to avoid email spamming. Of the 3000 emails sent, four addresses were invalid and their emails were returned for a total sample of 2996 students.

The survey was constructed using a web-based service called SurveyMonkey.com. Students were offered the opportunity to enter into a drawing for prizes if they completed the survey, and prizes were noted in the email. The undergraduate students were contacted via email on a Friday. Based on previous assessments, surveys sent out on Friday produced the best response rate at the Mid-Atlantic University under study (J. Dugan, personal communication, November 15, 2006). The survey remained open for two weeks. Two follow-up emails were sent to participants; the first follow-up email was sent on the fifth day and the second follow-up email was sent on the tenth day. Each email included a brief description of the study, a list of prizes, and a link to the online survey. Once students clicked on the link, they were directed to an informed consent form (Appendix A and Appendix B). After consenting, students were directed to complete the online survey. At the end of the survey, they had the choice of clicking on the option to join a raffle for prizes. The grand prize was a $50 gift certificate to the University Bookstore. The second prize was a $30 gift certificate to Target and the third prize was a $10 gift certificate to Starbucks Coffee. Prizes were noted in the email and any self-defining information given by the student was not linked to their survey responses.

After two weeks and two reminder emails, 570 students responded for a response rate of 17.9%. Thirty-one respondents did not answer any questions after the informed consent form, therefore, their data were not used leaving 539 cases for analyses.

Since the data were collected electronically, the online survey company (SurveyMonkey.com) provided a web results page and with special request, a computer generated data document. These data were exported into Excel, condensed, and then imported into SPSS.

Data Analysis

Due to a low number of respondents, Native American students ($n = 4$), Middle Eastern students ($n = 22$), and students identifying as "Other" ($n = 23$) were not used in the chi-square analyses. To maintain a low error rate while comparing age groups, ages 18-20 were combined and ages 21-24 were combined.

Research Question 1: What topics are undergraduate students discussing with their parent(s), Research Question 4: What methods are undergraduate students and their parents using to communicate with each other, and Research Question 6: How satisfied are students with their parent-student communication were analyzed using descriptive statistics. For each research question, percentages were computed to summarize the categorical data. Percentages used in this study were computed directly from raw data.

Research Question 2: How frequently are undergraduate students communicating with their parent(s) and Research Question 3: Who initiated the student-parent conversation? Students or parent(s)? were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Measures of central tendency and percentages were computed for the frequency of

student-parent communication. Measures of central tendency include the mean, the arithmetic average of a set of scores; the median, the middle value of ranked scores; and the mode, the most frequently reoccurring score. Percentages used in this study were computed directly from raw data.

Research Question 5: Do the topics, frequency, and methods of communication in student-parent relationships differ by race, gender, and age was broken down into six independent hypotheses. Chi-square analyses were used to determine any statistically significant differences between race, gender, and age groups on the topics discussed and the methods used in communication. Two ANOVAs were conducted to determine any statistically significant differences between race groups on the frequency of student initiated and parent initiated communication. Four independent-samples *t* tests were conducted to determine whether frequency of student-initiated and parent-initiated communication differed by gender and age.

To run these analyses, the following racial groups were used: African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Caucasian/White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial/Multiethnic. Gender included men and women. Age was combined into the following groups: 18-20-year old students, 21-24-year old students. The chi-square analyses tested whether a set of proportions was higher or lower than expected by chance; these analyses summarized the discrepancy between observed and expected frequencies. The ANOVA tested the differences between three or more independent groups and the independent-samples *t* test determined whether group means were significantly different.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine student-parent relationships by understanding communication patterns between undergraduate students and their parents. The topics discussed, initiation, method, and frequency of communication were investigated. This study took race, gender, and age into consideration. A proportional, stratified sample of 3000 undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24 received the online survey instrument via email during their spring semester. The survey instrument was self-designed by the researcher and was tested for content validity. Descriptive statistics such as measures of central tendency – mean, median, mode – and percentages were calculated on frequency of communication. For categorical data, such as the topics discussed, initiation, method, and satisfaction of parent-student communication percentages were computed. Additionally, t tests, ANOVAs, and chi-square analyses were conducted to determine statistical significance by race, gender, and age on the topics discussed, frequency of communication, and method of communication. Results of the analyses are reported in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to examine student-parent relationships by understanding the communication patterns of undergraduate students and their parents. For the purpose of this study, parent(s) were defined as biological or adoptive mothers or fathers, as well as a person that has taken on the role of legal guardian. Student-parent communication was defined by any verbal or written interaction between students and their parent(s). Verbal and written interaction could occur in-person, over the phone, through text message, email, postal mail, instant messenger, networking sites, and blogging. Frequency of communication was defined as the number of times per week a student and his or her parent(s) communicated. Race, gender, and age were also considered.

This chapter reports the results found from the descriptive and statistical analyses for each research question. Results for the six hypotheses address whether or not there are statistically significant differences among students by race, gender, and age on the topics, frequency, and methods used to communicate with parents.

Results of Primary Research Questions

Research Question 1: What topics are undergraduate students discussing with their parent(s)?

To address this research question, students were given a list of 30 topics and asked to report the frequency in which they asked their parents for advice or shared information. Their response choices included: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, and Often. Frequencies and percentages of topics and response choices for advice topics and shared

topics are illustrated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 respectively. To provide a summarized view of the most popular topics of communication, the percentages given in the text reflect students who answered "sometimes" and "often."

Although all the topics were communicated between student and parent at some level, students most commonly (sometimes and often) sought advice regarding the following topics: physical health issues (57.0%), career planning (56.5%), living situation (52.3 %), friends (51.9%), and current financial situation (48.3%). Five students asked their parents for advice on "Other" topics, such as study abroad, summer plans, family issues, and buying a car. More than two-thirds of respondents never sought advice regarding teaching assistants (67.4%), administrators (69.7%), alcohol (69.5%), and sex (81.3%).

When it came to sharing information with parents, students most commonly communicated about classes (74.6%), grades (67.8%), physical health issues (64.9%), friends (60.9%), living situation (56.9%), stress (54.3%), professors (52.2%), career planning (51.8%), current financial situation (51.3%), organizations/clubs (50.2%), credit card (49.9%), and eating/nutrition (46.9%). For the "Other" response option, six students reported that they discussed study abroad, summer plans, summer classes, and other family members with their parents. More than two-thirds of respondents never discussed sex (81.3%) with their parents.

Table 4.1

Frequencies and Percentages of Topics on which Students Sought Advice from Parents

Topic	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Grades	214 (40.8%)	140 (26.7%)	126 (24.0%)	45 (8.6%)
Classes	175 (33.3%)	122 (23.2%)	165 (31.4%)	63 (12.0%)
Professors	278 (53.2%)	135 (25.8%)	79 (15.1%)	31 (5.9%)
Teaching Assistants	354 (67.4%)	107 (20.4%)	44 (8.4%)	20 (3.8%)
Administrators	364 (69.7%)	101 (19.3%)	39 (7.5%)	18 (3.4%)
Physical Health Issues	113 (21.5%)	113 (21.5%)	204 (38.9%)	95 (18.1%)
Stress	175 (33.3%)	95 (18.1%)	174 (33.1%)	81 (15.4%)
Loneliness	335 (63.8%)	103 (19.6%)	60 (11.4%)	27 (5.0%)
Feeling Down	294 (55.9%)	113 (21.5%)	84 (16.0%)	35 (6.7%)
Eating/Nutrition	200 (38.0%)	121 (23.0%)	136 (25.9%)	69 (13.1%)
Body Image	323 (61.6%)	101 (19.3%)	76 (14.5%)	24 (4.6%)
Alcohol	364 (69.5%)	99 (18.4%)	45 (8.6%)	16 (3.1%)
Sex	426 (81.3%)	75 (14.3%)	18 (3.4%)	5 (1.0%)
Credit Card	164 (31.3%)	134 (25.6%)	168 (32.1%)	58 (11.1%)
Current Job	184 (35.2%)	95 (18.2%)	167 (32.0%)	76 (14.6%)
College Loans	300 (57.9%)	77 (14.9%)	99 (19.1%)	42 (8.1%)
Current Financial Situation	145 (27.7%)	126 (24.0%)	155 (29.6%)	98 (18.7%)
Future Financial Situation	159 (30.3%)	113 (21.6%)	150 (27.8%)	102 (18.9%)
Roommate(s)	238 (45.2%)	100 (19.0%)	127 (23.6%)	61 (11.3%)
Friends	140 (26.7%)	113 (21.5%)	183 (34.9%)	89 (17.0%)
Living Situation	138 (26.2%)	113 (21.5%)	177 (33.7%)	98 (18.6%)
Significant Others	244 (46.4%)	99 (18.4%)	109 (20.7%)	74 (14.1%)
Social Events	184 (35.1%)	118 (22.5%)	158 (30.2%)	64 (12.2%)
Organizations/Clubs	186 (35.4%)	107 (20.4%)	161 (30.7%)	71 (13.5%)
Sports	262 (49.8%)	98 (18.6%)	115 (21.9%)	51 (9.7%)
Community Service Activities	280 (53.4%)	115 (21.9%)	97 (18.5%)	32 (6.1%)
Career Planning	141 (26.9%)	87 (16.6%)	175 (33.3%)	122 (23.2%)
Choosing a Major	246 (45.6%)	95 (18.1%)	114 (21.7%)	71 (13.5%)
Internships	175 (33.3%)	104 (19.8%)	150 (28.6%)	96 (18.3%)

Table 4.2

Frequencies and Percentages of Topics Shared with Parents

Topic	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Grades	65 (12.7%)	91 (17.7%)	196 (36.4%)	161(31.4%)
Classes	38 (7.4%)	73 (14.2%)	216 (40.1%)	186(34.5%)
Professors	126 (24.7%)	118 (23.1%)	164 (32.2%)	102(20.0%)
Teaching Assistants	281 (54.9%)	90 (17.6%)	84 (16.4%)	57 (11.1%)
Administrators	334 (65.5%)	91 (17.8%)	42 (8.2%)	43 (8.4%)
Physical Health Issues	89 (17.3%)	91 (17.7%)	209 (40.7%)	124(24.2%)
Stress	140 (27.3%)	94 (18.3%)	168 (32.7%)	111(21.6%)
Loneliness	316 (61.7%)	97 (18.9%)	57 (11.1%)	42 (8.2%)
Feeling Down	285 (55.8%)	101 (19.8%)	78 (15.3%)	47 (9.2%)
Eating/Nutrition	157 (30.7%)	115 (22.5%)	160 (31.3%)	80 (15.6%)
Body Image	280 (54.6%)	116 (22.6%)	81 (15.8%)	36 (7.0%)
Alcohol	326 (63.8%)	97 (19.0%)	60 (11.7%)	28 (5.5%)
Sex	417 (81.3%)	59 (11.5%)	22 (4.3%)	15 (2.9%)
Credit Card	161 (31.4%)	96 (18.7%)	173 (33.7%)	83 (16.2%)
Current Job	178 (34.8%)	65 (12.7%)	164 (32.1%)	104(20.4%)
College Loans	292 (57.5%)	83 (16.3%)	89 (17.5%)	44 (8.7%)
Current Financial Situation	143 (27.9%)	107 (20.9%)	160 (31.2%)	103(20.1%)
Future Financial Situation	175 (34.1%)	96 (18.7%)	146 (28.5%)	96(18.7%)
Roommate(s)	172 (33.6%)	93 (18.2%)	154 (30.1%)	93 (18.2%)
Friends	92 (18.0%)	108 (21.1%)	185 (36.1%)	127(24.8%)
Living Situation	127 (24.9%)	93 (18.2%)	175 (34.2%)	116(22.7%)
Significant Others	210 (41.0%)	98 (19.1%)	120 (23.4%)	84 (16.4%)
Social Events	166 (32.4%)	114 (22.3%)	73 (14.3%)	73 (14.3%)
Organizations/Clubs	164 (32.0%)	91 (17.7%)	168 (32.7%)	90 (17.5%)
Sports	232 (45.3%)	90 (17.6%)	115 (22.5%)	75 (14.6%)
Community Service Activities	256 (49.9%)	114 (22.2%)	98 (19.1%)	45 (8.8%)
Career Planning	143 (27.9%)	104 (20.3%)	156 (30.4%)	110(21.4%)
Choosing a Major	231 (45.2%)	89 (17.4%)	123 (24.1%)	68 (13.3%)
Internships	185 (36.3%)	91 (17.8%)	139 (27.3%)	95 (18.6%)

Research Question 2: How frequently are undergraduate students communicating with
their parent(s)? and Research Question 3: Who initiated the student-parent
conversation? Students or parent(s)?

To address these two research questions, students were asked to report the
frequency of student-initiated communication and to report the frequency of parent-
initiated communication in the past week. For both items, Students were able to choose
from a pull-down menu that ranged from "0 times a week" to "9 or more times a week."

Of the 539 responses, 102 students initiated communication with their parents
nine or more times a week (19.1%), 95 students initiated communication three times a
week (17.8%), and 92 students initiated communication two times a week (17.3%). The
rest of the responses are distributed across the other response choices. Similarly, 115
students reported that their parents initiated communication nine or more times a week
(21.5%), 96 students reported that parents initiated communication two times a week
(18.0%), and 94 students reported that parents initiated communication three times a
week (17.6%). Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 illustrate how frequently students initiated
communication with their parents and how frequently parents initiated communication
with their students. Students initiated communication a mean of 5.36 times a week while
parents initiated communication a mean of 5.67 times a week (Table 4.5).

Table 4.3

Frequencies and Percentages of Student Initiated Communication (N = 533)

Number of Times Per Week	Frequency	Percent
0 times a week	10	1.9%
1 time a week	67	12.6%
2 times a week	92	17.3%
3 times a week	95	17.8%
4 times a week	64	12.0%
5 times a week	46	8.6%
6 times a week	21	3.9%
7 times a week	30	5.6%
8 times a week	6	1.1%
9 or more times a week	102	19.1%
Missing	6	

Table 4.4

Frequencies and Percentages of Parent Initiated Communication (N = 534)

Number of Times Per Week	Frequency	Percent
0 times a week	11	2.1%
1 time a week	36	6.7%
2 times a week	96	18.0%
3 times a week	94	17.6%
4 times a week	70	13.1%
5 times a week	47	8.8%
6 times a week	28	5.2%
7 times a week	29	5.4%
8 times a week	8	1.5%
9 or more times a week	115	21.5%
Missing	5	

Table 4.5
Measures of Central Tendencies for Student and Parent Initiated Communication

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Median	Mode
Student Initiated Communication	5.36	2.81	5.01	9 or more times
Parent Initiated Communication	5.67	2.79	5.01	9 or more times

Research Question 4: What methods are undergraduate students and their parent(s)

using to communicate with each other?

To determine which methods were more commonly used for communication, students were asked to report how frequently they used 10 different methods and how frequently their parents used those same 10 methods. The 10 methods offered were cell phone, text message, pay phone/dorm phone, email, postal mail, instant messenger, blogging, networking sites, in-person, and other. Response choices included Never, Rarely, Sometimes, and Often. Frequencies and percentages are provided in Table 4.6 and Table 4.7. The percentages given in the text reflect students who answered "sometimes" and "often."

The most commonly used method by both students and parents was cell phones. Four hundred sixty-one students (85.6%) reported using cell phones "Sometimes" or "Often" to communicate with their parents. Similarly 466 students reported that parents (86.6%) "Sometimes" or "Often" used cell phones to communicate with their student. In-person (53.9% students; 45.8% parents) and email (39.7% students; 39.4% parents) communication were also used by students and parents, although not as frequently as the cell phone.

More than two-thirds of respondents never used text message (73.1%), pay or dorm phone (71.3%), postal mail (87.5%), instant messenger (79.7%), blogging (98.3%), or networking sites (97.3%) to communicate with their parents. Likewise, more than two-thirds of parents never used text message (78.1%), postal mail (86.9%), instant messenger (84.0%), blogging (98.9%), or networking sites (98.5%) to communicate with their student.

Table 4.6

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods Used by Students

Methods	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Cell Phone	17 (3.2%)	60 (11.2%)	183 (34.0%)	278 (51.6%)
Text Message	388 (73.1%)	66 (12.4%)	52 (9.8%)	25 (4.7%)
Pay Phone, Home phone				
Or Dorm phone	380 (71.3%)	52 (9.8%)	68 (12.8%)	33 (6.2%)
Email	193 (36.3%)	128 (24.1%)	145 (27.3%)	66 (12.4%)
Postal Mail	461 (87.5%)	46 (8.7%)	17 (3.2%)	3 (0.6%)
Instant Messenger	424 (79.7%)	52 (9.8%)	35 (6.6%)	21 (3.9%)
Blog	521 (98.3%)	4 (0.8%)	4 (0.8%)	1 (0.2%)
MySpace, Xanga, or				
Other networking				
Database	513 (97.3%)	6 (1.1%)	6 (1.1%)	2 (0.4%)
In Person	161 (30.1%)	85 (15.9%)	138 (25.8%)	150 (28.1%)

Table 4.7

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods Used by Parents

Methods	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Cell Phone	28 (5.2%)	44 (8.2%)	210 (39.0%)	256 (47.6%)
Text Message	413 (78.1%)	56 (10.6%)	40 (7.6%)	20 (3.8%)
Home phone				
Or Pay phone	199 (37.6%)	35 (6.6%)	163 (30.8%)	132 (25.0%)
Email	208 (39.2%)	114 (21.5%)	148 (27.9%)	61 (11.5%)
Postal Mail	459 (86.9%)	44 (8.3%)	22 (4.2%)	3 (0.6%)
Instant Messenger	442 (84.0%)	37 (7.0%)	30 (5.7%)	17 (3.2%)
Blog	519 (98.9%)	3 (0.6%)	3 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
MySpace, Xanga, or				
Other networking				
Database	516 (98.5%)	4 (0.8%)	4 (0.8%)	0 (0%)
In Person	219 (41.2%)	69 (13.0%)	106 (20.0%)	137 (25.8%)

Research Question 5: Do the topics, frequency, and methods of communication in student-parent relationships differ by race, gender, and age?

Hypothesis 1: The topics about which students ask their parents for advice do not differ by race, gender, and age.

To better understand the depth and breadth of student-parent communication, students were given a list of 30 topics and asked to report on the ones they typically ask their parents for advice. Response choices included: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, and Often.

Several chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether advice topics differed by race, gender, or age. The first set of chi-square analyses assessed whether there were differences among five different racial groups on those advice topics listed. Due to a small number of respondents, Middle Eastern ($n = 22$), Native American ($n = 4$), and "Other" ($n = 23$) racial groups were not included in any chi-square analyses. The racial groups included in the following tests were African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Caucasian/White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial/Multiethnic.

With alpha set at .05, and of the 30 topics listed, there were significant differences by race on the following six topics: eating/nutrition, college loans, current financial situation, future financial situation, significant others, and social events. In relation to eating/nutrition, proportionately students of color were more likely to "sometimes" or "often" ask their parents for advice and proportionately Caucasian/White students were more likely to "never" or "rarely" ask for advice. When asking for advice about college loans, current financial situation, and future financial situation, African American/Black

students and Hispanic/Latino students were proportionately more likely to "often" ask

their parents for advice while Asian American, Caucasian, and Multiracial students were

more like to "never" ask their parents for advice. For significant others and social events,

proportionately African American and Asian American students were more likely to

"never" ask their parents for advice while Latino students were more likely to "often" ask

for advice (Table 4.8). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to race with an $N =$

463, there are 70 African American students, 112 Asian American students, 175

Caucasian students, 70 Latino students, and 36 Multiracial students.

Table 4.8

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Race (Significant Results)

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 24.2*
	Black	32.9%	30.0%	20.0%	17.1%	
	APA	38.4%	14.3%	33.0%	14.3%	
	White	47.4%	24.0%	20.6%	8.0%	
	Latino/a	31.4%	20.0%	32.9%	15.7%	
	Multi-Racial	27.8%	30.6%	30.6%	11.1%	
College Loans						χ^2 (12, N=457) = 35.6***
	Black	58.6%	10.0%	20.0%	11.4%	
	APA	61.8%	11.8%	20.9%	5.5%	
	White	64.7%	15.0%	16.2%	4.0%	
	Latino/a	34.8%	23.2%	24.6%	17.4%	
	Multi-Racial	80.0%	8.6%	8.6%	2.9%	
Current Financial Situation						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 42.9***
	Black	18.6%	21.4%	32.9%	27.1%	
	APA	42.9%	23.2%	25.9%	8.0%	
	White	26.4%	28.7%	28.7%	16.1%	
	Latino/a	17.1%	15.7%	32.9%	34.3%	
	Multi-Racial	44.4%	22.2%	16.7%	16.7%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Future Financial Situation						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 32.9***
	Black	20.0%	20.0%	31.4%	28.6%	
	APA	37.5%	23.2%	30.4%	8.9%	
	White	33.9%	21.8%	27.6%	16.7%	
	Latino/a	20.0%	15.7%	31.4%	32.9%	
	Multi-Racial	50.0%	19.4%	13.9%	16.7%	
Significant Others						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 39.4***
	Black	55.7%	22.9%	15.7%	5.7%	
	APA	58.9%	20.5%	14.3%	6.3%	
	White	40.6%	19.4%	26.3%	13.7%	
	Latino/a	35.7%	15.7%	20.0%	28.6%	
	Multi-Racial	33.3%	13.9%	30.6%	22.2%	
Social Events						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 22.9*
	Black	41.4%	20.0%	30.0%	8.6%	
	APA	48.2%	20.0%	22.7%	9.1%	
	White	34.9%	23.4%	29.7%	12.0%	
	Latino/a	20.0%	24.3%	37.1%	18.6%	
	Multi-Racial	22.2%	25.0%	44.4%	8.3%	

a. $N = 463$; African American students ($n = 70$), Asian American students ($n = 112$), Caucasian students ($n = 175$), Latino students ($n = 70$), and Multiracial students ($n = 36$)

*$p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

Chi-square analyses were not significant by race for the following 18 topics:

grades, classes, professors, physical health issues, stress, loneliness, feeling down, credit

card, current job, roommate(s), friends, living situation, organizations/clubs, sports,

community services activities, career planning, choosing a major, and internships. These

tests indicated that African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander,

Caucasian/White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial/Multiethnic students did not differ

significantly in amount of advice sought for the topics listed above. Refer to Appendix E-

1 for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Finally, for chi-square tests, no more than 20% of the cells should have an

expected count less than 5 (Green & Salkind, 2005; Pallant, 2005). For five topics, this

assumption was violated and therefore, these chi-square results were not used. The tables

for the five topics of teaching assistants, administrators, body image, alcohol, and sex are

presented in Appendix E (Table E-2).

Another set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether advice

topics differed by gender. Of the 30 topics and with alpha set at .05, there were

significant differences on the following 12 topics: classes, professors, physical health

issues, stress, feeling down, roommates, friends, living situation, significant others, social

events, organizations and clubs, and community service activities. For all the above

topics, proportionately men were more likely to "never" ask their parents for advice and

proportionately more women were more likely to "often" ask for advice (Table 4.9).

Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to gender with an $N = 463$, there were 161

males and 302 females.

Table 4.9

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Gender (Significant Results)

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Classes						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 20.0***
	Males	46.3%	22.5%	26.3%	5.0%	
	Females	28.1%	23.8%	33.8%	14.2%	
Professors						χ^2 (3, N=460) = 9.2*
	Males	63.8%	20.6%	11.3%	4.4%	
	Females	49.0%	28.3%	16.7%	6.0%	
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 15.7**
	Males	30.0%	23.8%	36.3%	10.0%	
	Females	17.5%	20.5%	41.1%	20.9%	

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Stress						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 40.6$***
	Males	46.0%	21.7%	30.4%	1.9%	
	Females	27.9%	15.6%	34.9%	21.6%	
Feeling Down						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 17.4$**
	Males	69.6%	14.3%	13.7%	2.5%	
	Females	51.3%	23.5%	16.2%	8.9%	
Roommate(s)						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 16.7$**
	Males	52.2%	20.5%	23.6%	3.7%	
	Females	40.7%	17.5%	26.2%	15.6%	
Friends						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 24.5$***
	Males	34.4%	28.1%	29.4%	8.1%	
	Females	23.5%	17.2%	36.8%	22.5%	
Living Situation						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 22.8$***
	Males	33.5%	24.8%	32.9%	8.7%	
	Females	21.2%	19.5%	33.8%	25.5%	
Significant Others						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 11.9$**
	Males	55.9%	17.4%	18.6%	8.1%	
	Females	40.7%	20.2%	22.5%	16.6%	
Social Events						$\chi^2 (3, N=461) = 15.6$**
	Males	44.4%	25.6%	23.8%	6.3%	
	Females	31.2%	20.6%	33.9%	14.3%	
Organizations/Clubs						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 10.2$*
	Males	44.1%	19.9%	27.3%	8.7%	
	Females	30.9%	20.6%	32.6%	15.9%	
Community Service Activities						$\chi^2 (3, N=461) = 13.0$**
	Males	63.1%	15.0%	19.4%	2.5%	
	Females	48.8%	24.9%	18.9%	7.3%	

a. $N = 463$; males ($n = 161$) and females ($n = 302$)
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

There were no significant differences by gender for advice on the following 16

topics: grades, teaching assistants, administrators, loneliness, eating/nutrition, body

image, alcohol, credit card, current job, college loans, current financial situation, future financial situation, sports, career planning, choosing a major, and internships. These chi-square analyses indicated that male students and female students did not differ significantly in their amount of advice sought for the topics listed above. Refer to Appendix E (Table E-3) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

The chi-square analysis for the topic of sex contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5, and thus the chi-square results for the sex topic were not used. Frequencies and percentages are shown in Appendix E (Table E-4).

Finally, a set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether advice topics differed by age. Of the 30 topics and with alpha set at .05, there were significant differences on the following seven topics: grades, classes, professors, eating/nutrition, alcohol, organizations/clubs, and choosing a major. For grades, classes, professors, alcohol, organizations/clubs, and choosing a major, proportionately 18-20-year old students more likely "often" asked their parents for advice while 21-24-year old students more likely "never" asked for advice. However, for eating/nutrition, proportionately 21-24-year old students more "often" asked their parents for advice while 18-20-year old students "never" asked for advice (Table 4.10). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to age with an $N = 463$, there were 324 18-20-year old students and 139 21-24 year-old students.

Table 4.10

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Age (Significant Results)

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 23.5***
	18-20	34.7%	27.6%	27.6%	10.2%	
	21-24	58.3%	20.9%	16.5%	4.3%	
Classes						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 16.5**
	18-20	29.4%	22.9%	34.4%	13.3%	
	21-24	46.0%	24.5%	23.7%	5.8%	
Professors						χ^2 (3, *N*=460) = 9.9*
	18-20	50.2%	29.3%	14.3%	6.2%	
	21-24	63.3%	17.3%	15.8%	3.6%	
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 9.2*
	18-20	36.4%	26.2%	25.6%	11.7%	
	21-24	45.3%	13.7%	27.3%	13.7%	
Alcohol						χ^2 (3, *N*=461) = 9.2*
	18-20	64.9%	22.4%	9.0%	3.7%	
	21-24	77.7%	12.2%	8.6%	1.4%	
Organizations/Clubs						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 9.6*
	18-20	31.3%	20.4%	33.7%	14.6%	
	21-24	45.3%	20.1%	23.7%	10.8%	
Choosing a Major						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 19.8***
	18-20	41.0%	17.9%	25.9%	15.1%	
	21-24	59.7%	20.1%	12.2%	7.9%	

a. *N* = 463; 18-20-year old students (*n* = 324) and 21-24 year-old students (*n* = 139)
* *p* < .05
** *p* < .01
*** *p* < .001

There were no significant differences between advice topics and age for the

following 21 topics: teaching assistants, administrators, physical health issues, stress,

loneliness, feeling down, body image, credit card, current job, college loans, current

financial situation, future financial situation, roommate(s), friends, living situation,

significant others, social events, sports, community service activities, career planning, and internships. These tests indicated that 18-20-year old students and 21-24-year old students did not significantly differ in the frequency of advice sought for the topics listed above. Refer to Appendix E (Table E-5) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Again, one topic contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5. The chi-square results for the sex topic were not used. Frequencies and percentages are shown in Appendix E (Table E-6).

Hypothesis 2: The topics that students share with their parents do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Several chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that the topics students share with parents do not differ by race, gender, and age. Similar to the advice question asked on the survey instrument, students were given the same list of 30 topics and asked to report the frequency in which they shared information with their parents. The response choices included Never, Rarely, Sometimes, and Often.

In looking at race, several chi-square analyses were used to determine if there was a difference in the topics shared by students across five difference races: African, American, Asian American, Caucasian/White, Latino/a, and Multiracial. Due to a small number of respondents, Middle Eastern ($n = 22$), Native American ($n = 4$), and "Other" ($n = 23$) racial groups were not included in any chi-square analyses.

With alpha set at .05, there were significant differences for the following nine topics: classes, professors, stress, alcohol, college loans, current financial situation, living situation, significant others, and social events (Table 4.11).

Proportionately, Latino students and White students were more likely to "often"

share information with their parents concerning classes, professors, and social events

while proportionately Asian American students were more likely to "never" share

information. For stress, proportionately more Multiracial students endorsed "sometimes"

and "often" while proportionately more Asian American students endorsed "never."

Proportionately more White and Latino students "often" talk with their parents about

alcohol than African American, Asian American, and Multiracial students. For college

loans and current living situation, proportionately African American and Latino students

were more likely to "often" share with their parents than Asian American, White, and

Multiracial students who were more likely to endorse "never." Proportionately Latino and

Multiracial students were more likely to "often" share information with their parents

regarding living situation and significant others while African American, Asian

American, and White students were more likely to choose "never."

Table 4.11

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Race (Significant Results)

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Classes						$\chi^2 (12, N=463) = 26.6**$
	Black	5.7%	18.6%	40.0%	35.7%	
	APA	15.2%	20.5%	38.4%	25.9%	
	White	5.1%	12.0%	45.7%	37.1%	
	Latino/a	4.3%	12.9%	38.6%	44.3%	
	Multi-Racial	5.6%	2.8%	55.6%	36.1%	
Professors						$\chi^2 (12, N=461) = 23.4*$
	Black	18.8%	27.5%	34.8%	18.8%	
	APA	40.5%	18.9%	27.9%	12.6%	
	White	20.6%	21.1%	34.9%	23.4%	
	Latino/a	24.3%	17.1%	34.3%	24.3%	
	Multi-Racial	25.0%	30.6%	33.3%	11.1%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Stress						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 21.8*
	Black	32.9%	15.7%	28.6%	22.9%	
	APA	39.3%	14.3%	29.5%	17.0%	
	White	24.6%	21.7%	29.7%	24.0%	
	Latino/a	18.6%	17.1%	47.1%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	22.2%	11.1%	36.1%	30.6%	
Alcohol						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 23.1*
	Black	74.3%	15.7%	8.6%	1.4%	
	APA	73.9%	13.5%	6.3%	6.3%	
	White	55.7%	24.1%	13.8%	6.3%	
	Latino/a	58.6%	15.7%	20.0%	5.7%	
	Multi-Racial	61.1%	25.0%	5.6%	8.3%	
College Loans						χ^2 (12, N=459) = 32.9**
	Black	51.4%	20.0%	14.3%	14.3%	
	APA	61.8%	13.6%	17.3%	7.3%	
	White	64.4%	17.8%	13.8%	4.0%	
	Latino/a	37.7%	20.3%	24.6%	17.4%	
	Multi-Racial	77.8%	2.8%	13.9%	5.6%	
Current Financial Situation						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 21.7*
	Black	22.9%	20.0%	32.9%	24.3%	
	APA	35.7%	19.6%	29.5%	15.2%	
	White	29.1%	25.7%	29.1%	16.0%	
	Latino/a	17.1%	17.1%	31.4%	34.3%	
	Multi-Racial	38.9%	13.9%	30.6%	16.7%	
Living Situation						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 27.4**
	Black	30.0%	24.3%	28.6%	17.1%	
	APA	35.7%	18.8%	27.7%	17.9%	
	White	18.5%	18.5%	38.2%	24.9%	
	Latino/a	22.9%	8.6%	34.3%	34.3%	
	Multi-Racial	11.1%	16.7%	41.7%	30.6%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Significant Others						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 45.7***
	Black	47.1%	21.4%	25.7%	5.7%	
	APA	59.8%	18.8%	13.4%	8.0%	
	White	32.2%	21.8%	27.0%	19.0%	
	Latino/a	34.3%	14.3%	22.9%	28.6%	
	Multi-Racial	25.0%	13.9%	36.1%	25.0%	
Social Events						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 28.1**
	Black	28.6%	28.6%	32.9%	10.0%	
	APA	48.2%	16.1%	25.9%	9.8%	
	White	27.0%	24.7%	35.6%	12.6%	
	Latino/a	25.7%	17.1%	32.9%	24.3%	
	Multi-Racial	30.6%	22.2%	25.0%	22.2%	

a. *N* = 463; African American students (*n* = 70), Asian American students (*n* = 112), Caucasian students (*n* = 175), Latino students (*n* = 70), and Multiracial students (*n* = 36)

*p < .05
** p < .01
*** p < .001

There were no significant results by race for the following 19 topics: grades, teaching assistants, administrators, physical health issues, loneliness, feeling down, eating/nutrition, body image, credit card, current job, future financial situation, roommate(s), friends, organizations/clubs, sports, community service activities, career planning, choosing a major, and internships. Chi-square analyses indicated that the above topics shared with parents do not differ significantly by race. Refer to Appendix F (Table F-1) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Similar to Hypothesis 1, the sex topic contained more than 20% of cells which had an expected count less than 5. The chi-square results were not used and are shown in Appendix F (Table F-2).

Another set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether shared topics differed by gender. Of the 30 topics and with alpha set at .05, there were significant results on the following 18 topics: grades, classes, professors, administrators, physical health issues, stress, loneliness, feeling down, eating/nutrition, body image, sex, roommate(s), friends, living situation, significant others, social events, community services activities, and career planning. For all the above topics, proportionately men were more likely to "rarely" or "never" share information with their parents and proportionately women were more likely to "often" share information (Table 4.12).

Table 4.12

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Gender (Significant Results)

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 12.2**
	Males	17.4%	21.1%	39.1%	22.4%	
	Females	10.3%	15.9%	37.7%	36.1%	
Classes						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 23.3***
	Males	13.0%	19.9%	42.9%	24.2%	
	Females	4.6%	11.6%	42.7%	41.1%	
Professors						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 16.6**
	Males	35.0%	19.4%	34.4%	11.3%	
	Females	21.3%	22.9%	32.2%	23.6%	
Administrators						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 12.6**
	Males	68.3%	11.8%	13.7%	6.2%	
	Females	64.7%	20.0%	6.0%	9.3%	
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 17.8***
	Males	26.1%	18.0%	39.8%	16.1%	
	Females	12.9%	15.9%	42.4%	28.8%	
Stress						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 48.8***
	Males	46.0%	19.3%	25.5%	9.3%	
	Females	18.9%	16.6%	36.4%	28.1%	

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Loneliness						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 14.7**
	Males	73.9%	12.4%	8.1%	5.6%	
	Females	55.8%	21.9%	12.6%	9.6%	
Feeling Down						χ^2 (3, *N*=461) = 14.9**
	Males	68.8%	12.5%	11.9%	6.9%	
	Females	50.2%	22.3%	17.3%	10.3%	
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 8.2*
	Males	37.9%	22.4%	28.6%	11.2%	
	Females	26.2%	22.3%	34.6%	16.9%	
Body Image						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 13.8**
	Males	67.1%	15.5%	13.7%	3.7%	
	Females	50.0%	25.8%	16.2%	7.9%	
Sex						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 8.2*
	Males	82.0%	8.1%	7.5%	2.5%	
	Females	81.1%	13.2%	2.6%	3.0%	
Roommate(s)						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 27.0***
	Males	38.1%	24.4%	30.6%	6.9%	
	Females	28.8%	14.9%	30.8%	25.5%	
Friends						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 39.5***
	Males	27.5%	27.5%	34.4%	10.6%	
	Females	13.6%	16.2%	36.4%	33.8%	
Living Situation						χ^2 (3, *N*=461) = 17.7**
	Males	28.8%	21.3%	37.5%	12.5%	
	Females	22.3%	15.9%	31.9%	29.9%	
Significant Others						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 19.5***
	Males	51.3%	22.5%	16.9%	9.4%	
	Females	35.4%	17.5%	27.2%	19.9%	
Social Events						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 16.3**
	Males	40.6%	25.6%	26.3%	7.5%	
	Females	28.1%	19.9%	34.4%	17.5%	
Community Service Activities						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 12.9**
	Males	58.4%	18.0%	20.5%	3.1%	
	Females	46.4%	23.5%	18.9%	11.3%	

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Career Planning						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 8.4*
	Males	32.2%	25.5%	27.3%	14.9%	
	Females	26.5%	18.2%	31.8%	23.5%	

a. $N = 463$; males ($n = 161$) and females ($n = 302$)

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

There were no significant differences between shared topics and gender for the following 11 topics: teaching assistants, alcohol, credit card, current job, college loans, current financial situation, future financial situation, organizations/clubs, sports, choosing a major, and internships. These chi-square analyses indicated that male students and female students did not differ significantly in their level of sharing for the topics listed above. Refer to Appendix F for percentages and non-significant chi-square results (Table F-3).

Finally, a set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether shared topics differed by age. With alpha set at .05, there was one significant result on the following topic: choosing a major. When sharing information about chosing a major, proportionately, 18-20-year old students more likely chose "sometimes" and "often" while 21-24-year old students more frequently chose "never" (Table 4.13). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to age with an $N = 462$, there were 323 18-20-year old students and 139 21-24 year-old students.

Table 4.13

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Age (Significant Results)

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Choosing a Major						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 20.0***
	18-20	39.9%	16.1%	29.1%	14.9%	
	21-24	58.3%	19.4%	14.4%	7.9%	

a. $N = 462$; 18-20-year old students ($n = 323$) and 21-24 year-old students ($n = 139$)
*** $p < .001$

There were no significant differences by age on the following 28 topics: grades, classes, professors, teaching assistants, administrators, physical health issues, stress, loneliness, feeling down, eating/nutrition, body image, alcohol, sex, credit card, current job, college loans, current financial situation, future financial situation, roommate(s), friends, living situation, significant others, social events, organizations/clubs, sports, community service activities, career planning, and internships. These tests indicated that 18-20-year old students and 21-24-year old students did not differ significantly in the level of sharing with their parents on the topics listed above. Refer to Appendix F (Table F-4) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Hypothesis 3: The frequency of student-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age.

An ANOVA and two independent-samples *t* tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that the frequency of student-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age. In looking at race, an ANOVA was used to determine if there was a difference in the frequency of student-initiated communication among five different races. The independent variable, race, included five groups: African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Caucasian/White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial/Multiethnic. The dependent variable was the number of times students

initiated communication with their parents in the past week. With alpha set at .05, the

ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 453) = 3.0$, $p = .02$. Although the results were significant,

the strength of the relationship between the various races and the frequency of

communication, as assessed by η^2, was weak, with the race factor accounting for only 3%

of the variance of the dependent variable. Refer to Tables 4.14 and 4.15 for descriptive

statistics and ANOVA results.

Table 4.14

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Race

Race	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Black	5.19	2.91	69
APA	5.21	2.81	111
White	4.99	2.61	172
Latino/a	6.29	2.76	70
Multiracial	4.94	2.55	36

Table 4.15

ANOVA on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Race

	Sum of Squares	Mean Sqaure	F	Partial Eta Squared
Between Groups	90.01	22.50	3.0*	0.03
Within Groups	3357.95	7.41		
Total	3447.97			

* $p < .05$

      Follow-up tests were conducted to evaluate the pairwise differences among the

means. Since Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was not violated, the Tukey test

was utilized for this post hoc analysis. There was one significant difference between

Caucasian/White students and Hispanic/Latino students, but no significant differences

between any of the other racial groups (Table 4.16). With a mean of 6.29 ($SD = 2.76$),

Hispanic/Latino students initiated communication with their parents more frequently than

Caucasian/White students ($M = 4.99$, $SD = 2.61$).

Table 4.16

Tukey Post Hoc Tests on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Race

(I) Race	(J) Race	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Black	APA	-0.02	.42	1.00
	White	0.19	0.39	0.98
	Latino/a	-1.09	0.46	0.12
	Multiracial	0.24	0.56	0.99
APA	Black	0.02	0.42	1.00
	White	0.21	0.33	0.97
	Latino/a	-1.08	0.42	0.07
	Multiracial	0.26	0.52	0.99
White	Black	-0.19	0.39	0.99
	APA	-0.21	0.42	0.07
	Latino/a	-1.29*	0.39	0.01*
	Multiracial	1.34	0.56	0.12
Latino/a	Black	1.09	0.46	0.12
	APA	1.08	0.42	0.07
	White	1.29*	0.39	0.01*
	Multiracial	1.34	0.56	0.12
Multiracial	Black	-0.24	0.56	0.99
	APA	-0.26	0.52	0.99
	White	-0.05	0.49	1.00
	Latino/a	-1.34	0.56	0.12

* $p < .05$

An independent samples t test was conducted to evaluate whether males and females differed in their frequency of student initiated communication. With alpha set at .05, $t(456) = -4.10$, $p < .001$. The results indicated that there is a significant difference between males and females in the frequency of student initiated communication. Per week, female students ($M = 5.65$, $SD = 2.75$) initiated communication with their parents more frequently than male ($M = 4.56$, $SD = 2.60$) students. Table 4.17 and Table 4.18 respectively present the means and t test results.

Table 4.17

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Frequency of Student Initiation	Males	159	4.56	2.60	0.21
	Females	299	5.65	2.75	0.16

Table 4.18

Independent Samples t test Analysis on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Frequency of Student Initiation	Equal variances assumed	3.83	0.51	-4.10***	456

*** $p < .001$

To determine any differences by age, another independent-samples *t* test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that 18-20-year old students and 21-24-year old students do not differ in their frequency of communication with their parents. Levene's Test for Equality of Variances was violated indicating that the two variances were not equal. Thus, a corrected *t* test was used to account for the unequal variances and to determine if results were in fact due to differences in group means or only due to chance. With an alpha set at .05, $t(237.39) = -2.21$, $p = .03$. The results indicate that there is a significant difference between 18-20-year old students and 21-24-year old students in the frequency of student initiated communication. Twenty-one to 24-year old ($M = 5.72$, $SD = 2.93$) students initiated communication with their parents significantly more than 18-20-year old ($M = 5.07$; $SD = 2.64$) students (Table 4.19).

Table 4.19

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Age

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Frequency of Student Initiation	18-20	320	5.07	2.64	0.15
	21-24	138	5.72	2.93	0.25

Table 4.20

Independent Samples Corrected t-test Analysis on the Frequency of Student Initiated Communication by Age

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		*t*-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Frequency of Student Initiation	Equal variances not assumed	8.70	0.003	-2.21*	237.39

* p < .05

Hypothesis 4: The frequency of parent-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age.

An ANOVA and two independent samples *t* tests were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that the frequency of parent-initiated communication does not differ by race, gender, and age. In looking at race, an ANOVA was used to determine if there were any differences between five different racial groups: African American/Black, Asian American/Pacific Islander, Caucasian/White, Hispanic/Latino, and Multiracial/Multiethnic. Due to a small number of respondents, Middle Eastern ($n = 22$), Native American ($n = 4$), and "Other" ($n = 23$) racial groups were not included in the analysis. The dependent variable was the number of times students reported that parents initiated communication with their student in the past week. With alpha set at .05, the ANOVA was significant, $F(4, 455) = 5.37$, $p < .01$. The strength of the relationship between the races and the frequency of parent-initiated communication, as assessed by η^2,

was weak, with race accounting for 5% of the variance of the dependent variable. Refer to Tables 4.21 and 4.22 for descriptive statistics and ANOVA results.

Table 4.21

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Race

Race	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Black	5.66	2.80	70
APA	6.10	2.85	111
White	4.90	2.59	174
Latino/a	6.33	2.57	69
Multiracial	5.11	2.75	36

Table 4.22

ANOVA on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Race

	Sum of Squares	Mean Square	F	Partial Eta Squared
Between Groups	156.46	39.12	5.37***	0.05
Within Groups	3315.91	7.29		
Total	3472.37			

*** $p < .001$

As Levene's test for equality of variances was not violated, the Tukey test was used to evaluate the pairwise differences among the means (Table 4.23). There were two significant differences. Parents of Hispanic/Latino students ($M = 6.33$, $SD = 2.57$) and parents of Asian American/Pacific Islander students ($M = 6.10$, $SD = 2.85$) initiated communication with their students more frequently than parents of Caucasian/White students ($M = 4.90$, $SD = 2.59$). There were no significant differences between parents of Caucasian/White students and parents of African American/Black students or parents of Multiracial/Multiethnic students. Additionally, there were no significant differences among parents of students of color.

Table 4.23

Tukey Post Hoc Tests on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Race

(I) Race	(J) Race	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Black	APA	-0.44	0.41	0.82
	White	0.75	0.38	0.28
	Latino/a	-0.68	0.46	0.58
	Multiracial	0.55	0.55	0.86
APA	Black	0.44	0.41	0.82
	White	1.19**	0.33	0.00**
	Latino/a	-0.23	0.41	0.98
	Multiracial	0.99	0.52	0.31
White	Black	-0.75	0.38	0.28
	APA	-1.19**	0.33	0.00**
	Latino/a	-1.43*	0.38	0.00**
	Multiracial	-0.21	0.49	0.99
Latino/a	Black	0.68	0.46	0.58
	APA	0.23	0.41	0.98
	White	1.43**	0.38	0.00**
	Multiracial	1.22	0.56	0.18
Multiracial	Black	-0.55	0.55	0.86
	APA	-0.99	0.52	0.31
	White	-0.21	0.49	0.99
	Latino/a	-1.22	0.56	0.18

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

To determine any differences between gender on the frequency of parent initiated communication, an independent samples t test was conducted. With alpha set at .05, the t test results were significant, $t(458) = -2.60$, $p = .01$. These results indicated that there was a significant difference between parents of male students and parents of female students in the frequency of parent initiated communication. Parents of females ($M = 5.78$, $SD = 2.78$) initiated communication with their student more frequently than parents of male ($M = 5.08$, $SD = 2.64$) students (Table 4.24).

Table 4.24

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Gender

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Frequency of Student Initiation	Males	159	5.08	2.64	0.21
	Females	301	5.78	2.78	0.16

Table 4.25

Independent Samples t-test analysis on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Frequency of Student Initiation	Equal variances assumed	3.30	0.07	-2.60	458*

* *p* < .05

The final independent-samples *t* test was conducted to evaluate the hypothesis

that the frequency of parent initiated communication does not differ by age. Levene's test

for equality of variances was violated indicating that the two sample variances were not

equal. With alpha set at .05, the corrected *t* test results were not significant, *t*(235.41) = -

1.73, p > .05 (Table 4.26). There were no significant differences between parents of 18-

20-year old students and parents of 21-24-year old students on the frequency of parent

initiated communication. Therefore, based on the results, the hypothesis that parents of

18-20-year old students and parents of 20-24-year old students do not differ in the

frequency of communication with their student cannot be rejected.

Table 4.26

Descriptive Statistics on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Age

	Age	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Frequency of Student Initiation	18-20	323	5.39	2.66	0.15
	21-24	137	5.89	2.93	0.25

Table 4.27

Independent Samples Corrected t-test Analysis on the Frequency of Parent Initiated Communication by Age

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means	
		F	Sig.	t	df
Frequency of Student Initiation	Equal variances not assumed	6.64	0.01	-1.73	235.41

* $p < .05$

Hypothesis 5: The methods used by students to communicate with their parents do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Several chi-square tests of independence were conducted to evaluate the hypothesis that methods used by students to communicate with their parents do not differ by race, gender, and age. To better understand the methods and frequency of use per week, students were provided a list of 10 methods and asked to choose Never, Rarely, Sometimes, and Often for each method. To examine the relationship between student methods and race, several chi-square analyses were used with alpha set to .05. The following two methods were significant: email, and in-person. For email use, proportionately White students were more likely to choose "sometimes" or "often" and students of color were more likely to choose "rarely" or "never." On a weekly basis, proportionately, Asian American and Latino students were more likely to "often" communicate with their parents in-person while White and Multiracial students were

more likely to "rarely" or "never" communicate with their parents in-person (Table 4.28).

Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to race with an $N = 459$, there were 69

African American students, 111 Asian American students, 175 Caucasian students, 69

Latino students, and 35 Multiracial students.

Table 4.28

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Race (Significant Results)

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Email						χ^2 (12, N=458) = 43.9***
	Black	38.2%	30.9%	16.2%	14.7%	
	APA	49.5%	13.5%	26.1%	10.8%	
	White	21.3%	25.3%	35.1%	18.4%	
	Latino/a	40.6%	27.5%	30.4%	1.4%	
	Multi-					
	Racial	30.6%	33.3%	25.0%	11.1%	
In Person						χ^2 (12, N=459) = 64.3***
	Black	29.0%	14.5%	33.3%	23.2%	
	APA	12.6%	17.1%	37.8%	32.4%	
	White	46.9%	17.1%	18.9%	17.1%	
	Latino/a	20.3%	17.4%	14.5%	47.8%	
	Multi-					
	Racial	40.0%	14.3%	25.7%	20.0%	

a. $N = 459$; African American students ($n = 69$), Asian American students ($n = 111$), Caucasian students ($n = 175$), Latino students ($n = 69$), and Multiracial students ($n = 35$)

*** $p < .001$

Finally, the rest of the chi-square tests contained more than 20% of cells with an

expected count less than 5. The following methods violated this assumption and

therefore, these chi-square results were discarded. The tables for the eight methods – cell

phone; text message; pay phone, home phone, or dorm phone; postal mail; instant

messenger; blog; and networking sites – are presented in Appendix G (Table G-1).

Another set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether methods

used by students differed by gender. Of the 10 methods and with alpha set at .05, there

was one significant result on the following method: cell phone. For cell phone use, proportionately men were more likely to choose "rarely" or "never" and proportionately more women chose "sometimes" or "often" (Table 4.29). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to gender with an $N = 462$, there were 160 males and 302 females.

Table 4.29

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Gender (Significant Results)

Method	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Cell Phone						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 25.8$***
	Males	3.8%	18.8%	40.0%	37.5%	
	Females	2.3%	6.6%	32.5%	58.6%	

a. $N = 462$; males ($n = 160$) and females ($n = 302$)
*** $p < .001$

There were no significant results between student methods and gender for the following five methods: text message; pay phone, home phone, or dorm phone; email; instant messenger; and in person. These tests indicated that male students and female students did not differ significantly in the use of the above methods of communication (Table G-2).

Based on the chi-square assumption previously mentioned, three chi-square analyses contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5. The chi-square results for the following three methods – postal mail, blog, and networking sites – were not used. The frequencies and percentages are presented in Appendix G (Table G-3).

Finally, a set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether student methods differed by age. With alpha set at .05, there was one significant result for the in-person method of communication. For in-person communication, proportionately more 18-20-year old students were likely to endorse "rarely" or "never" and proportionately

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21-24-year old students were more likely to endorse "sometimes" or "often" (Table 4.30).

Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to age with an $N = 459$, there were 320 18-20-year old students and 139 21-24 year-old students.

Table 4.30

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Age (Significant Results)

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
In Person						$\chi^2 (3, N=459) = 8.2*$
	18-20	35.0%	15.6%	25.6%	23.8%	
	21-24	23.0%	18.7%	25.2%	33.1%	

a. $N = 459$; 18-20-year old students ($n = 320$) and 21-24 year-old students ($n = 139$)
$* p < .05$

There were no significant results between student methods and age for the following five methods: cell phone, text message, pay phone, home phone, or dorm phone, email, and instant messenger. These tests indicated that 18-20-year old students and 21-24-year old students did not differ significantly in their use of the methods listed above. Refer to Appendix G (Table G-4) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Three methods contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5. Chi-square results for the following methods – postal mail, blog, and networking sites – were not used. Frequencies and percentages for these three methods are shown in Appendix G (Table G-5).

Hypothesis 6: The methods used by parents to communicate with their students do not differ by race, gender, and age.

Several chi-square analyses were conducted to assess whether the methods of communication used by parents to communicate with their students differ by race, gender, and age. Students were given a list of 10 methods and asked to report how

frequently their parents used those methods to communicate with them on a weekly basis. The 10 topics are the same as the ones students used to communicate with their parents. To examine the relationship between parent methods and race, several chi-square analyses were used with alpha set to .05. Significant chi-square results were found for the following three methods by race: home phone or pay phone; email; and in person. For home or pay phone, proportionately parents of African American and Latino students were more likely to endorse "sometimes" or "often" and proportionately parents of White students were more likely to endorse "never." Proportionately, parents of White students were more likely to "sometimes" or "often" use email and parents of Asian American students were more likely to choose "rarely" or "never." Conversely, parents of Asian American students were more likely to "often" communicate with their student in person and parents of White students were more likely to choose "never" (Table 4.31). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to race with an $N = 457$, there were 70 African American students, 108 Asian American students, 174 Caucasian students, 70 Latino students, and 35 Multiracial students.

Table 4.31

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Race (Significant Results)

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Home Phone or Pay Phone						χ^2 (12, N=454) = 26.5**
	Black	31.9%	0%	42.0%	26.1%	
	APA	39.8%	3.7%	34.3%	22.2%	
	White	42.2%	11.0%	23.7%	23.1%	
	Latino/a	27.5%	4.3%	36.2%	31.9%	
	Multi-Racial	45.7%	11.4%	22.9%	20.0%	
Email						χ^2 (12, N=457) = 35.8***
	Black	41.4%	25.7%	25.7%	7.1%	
	APA	49.1%	18.5%	23.1%	9.3%	
	White	21.8%	25.9%	33.9%	18.4%	
	Latino/a	45.7%	20.0%	30.0%	4.3%	
	Multi-Racial	48.6%	17.1%	22.9%	11.4%	
In Person						χ^2 (12, N=456) = 63.1***
	Black	40.6%	14.5%	29.0%	15.9%	
	APA	30.6%	9.9%	29.7%	29.7%	
	White	56.4%	14.0%	15.7%	14.0%	
	Latino/a	27.5%	15.9%	7.2%	49.3%	
	Multi-Racial	45.7%	17.1%	22.9%	14.3%	

a. $N = 457$; African American students ($n = 70$), Asian American students ($n = 108$), Caucasian students ($n = 174$), Latino students ($n = 70$), and Multiracial students ($n = 35$)

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

There were no significant differences for cell phone use by parents (Table H-1).

Additionally, five methods contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count

less than 5. Analyses for these five methods – text message, postal mail, instant

messenger, blog, and networking site – violated the chi-square assumption and were not

used. Frequencies and percentages for these five methods are presented in Appendix H

(Table H-2).

Another set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether methods used by parents differed by gender. Of the 10 methods and with alpha set at .05, there were no significant results for seven of the 10 methods. These analyses indicated that parents of male students and parents of female students did not differ significantly in the use of cell phone; text message; home or pay phone; email; instant messenger; and in person methods of communication (Table H-3).

A few chi-square tests violated the assumption of no more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5. The chi-square results for the following three methods – postal mail, blog, and networking sites – were discarded. Table H-4 presents frequencies and percentages of these methods used by parents.

Finally, a set of chi-square analyses were conducted to evaluate whether parent methods differed by age of student. With alpha set at .05, there was one significant result for the instant messenger method of communication. Proportionately, parents of 18-20-year old students were more likely to "often" use instant messenger to communicate with their student and parents of 21-24-year old students were more likely to endorse "never" (Table 4.32). Please note for all chi-square analyses relating to age with an $N = 453$, there were 315 18-20-year old students and 138 21-24-year old students.

Table 4.32

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Age (Significant Result)

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Instant Messenger						χ^2 (3, *N*=453) = 8.4*
	18-20	80.0%	8.6%	7.6%	3.8%	
	21-24	90.6%	5.1%	2.2%	2.2%	

a. $N = 453$; 18-20-year old students ($n = 315$) and 21-24 year-old students ($n = 138$)
* $p < .05$

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There were no significant results between student methods and age for the following five methods: cell phone, text message, home or pay phone, email, and in person. These analyses indicated that parents of 18-20-year old students and parents of 21-24-year old students did not differ significantly in their use of the methods listed above. Refer to Appendix H (Table H-5) for a complete list of percentages and non-significant chi-square results.

Four methods contained more than 20% of cells having an expected count less than 5. The chi-square results for the following topics – postal mail, blog, and networking sites – were discarded. The frequencies and percentages are illustrated in Appendix H (Table H-6).

Research Question 6: How satisfied are students with their parent-student communication?

To better understand the depth of satisfaction regarding parent-student communication, several items in the survey instrument asked students to report their level of satisfaction with the methods used, the quality of advice, the level of sharing, and the frequency of communication. Response choices were based on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly dissatisfied" to "strong satisfied." Frequencies and percentage responses for these five areas of satisfaction are presented in Table 4.33.

In general, 420 students were "satisfied" or "strongly satisfied" with the frequency of parent-student communication (78.6%). Four hundred forty-nine students were "satisfied" or "strongly satisfied" with the methods their parents chose to use (83.4%) while only 15 students were "dissatisfied" or "strongly dissatisfied" with the methods chosen by their parents (2.8%). The other 13.8% of students were neutral in

their feelings on the methods used by parents. Four hundred ten students were "satisfied"

or "strongly satisfied" with the frequency of parent *initiated* communication (76.1%). In

regards to the topics of communication, 404 students were "satisfied or "strongly

satisfied" with the quality of advice given by their parents (76.8%) and 406 students were

"satisfied" or "strongly satisfied" with their level of parent-student sharing (79.1%).

Table 4.33

Frequencies and Percentages of Student Satisfaction

Variables	Strongly Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Strongly Satisfied
Satisfied with Frequency	6 (1.1%)	24 (4.5%)	84 (15.7%)	241 (45.1%)	179 (33.5%)
Satisfied with Methods used By Parents	6 (1.1%)	9 (1.7%)	74 (13.8%)	266 (49.4%)	183 (34.0%)
Satisfied with Frequency of Parent Initiation	4 (0.7%)	23 (4.3%)	102 (18.9%)	243 (45.1%)	167 (31.0%)
Satisfied with Quality of Parent Advice	5 (1.0%)	23 (4.4%)	94 (17.9%)	244 (46.4%)	160 (30.4%)
Satisfied with Level of Sharing With Parents	4 (0.8%)	19 (3.7%)	84 (16.4%)	255 (49.7%)	151 (29.4%)

Summary

In general, students and parents both initiated communication with each other an

average of approximately five times a week, and both parties most frequently chose cell

phone as the preferred method. Additionally, students and parents commonly

communicated about physical health issues, current financial situation, friends, living

situation, and career planning. Discussion of the findings will be in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Implications

This study investigated the student-parent relationship by understanding the communication patterns between undergraduate students and their parents. Based on the findings in the previous chapter and the literature discussed in Chapter 2, this chapter will present general conclusions and a discussion of the results. It will also recognize the limitations of this investigation and provide suggestions for current practice in working with undergraduate students and their parents. Additionally, this chapter will make suggestions for future research related to the methods and findings of this study.

Discussion of Findings of Primary Research Questions

Research question one asked about what topics undergraduate students were discussing with their parents. Students identified the topics in which they asked their parents for advice and those topics which they shared information; this distinction provides more in-depth information regarding student-parent conversations. Results indicated that students commonly asked for advice on the following topics: physical health issues, current financial situation, friends, living situation, and career planning. With the exception of career planning, all other topics are likely considered everyday issues. Although students are not asking for advice about everything, perhaps they are asking for their parents' guidance on issues that were once considered part of growing up (Chickering & Reisser, 1993). In regards to sharing information, students discuss the same five topics identified above, as well as the topics of grades, classes, professors, stress, eating/nutrition, credit card, and organizations/clubs. This generation of students as Millennials (Howe & Strauss, 2000) often feel pressured to perform and perhaps that is

why so many are talking to their parents about stress, classes, grades, and co-curricular activities.

Yet, it is also interesting to consider the topics that are never discussed. In communicating with parents, 81.3% of students never asked for advice on sex, and 69.5% never asked for advice on alcohol. When it came to sharing information with their parents, 81.3% of students still did not discuss sex and 63.8% did not discuss alcohol. Since previous studies (Birch, O'Toole, & Kanu, 1997; Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000; Joo, Grable, & Bagwell, 2003; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001) have concluded that students who talk to their parents about alcohol and sex are less likely to engage in risky behavior, the results of this study may suggest that respondents to this study are more likely to engage in high risk behavior. While this study focuses on the relationship between student and parent, it is not known what type of communication is occurring between both parties. Parents could be addressing alcohol and sex by discussing the negative physical consequences, such as driving drunk or STD's, rather than focusing on emotional, cultural, or personal repercussions.

It is also important to consider that these topics are sensitive and even in clinical settings students are unlikely to initiate conversation regarding sex and alcohol until directly asked (V.S. Boyd, personal communication, May 24, 2007). As a result, if parents are not asking directly, students may not discuss these topics. This pattern may be applicable to the parent-student relationship or even the student-university relationship. As students in this study are not discussing these two topics, it may become the responsibility of universities and colleges to encourage students and parents to engage in

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these dialogues with one another. Universities may need to educate parents on how to speak with their student directly in regards to sex and alcohol.

Although the results of this study were based on student reported data, many results are consistent with the responses found in the 2nd Annual College Parent Experiences Survey (College Parents of America, 2007) which is based on parent reported data. The respondents in this study frequently asked their parents for advice on physical health issues, career planning, living situation, friends, and current financial situation with their parents. Additionally, students in this study shared information with their parents regarding academics, health, finances, friends, co-curricular activities, and career issues. The only topic College Parents of America identified as one that elicits frequent advice is finances. However, the Survey results indicated that parents are often concerned about academics, health and safety, finances, career planning, and personal relationships. Trice (2002) also noted in his study that students typically communicated with their parents regarding academics, social problems, and financial issues. The results of this current study provided a more in-depth look at the different aspects of academics, health and safety, finances, and personal relationships.

Research questions two and three examined how frequently students and parents initiated communication with each other. The results indicated that students initiated communication with their parents an average of 5.36 ($SD = 2.81$) times a week. Similarly, students reported that parents initiated communication with their student an average of 5.67 ($SD = 2.79$) times a week. Although the average for weekly communication was five times a week, the most frequent response was "nine or more times a week" for both students (19.1%) and parents (21.5%). Initiating communication

two or three times a week were the next most common responses from both parents and students. Since analyses were not conducted on the correlation of students and parents' response to these two items, it is not clear whether some students and parents are talking as frequently as 18 or more times a week. It is also unknown if there was an equal relationship between students and parents in their initiation or frequency. It is possible that the parent who initiates communication 9 or more times a week has the student who only initiates once or twice a week. Further research and correlation would help to identify this relationship.

Previous studies support this finding as Hofer and Kennedy (2006) also illustrated that students seek out parental guidance and advice just as much as parents want to stay involved. Similarly, Trice (2002) found that students contacted their parents approximately six times a week during stressful periods in the semester. The College Parents of America (2007) found in their most recent survey that parents are communicating with their student two to three times per week or more, but did not ask how often parents or students initiated those conversations. While dimensions of Erickson's psychosocial theory (Corey, 2005), attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1987), and parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971) were not directly measured in this study, it is possible that the frequency and initiation of communication between students and parents are related to the above theories.

Research question four sought to look at the methods most commonly used to communicate between students and parents. In previous studies, the rise of new technology has contributed to the increase in student-parent communication. Many students are now using cell phone, email, text message, and instant messenger to

communicate with their parents (College Parents of America, 2007; Hofer & Kennedy, 2006; Trice, 2002). This study illustrated that students and parents did in fact, use cell phones most frequently to communicate. This was true across five racial groups, men and women, and two age groups. The next most common method was in-person communication. This may be due to the fact that 20% of the respondents in this survey were living in their parent or parents' home. It would be important to consider the various demographics of those living at home as this study does not correlate those variables. Although literature (College Parents of America; Hofer & Kennedy; Trice) indicates that new technology has led to increased communication, more than two-thirds of the respondents never used text message, pay or home phone, postal mail, instant messenger, blogging, or networking sites. These methods of communication as they relate to race, gender, and age will be discussed in the following section.

Research question five examined whether the topics, frequency, and methods used by students and parents differed by race, gender, and age. In regards to race, cultural differences often play a role in how students interact with their parents and as a result influence how students respond and communicate with their parents (Taub, 1997). Unlike existing literature which states that Asian American students frequently discuss career choices (Tang, 2002), this study illustrated that Asian American students reported communicating about career planning with their parents less often than White, Latino, and African American students. It is important to note that this study did not ask students to report how often their parents initiated communication regarding career planning. It is possible that parents of Asian American students would be more likely to bring up career planning, thus, further research on this topic would be beneficial.

In general, proportionately Asian American and Latino students did communicate with their parents significantly more often than their Caucasian/White counterparts. Although White students and parents typically use cell phone or email to communicate with each other, the Asian American and Latino students in this study often communicated via cell phone or in person. Only 1.4% of Latino students often used email in comparison to 18.4% of Caucasian/White students as this difference may be attributed to lack of computer access in the homes or work places of Latino students or their parents. This might also indicate a gap in computer literacy among certain racial populations. This lack of email use by Latino parents and students may be related to cultural or personal preferences in communication, particularly with family; perhaps students and parents of Latino students prefer in-person or phone conversations. Students and parents may also feel that they are better able to express themselves verbally rather than through written communication. It would also be important to consider possible differences in communication methods by socioeconomic status, immigration status, and number of years in the US, as these factors were not analyzed in this study.

As for gender, previous research reported that female students were more likely to be connected and attached to their parents than male peers (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Manttanah, Hancock, & Brand, 2004; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Taub, 1995, 1997) as women tend to develop through attachments and relationships, especially with parents (Kenny & Donaldson; Samuolis, Layburn, & Schiaffino, 2001). Noller and Bagi (1985) found that female students were more comfortable talking about sex, relationships, and general problems with their parents than men. They also found that the topics discussed varied between mothers and fathers. Although this study did not ask students to

discriminate between conversations with mothers or fathers, female students did discuss all significant topics with their parents more often than male students. In fact, female students and parents of female students, as reported by students, also initiated communication with each other significantly more than male students and parents of male students, as reported by students. Although female and male students both used cell phones frequently, the results of this study indicated that female students used cell phones more often than male students. The differences between male and female students could be linked to the gender norms in the US culture (Cooke, Klopf, & Ishii, 1991; Wang & Mallinckrodt, 2006). Male students may not have as much practice talking about personal issues, emotions, or thoughts and thus, they may not think to discuss these topics with their parents quite as regularly as their female counterparts (Cooke, Klopf, & Ishii; Kenny & Donaldson; Taub, 1995, 1997).

In relation to age, previous studies primarily focus on freshman students and their need for emotional support and connectedness (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Taub, 1997; Wintre & Yaffe, 2000). Having parents involved was related to social competence and resulted in a decrease of stress for younger students (Kenny & Donaldson; Wintre & Yaffe). As supported in the results from this study, 18-20-year old students were more likely to often ask for advice and talk to their parents about academics, co-curricular activities, and social life than 21-24-year old students. Taub (1997) found that senior women students still sought parental involvement but in a different way than freshman students. Senior women students more frequently discussed career topics with their parents (Taub) but this study did not show that 21-24-year students communicated significantly more than their younger counterparts in regards to career planning.

Contrary to existing literature (Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Taub, 1997; Wintre & Yaffe, 2000), the 21-24-year old students in this study reported communicating with their parents significantly more often than the 18-20-year old students. As students mature and move through dependency and independence (Chickering & Reisser, 1993), the 21-24-year old students may have become more interdependent. It is also possible that with aging parents or grandparents, older students are more aware and attentive to their family. This may relate to attachment theory and the idea that leaving college and entering the world is a source of anxiety and a parallel experience to the "strange situation" (Ainsworth, 1987; Kenny, 1990; Lopez, 1995).

The only significant difference in regards to age and methods used by parents was that parents of younger students (18-20) were more likely to use instant messenger when communicating with their student than parents of older students (21-24), as reported by students. This finding could be related to the notion that Millennial students grew up in a technological world and are comfortable with cell phone, emails, and instant messages (Howe & Strauss, 2000). It is possible that younger students (18-20-years old) and their parents have been using these various tools to communicate since elementary and middle school, whereas older students (21-24-years old) may have typically conversed over phone or cell phone and did not regularly use instant messenger until later in their education.

In the midst of increased communication, research question six sought to examine student satisfaction with the frequency, methods used, quality of advice, and level of sharing between parents and students. Although Hofer and Kennedy (2006) found that students wanted their parents to stay involved, little research exists to determine the

satisfaction of students in today's current relationships. Although some may assume that students seeking advice or sharing information equates to satisfaction (Trice, 2002), the results in this study indicate that more than two-thirds of respondents were satisfied or strongly satisfied with the communication with their parent. This could be attributed to the fact that Millennial students are used to attention (Howe & Strauss, 2003) and any form of communication with parents results in positive feelings.

In general, this study supported many of the existing findings from previous studies, although it is important to note that communication between Millennial students and their parents seem to have increased from 10 to 15 years ago (Trice, 2002). It is also critical to consider the topics that are not discussed as this may indicate a need for student affairs professionals to address. These data help to shed light on the characteristics regarding the Millennial generation and what may evolve over the next 10-20-years as Millennials become parents. Since researchers and associations (College Parents of America, 2007; Hofer & Kennedy, 2006; Trice, 2002) are beginning to conduct research on students and parents, the results of this study could contribute to the literature in studying the trends of parental involvement.

Although this study provided greater in-depth information regarding frequency, methods, and topics of discussion than previous studies (Hofer & Kennedy, 2006; Noller & Bagi, 1985; Trice, 2002), it was not possible to gauge the quality of communication between parents and students. Additionally, there were no items that measured the type or quality of parent-student or family relationship. Without understanding family dynamics, it is difficult to generalize these findings to all parents and students. It is important to note

the limitations and consider the future research that is needed to better understand

student-parent communication at all types of institutions in various locations.

Limitations of the Study

Although this research provides more in-depth information about the topics

discussed, frequency, initiation, and methods of communication between students and

parents, it is essential to recognize the limitations of this study. Further research on this

topic could help to address some of these limitations and provide a greater foundation for

studying parents and students.

Potentially limiting factors in this study relate to the data collection, sample

selection, response rate, and methods. It is important to note that the survey was

distributed during midterms (March 2007) and thus, students may have had increased

communication with their parents during that stressful time (Trice, 2002). Additionally,

the second week of data collection was over spring break. Although two reminder emails

were sent, there may have been a greater response rate at another point in the semester. It

is also possible that students were being surveyed frequently and were no longer

interested in answering further assessments. In thinking about the characteristics of the

Millennial generation, it may be possible to assume that many students were highly

involved in a vast array of curricular or co-curricular activities (Howe & Strauss, 2000)

and as a result, did not feel they had time to sit down and take a survey. The difficulty in

reaching this generation of students is an indirect finding in and of itself.

This study only produced a 17.9% response rate, which is approximately 12% -

20% lower than expected for an online survey (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). This also means

that approximately 80% of the students sampled did not answer and are not accounted for

in the results. It is possible that the students who chose to take this survey are also the same students who already speak with their parents more frequently. Thus, results of this study may not be able to be generalized to all undergraduate students at the university at which this research was conducted. It is also important to note that this study only accounted for student self-report. Results on parent communication patterns may be different from a parent self-report survey.

It is important to note that although the sample was chosen and stratified according to the five racial groups available in the institutional database, this study allowed students to self-identify their own race. Since the institutional database did not include categories for Middle Eastern or Multiracial/Multiethnic students, it was not possible to include these two groups as part of the racial stratification. This study used only student "self report" race, rather than the "institutional reported" race. By allowing students to self-identify their race, it was not possible to determine exact numbers and percentages of non-respondents and usable respondents by racial group. Additionally, only four Native American, 22 Middle Eastern, and 23 "Other" respondents were included in the usable data for the descriptive questions. The above numbers were too low to include these populations in the chi-square analyses as it is necessary for each sub-group to have at least 30 cases (Upcraft & Schuh, 1996).

In regards to the analyses, several chi-square tests resulted in small cell sizes which violated the assumption that 80% of the cells must have an expected count greater than five (Green & Salkind, 2005; Upcraft & Schuh, 1996). Although there were 539 usable cases, there were a large number of individuals who did not commonly use text message, instant messenger, blogging, networking sites, and postal mail to communicate.

Further research and new data collection techniques would help to identify more factors related to student-parent communication.

Implications for Practice and Research

This study provides in-depth empirical data on the relationship and communication patterns of undergraduate students and their parents. The more information known about parent-student communication, the more likely researchers and practitioners will be able to understand, conceptualize, and explain relationships today. As noted previously 81.3% of students are not discussing the topic of sex and 69.5% never ask their parents for advice on alcohol. This may be indicative of a need for more university resources for our Millennial student body. As students in this study are not discussing these two topics, it may become the responsibility of universities and colleges to encourage students and parents to engage in these dialogues with one another. Perhaps orientation sessions or family newsletters could help to initiate these conversations between students and parents. Parent and family offices could suggest "Tips of the Week" or "Funky Family Facts" for parents to think about and provide conversation starters for those families that may need the extra assistance.

As mentioned previously, students may tend to only initiate conversation regarding sex and alcohol when asked directly about these topics (V.S. Boyd, personal communication, May 24, 2007). University staff may need to educate parents on the need to address these two topics using a direct approach with their student. Within the university, staff and administrators may want to directly initiate these conversations with their students to determine what is happening on campus. It is possible that parents and universities may not know the current language used by students to communicate about

sex and alcohol. While prior research (Birch, O'Toole, & Kanu, 1997; Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000; Joo, Grable, & Bagwell, 2003; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001) suggests that parents are the best individuals to discuss these topics, it is important to recognize that these studies only examined the parent-student relationship on risky behavior as associated with alcohol and sex. What is not clear is whether conversations between students and peers, students and university staff, and students and counseling professionals would also lead to a reduction of risky behavior. As this current study only focuses on parents and students, it would be critical to further investigate these other relationships.

The results of this study could also indicate that students are in need of resources and staff that feel comfortable engaging in these conversations. It may become necessary for student affairs professionals to be well-versed in these areas as students seek out advice, guidance, or someone to listen. Practitioners might want to attend workshops or conferences to learn more about the physical and emotional influences or dangers of sex and alcohol, and how they can help to talk about these topics in an open manner. It may be helpful for professionals to stay alert and observant of the student body to learn the new lingo or phrases that surround both topics. Speaking the same language as students may help them to feel more comfortable in discussing sex and alcohol. It may be necessary for practitioners and researchers to converse with colleagues in the field, engage in dialogue with parents and students, or conduct focus groups to better understand why these topics are not being discussed and how they might be able to initiate these conversations. There may be numerous reasons why students are not

discussing these topics, and while this study does not address those factors, it may be helpful for staff and administrators to speak openly and willingly about alcohol and sex.

It is also important to note the lack of conversation on these two topics since more than two-thirds of students never discussed the topic of sex or alcohol with their parents and previous research supports that open discussion between students and parents lead to healthier and safer sexual and drinking behavior (Birch, O'Toole, & Kanu, 1997; Booth-Butterfield & Sidelinger, 1998; Deakin & Cohen, 1986; Hickman, Bartholomae, & McKenry, 2000; Joo, Grable, & Bagwell, 2003; Mueller & Powers, 1990; Palmer, Pinto, & Parente, 2001). Although a high number of students did not report any communication with their parents on sex, it may be due to the fact that sex could be considered a high risk or taboo topic, whereas classes, grades, or career planning are more low risk and less personal. Additionally, sex and alcohol may not be common topics of discussion for students and parents that identify as highly religious; however, this study did not address the issue of religion. These are possibilities to consider as it may be important for professionals to understand the cultural, class, and religious differences among students and their families and how that affects their communication.

Although students (85.6%) and parents (86.6%) primarily used cell phones to communicate with one another, the difference between racial groups in the use of email is important to note. For both students and parents, 18.4% of Caucasian/White students and their parents "often" use email while only 1.4% of Hispanic/Latino students and 4.3% of their parents use email. As the results of this study illustrate, Hispanic/Latino students and their parents are not using email often and this may be due to lack of computer access

or Internet access. It may also be a reflection of personal or cultural preferences in communication between students and parents.

This finding may affect the methods in which student affairs professionals choose to address and connect with this student population. For freshmen or transfer orientation information, it may be necessary to send hard copies instead of relying on online notices, emails, or newsletters. Additionally, this finding may raise implications for faculty as not all students will be on the same page in terms of comfort with computers, software, hardware, Internet research or use of online tools. Student affairs professionals could create orientation sessions on these different aspects or provide information on where students can go to receive additional assistance in navigating computers and technology.

Additionally, knowing the methods students frequently use or don't use to communicate with their parents might help universities to understand how best to reach their own students. In case of campus emergency, professionals may choose to use a cell phone alert rather than sending out an email alert. While text message was not a commonly used method between students and parents, the uniqueness and novelty of receiving a text alert from the university may encourage students to check the message faster than other methods. This again could affect faculty in how they reach their students both inside and outside of the class. This study only focuses on the methods used between students and parents, not students and peers, or students and university staff. Seeing that email is often used by the university, faculty may choose to communicate with their students via non-traditional methods, such as blogging or networking sites. Although these means are not commonly used between students and parents, faculty use may seem like a novel change that might entice students.

It is also critical to consider the frequency of student-parent communication as the average student ($M = 5.36$) and parent ($M = 5.67$) initiates conversation with one another regularly throughout the week. For student affairs professionals, this may indicate a need that is not being addressed on campus. The results of this study indicate that students are often asking their parents for advice on physical health issues, career planning, living situation, friends, and current financial situation. Perhaps these areas and topics need to be addressed in a different way to attract students and allow for open discussion.

In relation to the topics of physical health issues or stress, health centers on campus may need to start more programming or advertisement of the services available and perhaps recruit peer educators to reach out to students in their residence halls. Since students seem to be communicating with their parents frequently about career planning, career centers might consider new ways of connecting with younger students and increasing visibility on campus so that more students are aware of the services and people available to help them in their career development. Additionally, career centers or other departments may consider inviting financial planners to campus in an effort to educate and prepare students for college living, spending, and savings. Financial planners may be beneficial to have as early as new student orientation. By addressing some of these issues on the university level, students may not feel the need to ask their parents for advice.

Finally, residence hall advisors, student affairs professionals, and faculty may want to be aware of the typical issues that are arising among students in their personal lives. If students are frequently asking for advice on friends and living situation, perhaps there are concerns that are not being addressed. Within both topics are subtopics that help to define these categories. Understanding these nuances would provide professionals with

more knowledge of the issues on campus. This may involve more integrated programming for residence hall advisors or a more serious emphasis of roommate contracts during the first week of the semester. It may also be necessary to determine if students are talking about these topics with their parents or in their home before leaving for college. For those that are still living in home, it may be interesting to see if students and parents are discussing the differences of starting college and living at home. For off-campus housing offices, this may also indicate a need to reach off-campus students living in apartments, rental homes, or parents' homes. Since approximately 20% of the students in this study lived at home, it may be vital for professionals to consider the differences when communicating with parents whose students live at home versus students living on-campus as the needs of those populations might be different from one another. Perhaps students need more guidance or information on leasing, choosing roommates, or communicating with their parents as they bridge the gap between adolescence and adulthood. It is difficult to know just what the issues are within friends and living situation as additional research and perhaps focus groups are needed to better understand these areas.

The results of this study could be related to a number of factors, such as current residence, immigration status, socioeconomic status, cultural differences, family dynamics, and relationship norms, which were not analyzed or correlated in this thesis. Further quantitative and qualitative research is needed to better understand the trends surrounding parent-student communication.

Suggestions for Future Research

As there were limitations to this study, further investigation would be beneficial. Initially, it would be useful to conduct this study at other institutions. Although this study took place at a large, public, research university located in the Mid Atlantic, responses may differ at smaller, private institutions located in the north, south, Midwest, or western parts of the country. Current living situation was not taken into account for the analyses in this study; however, the majority of respondents lived in residence halls. In the future, a recommendation would be to specifically target students living off-campus, in fraternity/sorority houses, and those living in parents' homes.

For the survey instrument, it would be helpful to add a few demographic questions to gain a better understanding of the respondent population. In the future, the survey should examine the number of parents a students has, the gender and age of parents, whether parents are biological, foster, or adoptive, and perhaps the religion(s) of the parents and student. As noted previously, parents or students that identify as highly religious may not feel the need to discuss the same topics as those families who do not identify as highly religious. To better understand the implications of some existing literature (Noller & Bagi, 1985), the survey questions could also ask if students discussed certain topics more frequently with their mother or the father or primary caregiver. Additionally, it would be interesting to see if students are more frequently communicating with one parent or the other, as well as surveying parents to gain their account of the relationship and conversations.

To better understand the dynamics of each family, focus groups could be conducted to gain more depth in the topics discussed or not discussed, as well as the type

of family relationship that exists. It might be interesting to consider parent perceptions of communication with their student to broaden the lens of student-parent relationships. Additional correlations would help to determine the relationship between students in this study and their current residence, immigration status, or their socioeconomic status. Furthermore, cultural differences related to immigration or current residence may also play a role in the frequency and type of communication present. Further research examining gender by race would provide more information on whether gender differences apply across race or if cultural differences are more prevalent.

For a better idea of significant differences, analyses could be conducted on topics discussed, initiation, methods, and frequency of communication by immigration status, international student status, living areas, and class level. Another avenue for future research might include investigating the quality of students' relationship with each parent or guardian and assessing the methods, frequency and satisfaction with each individual parent rather than the parental unit. In the literature review, Erikson's psychosocial development theory (Corey, 2005), attachment theory (Ainsworth, 1987) and parenting styles (Baumrind, 1971) were examined to provide a context for this family dynamic; further research on this area in relation to student-parent communication patterns would be useful to theorists and practitioners. Future studies could include measurements or dimensions of student-parent attachment and parenting styles to better understand how these constructs affect the frequency, initiation, methods, and topics discussed. This may shed light on nuances between gender of student, parents, and of possible cultural differences of both parties. Quantitative analyses could consider using a relationship quality instrument or family dynamic instrument. Focus groups, individual interviews, or

case studies could be used to gain qualitative data. These findings would provide a more well-rounded view of undergraduate students and the communication patterns with their parents. In regards to student satisfaction with the frequency, quality, and level of parent communication, results may indicate that the high number of "satisfied" or "strongly satisfied" students relates to positive parenting. Perhaps involved parents are viewed more positively by their student than uninvolved parents; this would be an interesting correlation to study further.

In considering the topics not discussed in this study, further research on high risk behavior and communication may be helpful for universities and colleges. As the respondents in this study did not frequently discuss alcohol and sex, future studies might explore these two topics in particular. As Millennials are a new generation, it might be useful to see if the existing literature on parent-student communication and risky behavior still applies. Focus groups or interviews would provide more information as to what students are discussing and what parents might think they are relaying to their student. By understanding the depth of content and frequency of communication, researchers and practitioners may be able to create interventions that are appropriate for their institution.

Summary

Both the significant findings and insignificant findings of this investigation help practitioners and researchers to better understand student-parent relationships and give insight into practices that can help institutions partner with students and parents in a collaborative way while promoting student autonomy and interdependence. In combining the existing literature on parental involvement and well adjusted students with the common topics that are discussed, professionals can better target their conversations with

both parents and students to decrease risky or unhealthy behaviors. By understanding the frequencies and methods of communication in addition to topics discussed or not discussed, practitioners are able to assess the current college environment and to concentrate on any needs that are not being addressed.

As there were limitations with the data collection and analyses, further studies on student-parent communication is necessary and will be beneficial as Millennial students graduate and enter the work force. Deeper understanding of the communication patterns between students and parents allows for better relationships between institutions and their constituents. Therefore, additional research on student-parent communication will contribute to a more solid foundation of knowledge surrounding the increasing involvement of parents.

Appendix A

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

2100 Blair Lee Building
College Park, Maryland 20742-5121
301.405.4212 TEL 301.314.1475 FAX
irb@deans.umd.edu
www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB

February 15, 2007

MEMORANDUM

Application Approval Notification

To:	Dr. Marsha Guenzler-Stevens Christine Yip Department of Counseling and Personnel Services
From:	Roslyn Edson, M.S., CIP *RE* IRB Manager University of Maryland, College Park
Re:	**IRB Application Number:** <u>07-0065</u> **Project Title:** "Communication Patterns of Undergraduate Students and their Parents"
Approval Date:	February 12, 2007
Expiration Date:	February 12, 2008
Type of Application:	Initial
Type of Research:	Nonexempt
Type of Review For Application:	Expedited

The University of Maryland, College Park Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved your IRB application. The research was approved in accordance with 45 CFR 46, the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, and the University's IRB policies and procedures. Please reference the above-cited IRB application number in any future communications with our office regarding this research.

Recruitment/Consent: For research requiring written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped informed consent document is enclosed. The IRB approval expiration date has been stamped on the informed consent document. Please keep copies of the consent forms used for this research for three years after the completion of the research.

Continuing Review: If you intend to continue to collect data from human subjects or to analyze private, identifiable data collected from human subjects, after the expiration date for this approval (indicated above), you must submit a renewal application to the IRB Office at least 30 days before the approval expiration date.

Modifications: Any changes to the approved protocol must be approved by the IRB before the change is implemented, except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subjects. If you would like to modify the approved protocol, please submit an addendum request to the IRB Office. The instructions for submitting a request are posted on the IRB web site at: http://www.umresearch.umd.edu/IRB/irb_Addendum%20Protocol.htm. *(continued)*

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Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks: You must promptly report any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others to the IRB Manager at 301-405-0678 or redson@umresearch.umd.edu.

Student Researchers: Unless otherwise requested, this IRB approval document was sent to the Principal Investigator (PI). The PI should pass on the approval document or a copy to the student researchers. This IRB approval document may be a requirement for student researchers applying for graduation. The IRB may not be able to provide copies of the approval documents if several years have passed since the date of the original approval.

Additional Information: Please contact the IRB Office at 301-405-4212 if you have any IRB-related questions or concerns.

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Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Communication Patterns between Undergraduate Students and their Parents

This is a research project being conducted by Marsha Guenzler-Stevens and Christine Yip at the University of Maryland, College Park. We are inviting you to participate in this research project because you are an undergraduate student between the ages of 18 and 24. The purpose of this study is to examine the student-parent relationship by understanding how undergraduate students communicate with their parents. The procedure includes the completion of this five minute online survey.

We will keep your personal information confidential. To help protect your confidentiality, all data will be stored in password-protected computer files. If we write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible. Your information may be shared with representatives of the University of Maryland, College Park or governmental authorities if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

There are no known risks associated with participating in this research project. This research is not designed to help you personally, but we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study through improved understanding of communication patterns between undergraduate students and their parents.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to participate in this research, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you stop participating at any time, you will not be penalized or lose any benefits to which you otherwise qualify.

This research is being conducted Marsha Guenzler-Stevens at the University of Maryland, College Park. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact:

Dr. Marsha Guenzler-Stevens
0110 Stamp Student Union
University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742
301-314-8505.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject or wish to report a research-related injury, please contact:

Institutional Review Board Office
University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742
irb@deans.umd.edu
301-405-4212

This research has been reviewed according to the University of Maryland, College Park IRB procedures for research involving human subject.

Initials____ Date____

Your signature indicates that:
- You are at least 18 years of age
- The research has been explained to you
- Your questions have been fully answered
- You freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this research project.

Please click "I AGREE" if you understand the previously mentioned information and wish to participate in the research.

I AGREE

IRB APPROVED
EXPIRES ON

FEB 1 2 2008

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
COLLEGE PARK

Appendix B

Email Content

Subject: 5 Minute Thesis Survey for a Graduate Terp

Dear Student,

On behalf of the College Student Personnel program, in the College of Education, we are requesting your participation in completing our survey. The purpose of this survey is to learn more about student-parent communication. The data we receive will be used solely for the purposes outlined in our proposal and will not be released to any third parties. Once the information is used, the data will be securely destroyed.

By completing this survey, you may enter your name and email address in a drawing to **WIN one of three prizes**:
- **Grand Prize: $50 gift card to the University Bookstore**
- **Second Prize: $30 gift card to Target**
- **Third Prize: $10 gift card to Starbucks Coffee**

Please click on this link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=949623356796 and read the informed consent prior to taking the survey.

Thank in advance for your consideration,

Christine Yip and Marsha Guenzler-Stevens

Subject: Reminder to take this 5 Minute Survey and a chance to Win a Prize!

You were previously emailed a 5 minute survey. This is a friendly reminder to please complete the survey for a chance to win some prizes! Thank you to those who have already taken the survey – your participation is greatly appreciated!

The purpose of this survey is to learn more about student-parent communication. The data we receive will be used solely for the purposes outlined in our proposal and will not be released to any third parties. Once the information is used, the data will be securely destroyed.

By completing this survey, you may enter your name and email address in a drawing to **WIN one of three prizes**:

- **Grand Prize: $50 gift card to the University Bookstore**
- **Second Prize: $30 gift card to Target**
- **Third Prize: $10 gift card to Starbucks Coffee**

Please click on this link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=949623356796 and read the informed consent prior to taking the survey.

Thank in advance for your consideration,

Christine Yip and Marsha Guenzler-Stevens

Appendix C

Student-Parent Communication
Please respond to the following questions by clicking the appropriate response choices.
This survey takes approximately 5 minutes to complete. Thank you for your participation.

1. **In the last week, how often did YOU INITIATE communication with your parents using the following methods?** (Circle only <u>one</u> response for each item)

   1 = Never   3 = Sometimes
   2 = Rarely   4 = Often

   Cell phone 1 2 3 4
   Text message..1 2 3 4
   A pay phone, home phone, or
    dorm phone 1 2 3 4
   Email...1 2 3 4
   Postal mail...1 2 3 4
   Instant messenger..................................1 2 3 4
   Blog...1 2 3 4
   MySpace, Xanga, or
    another type of
    networking database.............................1 2 3 4
   In person...1 2 3 4
   Other: _____.............1 2 3 4
      (please describe)

2. **In the past week, approximately how many times did YOU INITIATE communication with your parents?** (Choose <u>one</u>.)

   1. 0 times a week
   2. 1 time a week
   3. 2 times a week
   4. 3 times a week
   5. 4 times a week
   6. 5 times a week
   7. 6 times a week
   8. 7 times a week
   9. 8 times a week
   10. 9 or more times a week

3. **How satisfied are you with the frequency of communication with your parents?** (Circle one.)

   Strongly Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Neutral   Satisfied   Strongly Satisfied

4. **In the last week, how often did your PARENTS INITIATE communication with you using the following methods?** (Circle only <u>one</u> response for each item)

1 = Never   **3 = Sometimes**
2 = Rarely   **4 = Often**

Cell phone 1 2 3 4
Text message...1 2 3 4
Home phone or pay phone 1 2 3 4
Email..1 2 3 4
Postal mail...1 2 3 4
Instant messenger.................................1 2 3 4
Blog..1 2 3 4
MySpace, Xanga, or
   another type of
   networking database.............................1 2 3 4
In person..1 2 3 4
Other: _____............1 2 3 4
   (please describe)

5. **How satisfied are you with the method of communication used by your parent(s)?** (Circle one.)

Strongly Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Neutral   Satisfied   Strongly Satisfied

6. **In the past week, approximately how many times did your PARENTS INITIATE communication with you?** (Choose <u>one</u>.)

1. 0 times a week
2. 1 time a week
3. 2 times a week
4. 3 times a week
5. 4 times a week
6. 5 times a week
7. 6 times a week
8. 7 times a week
9. 8 times a week
10. 9 or more times a week

7. **How satisfied are you with the frequency of parent-initiated contact?** (Circle one.)

Strongly Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Neutral   Satisfied   Strongly Satisfied

8. **In the past month, how often have you ASKED your PARENTS for ADVICE regarding the following topics?** (Circle only <u>one</u> response for each item)

1 = Never   **3 = Sometimes**
2 = Rarely   **4 = Often**

Grades 1 2 3 4
Classes...1 2 3 4
Professors..1 2 3 4
Teaching Assistant 1 2 3 4
Administrators..1 2 3 4

Physical Health issues 1 2 3 4
Stress 1 2 3 4
Loneliness 1 2 3 4
Feeling Down 1 2 3 4
Eating/Nutrition......................................1 2 3 4
Body Image 1 2 3 4
Alcohol..1 2 3 4
Sex 1 2 3 4

Credit card..1 2 3 4
Current Job...1 2 3 4
College Loans 1 2 3 4
Current Financial Situation 1 2 3 4
Future Financial Situation 1 2 3 4

1 = Never   **3 = Sometimes**
2 = Rarely   **4 = Often**

Roommate(s)..1 2 3 4
Friends...1 2 3 4
Living Situation......................................1 2 3 4
Significant Others...................................1 2 3 4
Social Events..1 2 3 4

Organizations or Clubs...........................1 2 3 4
Sports 1 2 3 4
Community Service Activities 1 2 3 4
Career Planning......................................1 2 3 4
Choosing a Major 1 2 3 4
Internships...1 2 3 4

Other: _____ 1 2 3 4
   (please describe)

9. **How satisfied are you with the quality of advice your parent(s) give you?** (Circle one.)

Strongly Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Neutral   Satisfied   Strongly Satisfied

10. **In the past month, how often have you SHARED information with your parents regarding the following topics?** (Circle only <u>one</u> response for each item)

1 = Never   3 = Sometimes
2 = Rarely   4 = Often

Grades 1 2 3 4
Classes..1 2 3 4
Professors...1 2 3 4
Teaching Assistant 1 2 3 4
Administrators.......................................1 2 3 4

Physical Health issues 1 2 3 4
Stress 1 2 3 4
Loneliness 1 2 3 4
Feeling Down..1 2 3 4
Eating/Nutrition.....................................1 2 3 4
Body Image 1 2 3 4
Alcohol...1 2 3 4
Sex 1 2 3 4

Credit card..1 2 3 4
Current Job...1 2 3 4
College Loans 1 2 3 4
Current Financial Situation 1 2 3 4
Future Financial Situation 1 2 3 4

Roommate(s)..1 2 3 4
Friends..1 2 3 4
Living Situation.....................................1 2 3 4
Significant Others..................................1 2 3 4
Social Events...1 2 3 4

Organizations or Clubs...........................1 2 3 4
Sports 1 2 3 4
Community Service Activities 1 2 3 4
Career Planning.....................................1 2 3 4
Choosing a Major 1 2 3 4
Internships..1 2 3 4

Other: _____ 1 2 3 4
    (please describe)

11. **How satisfied are you with the level of sharing between you and your parent(s)?** (Circle one.)

Strongly Dissatisfied   Dissatisfied   Neutral   Satisfied   Strongly Satisfied

Background Information

12. **Where are you currently living?** (Circle <u>one</u>.)

    1. Residence hall
    2. Sorority or fraternity house
    3. Commons or Courtyards
    4. Other off-campus apartment
    5. Family's home
    6. Other (Please describe): _____

13. **What is your current class level?** (Circle <u>one</u>.)

    1. Freshman (0-30 credits)
    2. Sophomore (31-60 credits)
    3. Junior (61-90 credits)
    4. Senior (91-120+ credits)

14. **Are you an international student?** (Circle <u>one</u>.)

    1. Yes
    2. No

15. **Are you the first in your family to go to college?** (Circle <u>one.</u>)

    1. Yes
    2. No

16. **What would you consider your immediate family's current socioeconomic status?** (Choose <u>one</u>.)

    1. Lower class
    2. Lower-Middle class
    3. Middle class
    4. Upper-Middle class
    5. Upper class

17. **Do you have any siblings?** (Circle <u>one.</u>)

    1. Yes
    2. No

18. What is your age? (Circle <u>one</u>.)

1. 18
2. 19
3. 20
4. 21
5. 22
6. 23
7. 24

19. What is your race/ethnicity? (Circle <u>one</u>.)

1. African American or Black
2. Asian American or Pacific Islander
3. Caucasian or White
4. Hispanic/Latino
5. Middle Eastern
6. Multiethnic or Multiracial
7. Native American or American Indian
8. Other (Please describe): _____

20. What is your gender? (Circle <u>one</u>.)

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender

21. Which of the following most accurately describes you? (circle one.)

1. At least one of my grandparents, my parents and I are U.S. born
2. At least one of my parents and I are U.S. born
3. I am U.S. born, my parents are not
4. Foreign born; naturalized citizen
5. Foreign born; resident alien or permanent resident
6. Student visa

Appendix D

Ancillary Demographics of Usable Respondents (N = 539)

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Class Level	Freshman	123	24.0%
	Sophomore	130	25.3%
	Junior	146	28.5%
	Senior	114	22.2%
	Missing	26	
Current Residence	Residence Hall	252	49.2%
	Sorority or Fraternity House	14	2.7%
	Commons or Courtyards	55	10.7%
	Other Off-Campus Apartment	71	13.9%
	Family's Home	100	19.5%
	Other	20	3.9%
	Missing	27	
Siblings	Yes	460	89.7%
	No	53	10.3%
	Missing	26	
International Student	Yes	13	2.5%
	No	500	97.5%
	Missing	26	
First Generation College Student	Yes	87	17.0%
	No	424	83.0%
	Missing	28	
Socioeconomic Status	Lower class	8	1.6%
	Lower Middle class	63	12.3%
	Middle class	219	42.6%
	Upper Middle class	207	40.4%
	Upper class	15	2.9%
	Missing	27	

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Immigration Status	At least one of my grandparents, My parents, and I are US born	236	46.0%
	At least one of my parents and I are US born	52	10.1%
	I am US born; my parents are not	129	25.1%
	Foreign born; Naturalized citizen	57	11.1%
	Foreign born; Resident alien or Permanent resident	34	6.6%
	Student Visa	5	1.0%
	Missing	26	

Appendix E

Table E-1

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Race (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 12.7
	Black	44.2%	25.7%	18.6%	11.4%	
	APA	41.1%	18.8%	33.0%	7.1%	
	White	43.7%	25.3%	23.0%	8.0%	
	Latino/a	40.0%	34.3%	17.1%	8.6%	
	Multi-Racial	33.3%	30.6%	27.8%	8.3%	
Classes						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 11.9
	Black	31.4%	32.9%	21.4%	14.3%	
	APA	40.2%	21.4%	31.3%	7.1%	
	White	34.3%	19.4%	33.1%	13.1%	
	Latino/a	30.4%	26.1%	34.8%	8.7%	
	Multi-Racial	30.6%	25.0%	33.3%	11.1%	
Professors						χ^2 (12, *N*=460) = 13.9
	Black	46.4%	33.3%	10.1%	10.1%	
	APA	58.6%	24.3%	14.4%	2.7%	
	White	52.3%	23.6%	17.8%	6.3%	
	Latino/a	57.1%	27.1%	10.0%	5.7%	
	Multi-Racial	58.3%	22.2%	19.4%	0%	
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 15.3
	Black	28.6%	21.4%	30.0%	20.0%	
	APA	21.6%	27.0%	36.0%	15.3%	
	White	21.1%	16.6%	48.0%	14.3%	
	Latino/a	20.0%	22.9%	37.1%	20.0%	
	Multi-Racial	16.7%	27.8%	30.6%	25.0%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Stress						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 11.2
	Black	38.6%	18.6%	28.6%	14.3%	
	APA	38.7%	17.1%	29.7%	14.4%	
	White	33.1%	20.0%	32.6%	14.3%	
	Latino/a	30.0%	12.9%	45.7%	11.4%	
	Multi-Racial	25.0%	16.7%	33.3%	25.0%	
Loneliness						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 9.8
	Black	61.4%	21.4%	14.3%	2.9%	
	APA	70.3%	16.2%	8.1%	5.4%	
	White	67.4%	17.7%	10.3%	4.6%	
	Latino/a	61.4%	21.4%	10.0%	7.1%	
	Multi-Racial	55.6%	19.4%	22.2%	2.8%	
Feeling Down						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 10.8
	Black	52.9%	18.6%	21.4%	7.1%	
	APA	66.1%	17.9%	9.8%	6.3%	
	White	58.9%	20.6%	14.9%	5.7%	
	Latino/a	54.3%	21.4%	17.1%	7.1%	
	Multi-Racial	41.7%	27.8%	19.4%	11.1%	
Credit Card						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 11.3
	Black	38.6%	17.1%	34.3%	10.0%	
	APA	35.7%	19.6%	33.0%	11.6%	
	White	28.2%	29.9%	33.9%	8.0%	
	Latino/a	27.1%	28.6%	30.0%	14.3%	
	Multi-Racial	33.3%	27.8%	25.0%	13.9%	
Current Job						χ^2 (12, N=460) = 8.7
	Black	38.6%	20.0%	25.7%	15.7%	
	APA	35.5%	21.8%	33.6%	9.1%	
	White	35.1%	16.7%	32.8%	15.5%	
	Latino/a	31.4%	20.0%	30.0%	18.6%	
	Multi-Racial	41.7%	13.9%	22.2%	22.2%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Roommate(s)						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 15.1
	Black	54.3%	15.7%	15.7%	14.3%	
	APA	48.2%	17.0%	27.7%	7.1%	
	White	40.0%	20.6%	29.1%	10.3%	
	Latino/a	47.1%	18.6%	21.4%	12.9%	
	Multi-Racial	33.3%	19.4%	25.0%	22.2%	
Friends						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 12.7
	Black	35.7%	15.7%	35.7%	12.9%	
	APA	31.3%	17.9%	34.8%	16.1%	
	White	25.3%	22.4%	35.6%	16.7%	
	Latino/a	17.1%	27.1%	32.9%	22.9%	
	Multi-Racial	27.8%	22.2%	25.0%	25.0%	
Living Situation						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 15.3
	Black	35.7%	21.4%	25.7%	17.1%	
	APA	31.3%	19.6%	36.6%	12.5%	
	White	19.4%	22.9%	36.0%	21.7%	
	Latino/a	24.3%	20.0%	30.0%	25.7%	
	Multi-Racial	19.4%	22.2%	33.3%	25.0%	
Organizations/Clubs						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 11.5
	Black	30.4%	18.8%	30.4%	20.3%	
	APA	36.6%	25.9%	27.7%	9.8%	
	White	36.6%	17.7%	32.0%	13.7%	
	Latino/a	32.9%	25.7%	30.0%	11.4%	
	Multi-Racial	41.7%	8.3%	36.1%	13.9%	
Sports						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 13.7
	Black	57.1%	15.7%	21.4%	5.7%	
	APA	50.0%	17.9%	24.1%	8.0%	
	White	44.6%	20.0%	25.1%	10.3%	
	Latino/a	52.9%	17.1%	12.9%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	44.4%	13.9%	33.3%	8.3%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Community Service Activities						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 13.8
	Black	50.0%	21.4%	18.6%	10.0%	
	APA	50.0%	20.5%	24.1%	5.4%	
	White	60.1%	22.5%	13.3%	4.0%	
	Latino/a	45.7%	24.3%	22.9%	7.1%	
	Multi-Racial	58.3%	13.9%	25.0%	2.8%	
Career Planning						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 15.2
	Black	27.1%	20.0%	28.6%	24.3%	
	APA	23.4%	17.1%	39.6%	19.8%	
	White	32.6%	17.7%	29.7%	20.0%	
	Latino/a	18.6%	22.9%	30.0%	28.6%	
	Multi-Racial	38.9%	5.6%	36.1%	19.4%	
Choosing a Major						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 20.6
	Black	48.6%	11.4%	25.7%	14.3%	
	APA	39.3%	25.0%	21.4%	14.3%	
	White	55.4%	14.3%	20.0%	10.3%	
	Latino/a	34.3%	28.6%	20.0%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	47.2%	13.9%	27.8%	11.1%	
Internships						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 11.8
	Black	35.7%	24.3%	22.9%	17.1%	
	APA	23.2%	24.1%	33.9%	18.8%	
	White	37.7%	16.0%	26.9%	19.4%	
	Latino/a	38.6%	18.6%	27.1%	15.7%	
	Multi-Racial	36.1%	13.9%	33.3%	16.7%	

Table E-2

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Race

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Teaching Assistants					
	Black	41 (59.4%)	23 (33.3%)	1 (1.4%)	4 (5.8%)
	APA	80 (71.4%)	19 (17.0%)	12 (10.7%)	1 (0.9%)
	White	122 (69.7%)	29 (16.6%)	14 (8.0%)	10 (5.7%)
	Latino/a	46 (65.7%)	17 (24.3%)	4 (5.7%)	3 (4.3%)
	Multi-Racial	25 (69.4%)	7 (19.4%)	4 (11.1%)	0 (0%)
Administrators					
	Black	45 (64.3%)	17 (24.3%)	4 (5.7%)	4 (5.7%)
	APA	82 (73.9%)	17 (15.3%)	11 (9.9%)	1 (0.9%)
	White	127 (72.6%)	27 (15.4%)	14 (8.0%)	7 (4.0%)
	Latino/a	47 (68.1%)	18 (26.1%)	1 (1.4%)	3 (4.3%)
	Multi-Raical	27 (77.1%)	6 (17.1%)	2 (5.7%)	0 (0%)
Body Image					
	Black	40 (58.0%)	14 (20.3%)	12 (17.4%)	3 (4.3%)
	APA	77 (68.8%)	13 (11.6%)	17 (15.2%)	5 (4.5%)
	White	116 (66.3%)	38 (21.7%)	17 (9.7%)	4 (2.3%)
	Latino/a	40 (58.0%)	13 (18.8%)	12 (17.4%)	4 (5.8%)
	Multi-Racial	19 (52.8%)	11 (30.6%)	5 (13.9%)	1 (2.8%)
Alcohol					
	Black	53 (75.7%)	13 (18.6%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	79 (71.8%)	17 (15.5%)	10 (9.1%)	4 (3.6%)
	White	114 (65.1%)	40 (22.9%)	18 (10.3%)	3 (1.7%)
	Latino/a	47 (67.1%)	11 (15.7%)	7 (10.0%)	5 (7.1%)
	Multi-Racial	24 (66.7%)	8 (22.2%)	3 (8.3%)	1 (2.8%)
Sex					
	Black	57 (81.4%)	9 (12.9%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	93 (83.0%)	13 (11.6%)	5 (4.5%)	1 (0.9%)
	White	137 (79.2%)	31 (17.9%)	4 (2.3%)	1 (0.6%)
	Latino/a	55 (78.6%)	11 (15.7%)	4 (57%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	32 (88.9%)	2 (5.6%)	2 (5.6%)	0 (0%)

Table E-3

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Gender (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 7.1
	Males	48.4%	22.4%	24.2%	5.0%	
	Females	38.2%	27.2%	24.3%	10.3%	
Teaching Assistants						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 5.9
	Males	73.1%	14.4%	8.8%	3.8%	
	Females	65.2%	23.8%	7.0%	4.0%	
Administrators						χ^2 (3, N=460) = 1.9
	Males	74.2%	15.1%	6.9%	3.8%	
	Females	69.8%	20.3%	7.0%	3.0%	
Loneliness						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 7.4
	Males	73.1%	15.0%	9.4%	2.5%	
	Females	61.3%	20.5%	12.3%	6.0%	
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 2.7
	Males	41.6%	24.2%	24.8%	9.3%	
	Females	37.7%	21.5%	26.8%	13.9%	
Body Image						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 2.8
	Males	68.1%	17.5%	11.9%	2.5%	
	Females	60.8%	20.3%	14.6%	4.3%	
Alcohol						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 0.6
	Males	69.6%	18.0%	8.7%	3.7%	
	Females	68.3%	20.0%	9.0%	2.7%	
Credit Card						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 6.1
	Males	38.8%	21.3%	31.3%	8.8%	
	Females	28.1%	27.2%	33.1%	11.6%	
Current Job						χ^2 (3, N=460) = 3.8
	Males	38.4%	20.1%	30.8%	10.7%	
	Females	34.2%	17.9%	30.6%	17.3%	
College Loans						χ^2 (3, N=457) = 4.4
	Males	58.5%	12.6%	23.3%	5.7%	
	Females	60.4%	15.1%	16.1%	8.4%	

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Current Financial Situation						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 6.9$
	Males	26.9%	22.5%	35.6%	15.0%	
	Females	30.5%	24.5%	24.5%	20.5%	
Future Financial Situation						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 0.9$
	Males	32.5%	20.6%	30.0%	16.9%	
	Females	31.5%	20.9%	27.5%	20.2%	
Sports						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 0.8$
	Males	47.8%	18.6%	24.8%	8.7%	
	Females	49.7%	17.5%	22.2%	10.6%	
Career Planning						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 6.1$
	Males	31.7%	21.1%	30.4%	16.8%	
	Females	25.9%	15.9%	33.6%	24.6%	
Choosing a Major						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 2.5$
	Males	50.3%	18.6%	21.1%	9.9%	
	Females	44.7%	18.5%	22.2%	14.6%	
Internships						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 1.9$
	Males	36.0%	20.5%	28.6%	14.9%	
	Females	32.8%	18.9%	28.5%	19.9%	

Table E-4

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Gender

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Sex					
	Males	130 (81.8%)	21 (13.2%)	7 (4.4%)	1 (0.6%)
	Females	244 (80.8%)	45 (14.9%)	11 (3.6%)	2 (0.7%)

Table E-5

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Age (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Teaching Assistants						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 5.9
	18-20	64.5%	22.8%	8.3%	4.3%	
	21-24	76.1%	15.2%	5.8%	2.9%	
Administrators						χ^2 (3, *N*=460) = 4.9
	18-20	68.3%	20.8%	7.5%	3.4%	
	21-24	78.3%	13.0%	5.8%	2.9%	
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 2.5
	18-20	20.7%	22.8%	38.3%	18.2%	
	21-24	24.6%	18.8%	42.0%	14.5%	
Stress						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 6.2
	18-20	31.3%	19.5%	35.3%	13.9%	
	21-24	41.0%	13.7%	28.8%	16.5%	
Loneliness						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 0.5
	18-20	64.5%	19.1%	11.7%	4.6%	
	21-24	67.4%	17.4%	10.1%	5.1%	
Feeling Down						χ^2 (3, *N*=463) = 1.5
	18-20	57.4%	21.6%	14.8%	6.2%	
	21-24	58.3%	17.3%	16.5%	7.9%	
Body Image						χ^2 (3, *N*=461) = 4.3
	18-20	60.4%	21.1%	14.9%	3.7%	
	21-24	70.3%	15.2%	10.9%	3.6%	
Credit Card						χ^2 (3, *N*=462) = 3.9
	18-20	30.3%	24.8%	32.5%	12.4%	
	21-24	35.3%	25.9%	32.4%	6.5%	
Current Job						χ^2 (3, *N*=460) = 4.5
	18-20	38.5%	18.6%	29.2%	13.7%	
	21-24	29.0%	18.8%	34.1%	18.1%	
College Loans						χ^2 (3, *N*=457) = 1.7
	18-20	60.6%	13.8%	17.5%	8.1%	
	21-24	57.7%	15.3%	21.2%	5.8%	

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Current Financial Situation						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 2.9
	18-20	28.8%	22.9%	30.7%	17.6%	
	21-24	30.2%	25.9%	23.0%	20.9%	
Future Financial Situation						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 2.5
	18-20	33.7%	20.7%	27.9%	17.6%	
	21-24	27.3%	20.9%	29.5%	22.3%	
Roommate(s)						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 6.5
	18-20	41.0%	20.7%	26.2%	12.0%	
	21-24	53.2%	13.7%	23.0%	10.1%	
Friends						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 4.3
	18-20	25.4%	22.9%	33.1%	18.6%	
	21-24	31.7%	16.5%	36.7%	15.1%	
Living Situation						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 6.0
	18-20	22.5%	21.3%	36.1%	20.1%	
	21-24	32.4%	21.6%	27.3%	18.7%	
Significant Others						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 0.8
	18-20	45.4%	18.8%	22.2%	13.6%	
	21-24	47.5%	20.1%	18.7%	13.7%	
Social Events						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 4.5
	18-20	32.8%	22.9%	32.5%	11.8%	
	21-24	42.8%	21.0%	25.4%	10.9%	
Sports						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 3.2
	18-20	46.6%	18.5%	23.8%	11.1%	
	21-24	54.7%	16.5%	21.6%	7.2%	
Community Service Activities						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 5.3
	18-20	50.6%	22.0%	20.8%	6.5%	
	21-24	34.3%	28.3%	23.9%	19.2%	
Career Planning						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 4.1
	18-20	30.0%	18.6%	31.3%	20.1%	
	21-24	23.0%	15.8%	35.3%	25.9%	
Internships						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 1.1
	18-20	34.3%	19.8%	27.2%	18.8%	
	21-24	33.1%	18.7%	31.7%	16.5%	

Table E-6

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Request for Advice from Parents by Age

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Sex					
	18-20	253 (78.6%)	50 (15.5%)	17 (5.3%)	2 (0.6%)
	21-24	121 (87.1%)	16 (11.5%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)

Appendix F

Table F-1

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Race (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (12, *N*=463) = 9.6
	Black	11.4%	21.4%	34.3%	32.9%	
	APA	17.0%	18.8%	39.3%	25.0%	
	White	12.6%	17.1%	36.6%	33.7%	
	Latino/a	10.0%	18.6%	37.1%	34.3%	
	Multi-Racial	8.3%	8.3%	52.8%	30.6%	
Teaching Assistants						χ^2 (12, *N*=463) = 16.5
	Black	54.3%	18.6%	20.0%	7.1%	
	APA	62.5%	12.5%	17.9%	7.1%	
	White	52.0%	17.7%	14.9%	15.4%	
	Latino/a	44.3%	24.3%	17.1%	14.3%	
	Multi-Racial	63.9%	19.4%	13.9%	2.8%	
Administrators						χ^2 (12, *N*=461) = 12.1
	Black	60.0%	22.9%	12.9%	4.3%	
	APA	68.5%	17.1%	8.1%	6.3%	
	White	65.5%	14.9%	9.2%	10.3%	
	Latino/a	64.3%	18.6%	4.3%	12.9%	
	Multi-Racial	75.0%	13.9%	8.3%	2.8%	
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (12, *N*=463) = 11.2
	Black	21.4%	14.3%	42.9%	21.4%	
	APA	21.4%	19.6%	39.3%	19.6%	
	White	17.7%	16.0%	39.4%	26.9%	
	Latino/a	10.0%	17.1%	50.0%	22.9%	
	Multi-Racial	11.1%	13.9%	38.9%	36.1%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Loneliness						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 11.9
	Black	58.6%	22.9%	11.4%	7.1%	
	APA	70.5%	13.4%	7.1%	8.9%	
	White	61.1%	19.4%	10.3%	9.1%	
	Latino/a	60.0%	17.1%	14.3%	8.6%	
	Multi-Racial	51.4%	25.7%	20.0%	2.9%	
Feeling Down						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 14.2
	Black	48.6%	25.7%	18.6%	7.1%	
	APA	67.0%	15.2%	8.9%	8.9%	
	White	55.4%	19.4%	14.3%	10.9%	
	Latino/a	55.1%	15.9%	21.7%	7.2%	
	Multi-Racial	48.6%	20.0%	22.9%	8.6%	
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 19.3
	Black	34.3%	21.4%	30.0%	14.3%	
	APA	33.9%	16.1%	34.8%	15.2%	
	White	32.2%	28.7%	25.3%	13.8%	
	Latino/a	24.3%	15.7%	42.9%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	13.9%	25.0%	44.4%	16.7%	
Body Image						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 9.7
	Black	51.4%	24.3%	20.0%	4.3%	
	APA	61.6%	17.0%	13.4%	8.0%	
	White	56.6%	25.7%	12.6%	5.1%	
	Latino/a	51.4%	20.0%	18.6%	10.0%	
	Multi-Racial	52.8%	22.2%	19.4%	5.6%	
Credit Card						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 10.7
	Black	32.9%	18.6%	34.3%	14.3%	
	APA	36.6%	12.5%	36.6%	14.3%	
	White	26.9%	25.1%	31.4%	16.6%	
	Latino/a	31.4%	20.0%	31.4%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	33.3%	11.1%	38.9%	16.7%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Current Job						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 9.8
	Black	32.9%	12.9%	35.7%	18.6%	
	APA	39.6%	12.6%	30.6%	17.1%	
	White	32.6%	14.9%	30.9%	21.7%	
	Latino/a	32.9%	11.4%	25.7%	30.0%	
	Multi-Racial	36.1%	5.6%	41.7%	16.7%	
Future Financial Situation						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 14.5
	Black	30.0%	14.3%	32.9%	22.9%	
	APA	40.2%	17.0%	26.8%	16.1%	
	White	36.0%	22.3%	25.7%	16.0%	
	Latino/a	22.9%	21.4%	27.1%	28.6%	
	Multi-Racial	41.7%	19.4%	27.8%	11.1%	
Roommate(s)						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 14.3
	Black	38.6%	20.0%	27.1%	14.3%	
	APA	38.4%	17.9%	26.8%	17.0%	
	White	24.1%	19.5%	35.6%	20.7%	
	Latino/a	40.0%	14.3%	25.7%	20.0%	
	Multi-Racial	22.2%	16.7%	36.1%	25.0%	
Friends						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 21.1
	Black	24.3%	21.4%	34.3%	20.0%	
	APA	27.7%	24.1%	28.6%	19.6%	
	White	12.6%	20.7%	37.9%	28.7%	
	Latino/a	14.3%	12.9%	42.9%	30.0%	
	Multi-Racial	13.9%	16.7%	36.1%	33.3%	
Organizations/Clubs						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 7.3
	Black	28.6%	21.4%	31.4%	18.6%	
	APA	33.9%	15.2%	39.3%	11.6%	
	White	31.4%	17.7%	32.0%	18.9%	
	Latino/a	32.9%	17.1%	30.0%	20.0%	
	Multi-Racial	36.1%	11.1%	30.6%	22.2%	

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Sports						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 13.9
	Black	55.7%	17.1%	12.9%	14.3%	
	APA	45.5%	14.3%	27.7%	12.5%	
	White	39.7%	18.4%	24.1%	17.8%	
	Latino/a	47.1%	17.1%	18.6%	17.1%	
	Multi-Racial	36.1%	22.2%	33.3%	8.3%	
Community Service Activities						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 16.9
	Black	45.7%	22.9%	20.0%	11.4%	
	APA	44.6%	19.6%	27.7%	8.0%	
	White	59.4%	21.1%	12.6%	6.9%	
	Latino/a	42.9%	22.9%	25.7%	8.6%	
	Multi-Racial	50.0%	25.0%	13.9%	11.1%	
Career Planning						χ^2 (12, N=463) = 9.5
	Black	25.7%	17.1%	37.1%	20.0%	
	APA	33.0%	19.6%	28.6%	18.8%	
	White	28.0%	23.4%	28.0%	20.6%	
	Latino/a	21.4%	24.3%	28.6%	25.7%	
	Multi-Racial	36.1%	11.1%	36.1%	16.7%	
Choosing a Major						χ^2 (12, N=462) = 11.7
	Black	49.3%	14.5%	20.3%	15.9%	
	APA	42.9%	17.0%	29.5%	10.7%	
	White	49.7%	18.9%	21.1%	10.3%	
	Latino/a	34.3%	15.7%	30.0%	20.0%	
	Multi-Racial	47.2%	16.7%	25.0%	11.1%	
Internships						χ^2 (12, N=461) = 5.4
	Black	37.1%	24.3%	24.3%	14.3%	
	APA	34.8%	17.0%	32.1%	16.1%	
	White	38.3%	18.9%	23.4%	19.4%	
	Latino/a	36.2%	17.4%	27.5%	18.8%	
	Multi-Racial	31.4%	17.1%	31.4%	20.0%	

Table F-2

Frequencies and Percentages of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Race

Topic	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Sex					
	Black	57 (81.4%)	10 (14.3%)	2 (2.9%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	93 (83.0%)	8 (7.1%)	7 (6.3%)	4 (3.6%)
	White	138 (78.9%)	25 (14.3%)	7 (4.0%)	5 (2.9%)
	Latino/a	57 (81.4%)	8 (11.4%)	3 (4.3%)	2 (2.9%)
	Multi-Racial	32 (88.9%)	2 (5.6%)	1 (2.8%)	1 (2.8%)

Table F-3

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Gender (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Teaching Assistants						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 6.7$
	Males	58.4%	14.3%	19.9%	7.5%	
	Females	52.6%	19.5%	14.9%	12.9%	
Alcohol						$\chi^2 (3, N=461) = 2.1$
	Males	65.8%	18.0%	12.4%	3.7%	
	Females	62.7%	19.7%	11.0%	6.7%	
Credit Card						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 3.7$
	Males	36.6%	19.3%	30.4%	13.7%	
	Females	28.5%	19.2%	35.4%	16.9%	
Current Job						$\chi^2 (3, N=462) = 7.4$
	Males	39.1%	15.5%	30.4%	14.9%	
	Females	32.2%	11.3%	32.2%	24.3%	
College Loans						$\chi^2 (3, N=459) = 7.8$
	Males	59.4%	14.4%	21.3%	5.0%	
	Females	58.5%	17.4%	13.7%	10.4%	
Current Financial Situation						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 5.1$
	Males	26.7%	19.9%	36.6%	16.8%	
	Females	29.8%	21.9%	26.8%	21.5%	
Future Financial Situation						$\chi^2 (3, N=463) = 1.8$
	Males	32.9%	21.1%	29.8%	16.1%	
	Females	35.4%	18.5%	26.2%	19.9%	

Topic	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Organizations/Clubs						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 6.9
	Males	38.5%	17.4%	31.7%	12.4%	
	Females	28.8%	16.9%	34.1%	20.2%	
Sports						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.1
	Males	43.8%	16.9%	25.6%	13.8%	
	Females	44.7%	17.5%	21.9%	15.9%	
Choosing a Major						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 6.2
	Males	44.7%	18.6%	28.6%	8.1%	
	Females	65.7%	62.0%	59.6%	78.0%	
Internships						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 5.7
	Males	37.5%	23.8%	25.0%	13.8%	
	Females	35.9%	16.3%	27.9%	19.9%	

Table F-4

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Students' Shared Topics with Parents by Age (Non-Significant Results)

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Grades						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 6.7
	18-20	10.5%	17.6%	38.0%	34.0%	
	21-24	18.0%	18.0%	38.8%	25.2%	
Classes						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 5.1
	18-20	8.0%	13.0%	41.0%	38.0%	
	21-24	6.5%	18.0%	46.8%	28.8%	
Professors						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 3.9
	18-20	25.2%	20.2%	33.2%	21.4%	
	21-24	28.1%	25.2%	32.4%	14.4%	
Teaching Assistants						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 4.9
	18-20	53.1%	16.4%	18.2%	12.3%	
	21-24	58.3%	20.9%	12.9%	7.9%	
Administrators						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 4.1
	18-20	64.9%	16.1%	10.2%	8.7%	
	21-24	68.3%	19.4%	5.0%	7.2%	

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Physical Health Issues						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 3.9
	18-20	17.9%	17.6%	38.6%	25.9%	
	21-24	16.5%	14.4%	48.2%	20.9%	
Stress						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 0.2
	18-20	28.4%	17.9%	32.1%	21.6%	
	21-24	28.1%	16.5%	33.8%	21.6%	
Loneliness						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.9
	18-20	63.3%	17.0%	11.4%	8.3%	
	21-24	59.4%	22.5%	10.1%	8.0%	
Feeling Down						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 2.0
	18-20	57.1%	19.9%	14.0%	9.0%	
	21-24	55.4%	16.5%	18.7%	9.4%	
Eating/Nutrition						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 2.1
	18-20	28.4%	22.5%	34.0%	15.1%	
	21-24	34.8%	21.7%	29.0%	14.5%	
Body Image						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 2.8
	18-20	54.9%	22.2%	15.1%	7.7%	
	21-24	58.3%	22.3%	15.8%	3.6%	
Alcohol						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 2.0
	18-20	62.5%	18.9%	12.1%	6.5%	
	21-24	66.7%	19.6%	10.1%	3.6%	
Sex						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 2.8
	18-20	79.6%	13.0%	4.6%	2.8%	
	21-24	85.6%	7.9%	3.6%	2.9%	
Credit Card						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 1.7
	18-20	29.9%	19.1%	34.0%	17.0%	
	21-24	34.5%	19.4%	33.1%	12.9%	
Current Job						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 12.3
	18-20	39.6%	12.4%	29.1%	18.9%	
	21-24	23.0%	13.7%	37.4%	25.9%	
College Loans						χ^2 (3, N=459) = 1.6
	18-20	59.5%	16.8%	15.0%	8.7%	
	21-24	57.2%	15.2%	19.6%	8.0%	

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Current Financial Situation						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 1.4
	18-20	29.6%	19.8%	30.6%	20.1%	
	21-24	26.6%	24.5%	29.5%	19.4%	
Future Financial Situation						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 1.1
	18-20	34.9%	20.4%	26.2%	18.5%	
	21-24	33.8%	17.3%	30.2%	18.7%	
Roommate(s)						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 6.7
	18-20	28.5%	19.2%	31.6%	20.7%	
	21-24	40.3%	15.8%	28.8%	15.1%	
Friends						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 6.8
	18-20	17.6%	17.6%	36.2%	28.5%	
	21-24	20.1%	25.9%	34.5%	19.4%	
Living Situation						χ^2 (3, N=461) = 5.6
	18-20	23.0%	15.8%	36.0%	25.2%	
	21-24	28.1%	22.3%	28.8%	20.9%	
Significant Others						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.4
	18-20	40.2%	20.1%	22.6%	17.0%	
	21-24	42.4%	17.3%	25.9%	14.4%	
Social Events						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.7
	18-20	31.6%	23.2%	30.7%	14.6%	
	21-24	34.5%	18.7%	33.8%	12.9%	
Organizations/Clubs						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 6.0
	18-20	29.0%	17.6%	34.0%	19.4%	
	21-24	39.6%	15.8%	31.7%	12.9%	
Sports						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 4.8
	18-20	44.3%	15.2%	23.8%	16.7%	
	21-24	44.6%	22.3%	21.6%	11.5%	
Community Service Activities						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 3.2
	18-20	49.4%	21.0%	19.8%	9.9%	
	21-24	53.2%	23.0%	18.7%	5.0%	
Career Planning						χ^2 (3, N=463) = 7.1
	18-20	29.9%	21.9%	30.9%	17.3%	
	21-24	25.2%	18.0%	28.8%	28.1%	

Topic	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Internships						χ^2 (3, *N*=461) = 1.4
	18-20	37.0%	19.6%	27.0%	16.5%	
	21-24	35.3%	17.3%	26.6%	20.9%	

Appendix G

Table G-1

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Race

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Cell Phone					
	Black	5 (7.1%)	6 (8.6%)	27 (38.6%)	32 (45.7%)
	APA	3 (2.7%)	14 (12.6%)	42 (37.8%)	52 (46.8%)
	White	4 (2.3%)	22 (12.6%)	59 (33.7%)	90 (51.4%)
	Latino/a	0 (0%)	4 (5.7%)	23 (32.9%)	43 (61.4%)
	Multi Racial	1 (2.8%)	4 (11.1%)	11 (30.6%)	20 (55.6%)
Text Message					
	Black	46 (66.7%)	7 (10.1%)	11 (15.9%)	5 (7.2%)
	APA	96 (87.3%)	3 (2.7%)	8 (7.3%)	3 (2.7%)
	White	122 (70.9%)	29 (16.9%)	10 (5.8%)	11 (6.4%)
	Latino/a	48 (68.6%)	10 (14.3%)	10 (14.3%)	2 (2.9%)
	Multi- Racial	25 (71.4%)	4 (11.4%)	5 (14.3%)	1 (2.9%)
Pay Phone, Home Phone, or Dorm Phone					
	Black	44 (63.8%)	6 (8.7%)	14 (20.3%)	5 (7.2%)
	APA	72 (64.9%)	13 (11.7%)	16 (14.4%)	10 (9.0%)
	White	143 (81.7%)	12 (6.9%)	16 (9.1%)	4 (2.3%)
	Latino/a	44 (63.8%)	10 (14.5%)	6 (8.7%)	9 (13.0%)
	Multi- Racial	28 (80.0%)	2 (5.7%)	2 (5.7%)	3 (8.6%)
Postal Mail					
	Black	55 (79.7%)	9 (13.0%)	3 (4.3%)	2 (2.9%)
	APA	98 (89.1%)	7 (6.4%)	5 (4.5%)	0 (0%)
	White	146 (84.9%)	23 (13.4%)	3 (1.7%)	0 (0%)
	Latino/a	61 (89.7%)	2 (2.9%)	5 (7.4%)	0 (0%)
	Multi- Racial	32 (91.4%)	2 (5.7%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0%)

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Instant Messenger					
	Black	60 (87.0%)	5 (7.2%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	91 (82.0%)	8 (7.2%)	6 (5.4%)	6 (5.4%)
	White	122 (70.5%)	28 (16.2%)	15 (8.7%)	8 (4.6%)
	Latino/a	55 (79.7%)	6 (8.7%)	7 (10.1%)	1 (1.4%)
	Multi-Racial	31 (86.1%)	3 (8.3%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.6%)
Blog					
	Black	67 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	APA	106 (95.5%)	1 (0.9%)	3 (2.7%)	1 (0.9%)
	White	173 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Latino/a	67 (98.5%)	1 (1.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
MySpace, Xanga, or anther networking database					
	Black	66 (97.1%)	2 (2.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	APA	104 (93.7%)	2 (1.8%)	3 (2.7%)	2 (1.8%)
	White	172 (99.4%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Latino/a	66 (98.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table G-2

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Gender (Non-Significant Results)

Method	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Text Message						χ^2 (3, N=456) = 2.4
	Males	77.2%	10.8%	7.0%	5.1%	
	Females	72.1%	12.1%	11.1%	4.7%	
Pay Phone, Home Phone, or Dorm Phone						χ^2 (3, N=459) = 4.9
	Males	78.5%	7.0%	9.5%	5.1%	
	Females	68.8%	10.6%	13.0%	7.6%	
Email						χ^2 (3, N=458) = 2.7
	Males	37.1%	21.4%	26.4%	15.1%	
	Females	32.8%	25.8%	29.8%	11.7%	
Instant Messenger						χ^2 (3, N=458) = 5.4
	Males	74.1%	10.8%	10.1%	5.1%	
	Females	80.7%	11.0%	5.0%	3.3%	
In Person						χ^2 (3, N=459) = 2.7
	Males	34.2%	13.9%	27.8%	24.1%	
	Females	29.9%	17.9%	24.3%	27.9%	

Table G-3

Percentages and Frequencies of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Gender

Method	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Postal Mail					
	Males	135 (86.0%)	14 (8.9%)	8 (5.1%)	0 (0%)
	Females	257 (86.5%)	29 (9.8%)	9 (3.0%)	2 (0.7%)
Blog					
	Males	154 (97.5%)	1 (1.9%)	3 (1.9%)	0 (0%)
	Females	294 (98.7%)	3 (1.0%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.3%)
MySpace, Xanga, or another networking database					
	Males	151 (96.2%)	3 (1.9%)	2 (1.3%)	1 (0.6%)
	Females	292 (98.3%)	2 (0.7%)	2 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)

Table G-4

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Age (Non-Significant Results)

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Cell Phone						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.2
	18-20	3.1%	9.9%	35.3%	51.7%	
	21-24	2.2%	12.9%	34.5%	50.4%	
Text Message						χ^2 (3, N=456) = 2.1
	18-20	72.1%	12.9%	10.0%	5.0%	
	21-24	78.1%	8.8%	8.8%	4.4%	
Pay Phone, Home Phone, or Dorm Phone						χ^2 (3, N=459) = 3.0
	18-20	72.2%	10.3%	11.9%	5.6%	
	21-24	71.9%	7.2%	11.5%	9.4%	
Email						χ^2 (3, N=458) = 6.1
	18-20	33.3%	22.1%	31.8%	21.8%	
	21-24	36.5%	29.2%	21.2%	13.1%	
Instant Messenger						χ^2 (3, N=458) = 6.3
	18-20	75.6%	11.9%	8.4%	4.1%	
	21-24	84.8%	8.7%	2.9%	3.6%	

Table G-5

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods used by Students to Communicate with their Parents by Age

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Postal Mail					
	18-20	277 (87.4%)	25 (7.9%)	15 (4.7%)	0 (0%)
	21-24	115 (83.9%)	18 (13.1%)	2 (1.5%)	2 (1.5%)
Blog					
	18-20	311 (98.1%)	3 (0.9%)	3 (0.9%)	0 (0%)
	21-24	137 (98.6%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)
MySpace, Xanga, or another networking database					
	18-20	308 (97.2%)	5 (1.6%)	3 (0.9%)	1 (0.3%)
	21-24	135 (98.5%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)

Appendix H

Table H-1

Percentages and Chi-Square Analysis of Method used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Race (Non-Significant)

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Cell Phone						χ^2 (12, *N*=462) = 18.8
	Black	7.1%	8.6%	31.4%	52.9%	
	APA	1.8%	8.1%	41.4%	48.6%	
	White	8.0%	10.3%	44.0%	37.7%	
	Latino/a	4.3%	2.9%	34.3%	58.6%	
	Multi-Racial	2.8%	11.1%	47.2%	38.9%	

Table H-2

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Race

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Text Message					
	Black	50 (72.5%)	9 (13.0%)	5 (7.2%)	5 (7.2%)
	APA	93 (85.3%)	8 (7.3%)	7 (6.4%)	1 (0.9%)
	White	132 (76.7%)	17 (9.9%)	13 (7.6%)	10 (5.8%)
	Latino/a	51 (73.9%)	10 (14.5%)	6 (8.7%)	2 (2.9%)
	Multi-Racial	27 (75.0%)	6 (16.7%)	3 (8.3%)	0 (0%)
Postal Mail					
	Black	57 (82.6%)	8 (11.6%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	101 (92.7%)	5 (4.6%)	3 (2.8%)	0 (0%)
	White	142 (82.1%)	22 (12.7%)	8 (4.6%)	1 (0.6%)
	Latino/a	62 (91.2%)	2 (2.9%)	4 (5.9%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	31 (88.6%)	3 (8.6%)	1 (2.9%)	0 (0%)
Instant Messenger					
	Black	61 (88.4%)	4 (5.8%)	3 (4.3%)	1 (1.4%)
	APA	93 (86.9%)	4 (3.7%)	6 (5.6%)	4 (3.7%)
	White	136 (78.6%)	17 (9.8%)	13 (7.5%)	7 (4.0%)
	Latino/a	56 (82.4%)	6 (8.8%)	5 (7.4%)	1 (1.5%)
	Multi-Racial	31 (86.1%)	3 (8.3%)	0 (0%)	2 (5.6%)

Method	Race	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Blog					
	Black	68 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	APA	104 (96.3%)	2 (1.9%)	2 (1.9%)	0 (0%)
	White	171 (98.8%)	1 (0.6%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
	Latino/a	68 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	34 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
MySpace, Xanga, or another networking database					
	Black	67 (98.5%)	1 (1.5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	APA	103 (95.4%)	2 (1.9%)	3 (2.8%)	0 (0%)
	White	171 (99.4%)	1 (0.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Latino/a	68 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
	Multi-Racial	35 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

Table H-3

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Gender (Non-Significant Results)

Method	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Cell Phone						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 2.9
	Males	6.8%	9.3%	42.9%	41.0%	
	Females	4.7%	8.0%	38.9%	48.5%	
Text Message						χ^2 (3, N=455) = 5.6
	Males	80.4%	12.7%	3.8%	3.2%	
	Females	76.1%	10.1%	9.4%	4.4%	
Home Phone or Pay Phone						χ^2 (3, N=454) = 4.5
	Males	44.5%	5.2%	27.1%	23.2%	
	Females	34.8%	7.4%	32.8%	25.1%	
Email						χ^2 (3, N=457) = 3.1
	Males	34.2%	20.3%	33.5%	12.0%	
	Females	38.5%	23.7%	26.1%	11.7%	
Instant Messenger						χ^2 (3, N=453) = 1.1
	Males	80.8%	9.0%	6.4%	3.8%	
	Females	84.5%	6.7%	5.7%	3.0%	
In Person						χ^2 (3, N=456) = 1.3
	Males	44.9%	12.7%	21.5%	20.9%	
	Females	41.3%	14.1%	19.8%	24.8%	

Table H-4

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Gender

Method	Gender	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Postal Mail					
	Males	136 (86.6%)	12 (7.6%)	9 (5.7%)	0 (0%)
	Females	257 (86.5%)	28 (9.4%)	10 (3.4%)	2 (0.7%)
Blog					
	Males	152 (97.4%)	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)
	Females	293 (99.3%)	1 (0.3%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)
MySpace, Xanga, or another networking database					
	Males	152 (97.4%)	2 (1.3%)	2 (1.3%)	0 (0%)
	Females	292 (99.0%)	2 (0.7%)	1 (0.3%)	0 (0%)

Table H-5

Percentages and Chi-Square Analyses of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Age (Non-Significant)

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	χ^2
Cell Phone						χ^2 (3, N=462) = 1.2
	18-20	5.6%	8.0%	39.0%	47.4%	
	21-24	5.0%	9.4%	43.2%	42.4%	
Text Message						χ^2 (3, N=455) = 3.9
	18-20	77.4%	10.1%	7.5%	5.0%	
	21-24	78.1%	13.1%	7.3%	1.5%	
Home Phone or Pay Phone						χ^2 (3, N=454) = 2.3
	18-20	40.2%	6.6%	29.1%	24.1%	
	21-24	33.3%	6.5%	34.8%	25.4%	
Email						χ^2 (3, N=457) = 2.6
	18-20	34.8%	22.6%	30.4%	12.2%	
	21-24	42.0%	22.5%	24.6%	10.9%	
In Person						χ^2 (3, N=456) = 7.6
	18-20	45.0%	14.8%	20.1%	20.1%	
	21-24	37.0%	10.9%	21.0%	31.2%	

Table H-6

Frequencies and Percentages of Methods used by Parents to Communicate with their Students by Age

Method	Age	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
Postal Mail					
	18-20	271 (85.8%)	30 (9.5%)	14 (4.4%)	1 (0.3%)
	21-24	122 (88.4%)	10 (7.2%)	5 (3.6%)	1 (0.7%)
Blog					
	18-20	310 (98.1%)	3 (0.9%)	3 (0.9%)	0 (0%)
	21-24	135 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
MySpace, Xanga, or another networking database					
	18-20	311 (98.4%)	3 (0.9%)	2 (0.6%)	0 (0%)
	21-24	133 (98.5%)	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)	0 (0%)

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