

Measuring Expectations About College Adjustment

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Research on an instrument designed to measure matriculating students' expectations or level of confidence regarding their capacity for adjusting to college shows the instrument to be reliable and predictably related to a variety of pre- and postmatriculation self-report data and real-life behaviors. Uses of the instrument in high school as well as college are considered.

Many recent studies of adjustment to college have used a relatively new instrument for measuring that adjustment, the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) (Baker, 1992a; Baker & Siryk, 1989). A few of those studies have also used a variation of the SACQ—the Anticipated Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (ASACQ)—for pre-matriculation measurement of entering freshmen's expectations regarding their impending adjustment to college (Baker, McNeil, & Siryk, 1985; Baker & Schultz, 1992; Cooper & Robinson, 1988; Gerdes, 1986; Mendelowitz, 1990; Plaud, Baker, & Groccia, 1990). Although a great deal of information is available concerning the nature and use of the SACQ, relatively little has been written about the ASACQ. The purpose of this article is to redress that balance to the extent permitted by available data.

Background

The ASACQ and SACQ are similar instruments. Both consist of 67 statements addressing different facets of adjustment to college. Students are asked to rate each statement on a 9-point Likert-type scale for how closely the statement applies to them. The correspondingly numbered items on the two scales have essentially the same content with minor differences in wording required by the different instructions for the two scales. Both instruments yield a Full Scale score that is the sum of the 67 item scores and subscale scores for each of four areas: (a) academic adjustment, (b) social adjustment, (c) personal-emotional adjustment, and (d) institutional attachment/goal commitment. (The term "personal-emotional adjustment" is used here to refer to sense of physical and psychological well-being.)

The principal differences between the two in-

struments are in (a) time of administration, (b) instructions, and (c) constructs measured. The SACQ is employed any time after the beginning of an academic year, and students are asked to respond in terms of their current experience. The ASACQ is typically administered prior to matriculation, and students are asked to project themselves halfway into the first semester and indicate the degree that they expect the statement will apply to them at that future time. Higher SACQ scores indicate greater self-assessed adjustment. Higher ASACQ scores indicate greater expectations of oneself regarding future adjustment or greater confidence regarding the ability to adjust.

Measures of internal consistency for the ASACQ are quite acceptable and comparable to those for the SACQ. ASACQ coefficient alphas for six samples from five institutions range from .77 to .88 (median = .86) for the Academic Adjustment subscale, .84 to .92 (median = .89) for the Social Adjustment subscale, .73 to .81 (median = .77) for the Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale, .79 to .88 (median = .86) for the Attachment subscale, and .90 to .94 (median = .94) for the Full Scale (Baker et al., 1985; Baker & Schultz, 1992; Cooper & Robinson, 1988; Gerdes, 1986; Plaud et al., 1990). Intercorrelations among ASACQ subscales not sharing common items, from five samples at four institutions, range from .50 to .60 for the Academic/Social Adjustment subscales, .49 to .62 for the Academic/Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscales, .44 to .66 for the Social/Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscales, and .42 to .62 for the Personal-Emotional Adjustment Attachment subscales (Baker, 1992b; Cooper & Robinson, 1988; Gerdes, 1986). (Corresponding internal consistency data for the SACQ may be found in Baker, 1992a, and Baker and Siryk, 1989).

The principal use to date of the ASACQ has been in conjunction with the SACQ in studies of the relation between prematriculation expectations regarding adjustment to college and the postmatriculation reality (Baker et al., 1985; Baker & Schultz, 1992; Cooper & Robinson, 1988; Gerdes, 1986; Mendelowitz, 1990; Plaud, Baker, & Groccia, 1986). Such studies are facilitated by the structural similarities of the

ASACQ and SACQ, which make scores from the two instruments directly comparable.

Entering students have been found on average to have lower scores on the SACQ than the ASACQ, indicating that most freshmen become disillusioned postmatriculation regarding their capacity for adjustment to college. (See Baker & Schultz elsewhere in this issue for a summary of relevant data.) Individual differences in this phenomenon have been shown, however, with some students functioning at, or nearly as high as, their expected levels and others exceeding those levels (Baker et al., 1985).

These individual differences, furthermore, are associated with significant adjustment-related behaviors. Contrasted with students who adjust near or above their levels of expectations, students whose levels of adjustment are materially below what they expected (a) do not perform as well academically in college, (b) are more likely to be known to a campus psychological services center, (c) have a substantially higher rate of withdrawal from college, (d) are less likely to graduate on time, and (e) report less overall satisfaction with the college experience (Baker, 1992a; Baker et al., 1985; Gerdes, 1986). Six years after matriculation the graduation rate for disillusioned students was 55% and 86% for nondisillusioned students (Baker, 1992b).

Baker and Schultz (1992) found that freshmen in second semester interviews could recall their prematriculation expectation levels, their first semester adjustment levels, and also the differences between those levels. This indicates that there are experiential as well as behavioral counterparts of differences in the relation between ASACQ and SACQ scores.

A final study coupling the ASACQ and SACQ indicates that the disillusionment may be mitigated by intervention (Mendelowitz, 1990/1991). High school seniors who participated in a counseling program intended to facilitate the transition from high school to college experienced less disillusionment in their subsequent adjustment to college than did members of a control group.

These findings concerning the relation between ASACQ and SACQ scores are consistent with a similar phenomenon called the "freshman myth" (Stern, 1966, 1970; see also Baker et al., 1985). Stern reported that entering freshmen on average expect more from their college environment than they subsequently see themselves getting, hence the freshman myth.

ASACQISACQ data indicate that entering freshmen on average also expect more from themselves than they subsequently see themselves getting. The two kinds of disillusionment show several similarities: (a) the occurrence of individual differences, (b) association with significant postmatriculation adjustment-related behaviors, and (c) capacity for amelioration by intervention.

The various findings concerning coupled ASACQ/SACQ scores and the close correspondence between those findings and other data provide indirect evidence at least that the ASACQ does indeed measure a variable of consequence and that the variable has something to do with anticipations regarding the impending transition to college.

Three studies have reported relations between the ASACQ itself (i.e., not coupled with the SACQ) and other variables. Plaud et al. (1990) found that the more decided that entering engineering students were prematriculation about their major field of study, the higher their ASACQ-measured expectations about their adjustive capacity were. This was especially true for the academic aspects of the transition.

Gerdes (1986, 1991) demonstrated significant relation between ASACQ indices and a number of other variables. There were negative correlations between anticipated level of social adjustment and both the Quantitative and Verbal scores from the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and between anticipated level of institutional attachment and the SAT Quantitative score. There were correlations in the expected direction between ASACQ variables and (a) high school grade point average, (b) number of academic credits earned over four years of college, (c) number of semesters enrolled, and (d) attrition. But there was no significant correlation with either college grade point average or academic good standing.

Mendelowitz (1990/1991) found that high school seniors who had participated in a counseling program designed to facilitate the high school to college transition had greater expectations concerning their sense of psychological and physical well-being in the impending adjustment than did members of a control group.

The remainder of this article presents new analyses of the relation between ASACQ indices and other variables. Two primary sources of data are employed for these analyses, collected from two freshman classes entering Clark University ten years apart (i.e., in 1980, $N = 327$,

and 1990, $N = 291$). Secondary sources come from the University of Missouri at Rolla (Cooper & Robinson, 1988, $N = 247$), the University of Oregon (Gerdes, 1986, $N = 238$), and Holy Cross College (Baker et al., 1985, $N = 172$).

The variables to be examined for relation with the ASACQ are of three kinds: (a) postmatriculation test indices of effectiveness of adjustment to college (i.e., from the SACQ), (b) personal history/personal characteristics data collected prematriculation through university admissions procedures and by means of the annual freshman survey of the American Council on Education—University of California at Los Angeles Cooperative Institutional Research Program (ACE-UCLA CIRP), and (c) postmatriculation real-life behaviors.

Relation Between ASACQ and SACQ Indices

Until now there has been no systematic analysis of the extent to which ASACQ variables correlate with SACQ variables. Such an analysis would tell to what degree matriculating students' expectations predict postmatriculation self-assessed adjustment. The issue was touched on earlier in the comparison of average expectation scores with average actual adjustment scores but was not directly addressed in terms of how successfully matriculating freshmen had forecast their self-assessed adjustment to college.

There is a time-honored aphorism in psychology that the best way to know how a person will behave in a future situation is to ask that person. That essentially is what the ASACQ does. A more scientific basis for expecting ASACQ predictive capacity is the work of social cognitive theorists concerning expectancies and self-efficacy judgments (Bandura, 1986; Mischel, 1973; Rotter, 1982). Also contributing to ASACQ/SACQ correlations, however, would be the similarity of the instruments, the possible recall of ASACQ responses at the time of the SACQ administration, and test-taking response sets of individuals.

Data concerning ASACQ/SACQ relations are available for the two Clark University samples, including SACQ scores from both freshman semesters, and for the samples at the University of Oregon (Gerdes, 1991), the University of Missouri at Rolla (S. E. Cooper, personal communication, August 27, 1991) and Holy Cross College (Baker et al., 1985). The correlations

for corresponding subscales (e.g., anticipated Academic Adjustment vs. actual Academic Adjustment) and for the Full Scale are positive, statistically significant, and moderately strong (ranging from .38 to .70, all $p < .01$). Interestingly, in the two Clark samples ASACQ correlations with second semester SACQ scores are of the same approximate magnitude as with first semester scores.

Thus, entering freshmen are able prematriculation to predict postmatriculation self-assessed adjustment scores with some degree of accuracy. And they predict adjustment in both semesters to approximately the same extent. ASACQ scores do forecast to some moderate degree how well entering freshmen will subsequently see themselves as dealing with the demands of the transition into college.

Relation Between the ASACQ and Personal History/Personal Characteristics Data Collected Prematriculation

This section presents analyses of the relation between ASACQ variables and two sets of information about students collected prematriculation from students themselves or from their records. One set was generated during the admissions process at Clark University. The other set is responses to the annual freshman survey conducted by the ACE-UCLA CIRP. These data sets were available for freshmen entering Clark University in 1990 but not for those in 1980.

Admissions-related data

Clark University's admissions procedures produce data concerning the academic and social history of applicants. For our 1990 sample these data were collected in the fall and winter preceding the summer during which the ASACQ data were solicited. They were reviewed by the present authors for items potentially related to expectations or self-confidence regarding capacity for successfully dealing with the impending transition into college. Some items were selected because they allude to experiences that might be expected to build confidence regarding adjustive capacity in the college setting. Others were selected because they allude to experiences or characteristics implying varying levels of such confidence.

Students who had studied abroad ($n = 44$) had higher scores on the ASACQ Academic Adjustment subscale ($t = 1.65, p < .05$), the Social

Adjustment subscale ($t = 1.95, p < .05$), the Attachment subscale ($t = 1.67, p < .05$), and the Full Scale ($t = 1.96, p < .05$) than those who had not ($n = 247$). (One-tailed tests of significance were used throughout this study, except where indicated, because in most instances there were directional expectations.) Students who had participated in high school student government ($n = 80$) had higher scores on the ASACQ Attachment subscale ($t = 2.09, p < .05$) than those who had not ($n = 211$). Students who were tutors in high school ($n = 51$) had higher scores on the ASACQ Academic Adjustment subscale ($t = 2.23, p < .05$) than those who were not ($n = 240$). There were modest but statistically significant correlations in the expected direction between high school class rank and the Academic Adjustment subscale ($r = .23, n = 217, p < .01$) and the Full Scale ($r = .13, n = 217, p < .05$). Finally, early decision students ($n = 30$) had higher scores on the ASACQ Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale ($t = 1.90, p < .05$) than regularly admitted students ($n = 261$).

Several variables from the admissions data that we thought might relate significantly to ASACQ indices did not do so. These included (a) high school grade point average, (b) SAT scores, (c) scores from four SAT achievement tests, (d) whether Clark was a student's first choice, and (e) whether students knew what they wanted for a college major.

One statistically significant comparison was opposite to the expected direction. Amount of involvement in high school activities was negatively correlated with the ASACQ Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale ($r = -.16, N = 291, p < .01$).

These admissions data do not provide ringing endorsement of ASACQ validity, but on balance they are reasonably supportive and not contraindicative in any important way.

ACE-UCLA CIRP annual freshman survey data

The ACE-UCLA CIRP's annual freshman survey elicits a variety of information about students nationally. It was administered to Clark freshmen immediately prior to the beginning of the 1990-91 academic year as part of the regular matriculation process. The survey was completed by 252 members of the class who had also returned the ASACQ in the summer. The times of data collection for the CIRP survey and the ASACQ were approximately two months apart.

We reviewed the CIRP questionnaire for criteria against which to test the meaning of ASACQ variables. Items 25 and 38 were selected as particularly relevant.

Item 25 asks students to rate themselves on a 5-point scale for each of 16 traits in comparison with the average person their age. The traits (see Table 1) refer to self-conceptions regarding abilities and motivational characteristics that could be viewed as determinants of aspects of adjustment measured by the ASACQ subscales. They even include items referring directly to self-confidence. Several of the traits are relevant to the performance of academic tasks and others to social activities. Two are directly pertinent to sense of physical and psychological well-being.

Thus, we expected positive correlations between the 16 traits and the various ASACQ indices. And for each trait we expected differential degrees of correlation with the several subscales as a function of the relation between the nature of the trait and the aspects of adjustment measured by the subscales.

Table 1 presents the correlations between the 16 traits and the ASACQ for our sample, with the traits categorized as to area of adjustment. Overall, 63 of the 80 values are significant and in the expected direction. There are positive correlations between ASACQ scores and self-rated (a) competitiveness, drive to achieve, and intellectual self-confidence; (b) academic, mathematical, writing, and public speaking abilities; (c) popularity (including with the opposite sex), leadership ability, understanding of others, cooperativeness, and social self-confidence; and (d) emotional and physical health. Three significant correlations in the direction contrary to expectation occur for the trait artistic ability, possibly not surprising considering the relation between that ability and most academic demands in a liberal arts program.

Within the three categories of traits, the differential relations with ASACQ subscales are largely consistent with expectation. The highest correlations for the socially related traits are with the Social Adjustment subscale, and for the personal-emotionally related traits with the Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale. The same is generally true, though to a somewhat lesser extent, for the association between the academically related traits and the Academic Adjustment subscale.

Item 38 of the CIRP survey asks students for their best guess as to the chances, rated on a 4-

TABLE 1
Correlations Between Anticipated Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire Indices
and the Traits That Comprise Item #25 of the Cooperative Institutional Research
Program Annual Freshman Survey (N = 252)

Self-Rated Traits	Academic Adjustment Subscale	Social Adjustment Subscale	Personal- Emotional Adjustment Subscale	Attachment Subscale	Full Scale
Academically related					
Academic ability	.18**	ns	.21**	ns	.17**
Artistic ability	-.14*	ns	ns	-.15**	-.13*
Competitiveness	.23**	.16**	.11*	.13*	.20**
Drive to achieve	.35**	.14*	.17**	.18**	.27**
Mathematical ability	.11*	ns	.14*	ns	.11*
Public speaking ability	ns	.22**	.11*	ns	.16**
Self-confidence (intellectual)	.12*	ns	.26**	ns	.14*
Writing ability	ns	.19**	ns	.12*	.15**
Socially related					
Cooperativeness	ns	.20**	.19**	.20**	.20**
Leadership ability	.18**	.35**	.25**	.22**	.30**
Popularity	.14*	.34**	.19**	.19**	.25**
Popularity with opposite sex	.18**	.29**	.21**	.16*	.25**
Self-confidence (social)	.27**	.37**	.29**	.21**	.35**
Understanding of others	.11*	.17**	ns	.11*	.15**
Personal-emotionally related					
Emotional health	.26**	.27**	.37**	.18**	.33**
Physical health	.16**	.22**	.24**	.18**	.24**

* = $p < .05$ > .01

** = $p < .01$

point scale, that certain things will occur in their future. One group of future events includes decisions, actions, and accomplishments (or lack of them) of an academic sort that we reasoned should be related to a measure of self-confidence regarding academic adjustment in college. Another group of future events concerns the social area, including occupational and athletic activities. One future event is particularly relevant to personal-emotional adjustment and five to institutional **attachment/goal** commitment.

Because of the nature of the future events or the wording in item 38, the correlations between some of the events and ASACQ indices should be positive and others negative. For some it is difficult to decide whether there should be any

relation at all. As with the self-ratings in item 25, it was expected that the future events that are adjustment-relevant would be differentially correlated with the ASACQ subscales as a function of the relation between the event and the aspects of adjustment measured by the subscales.

Table 2 presents the correlations for our sample between the students' expectations regarding future events and the ASACQ indices, with the future events categorized by the areas of adjustment to which they should be most pertinent. For the academically related future events, 41 of the 45 comparisons of nine events with the five ASACQ indices are statistically significant and in the expected direction. Students with higher ASACQ scores see themselves as (a) less

TABLE 2
Correlations Between Anticipated Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire Indices
and the Predictions of Future Events That Comprise Item #38 of the Cooperative
Institutional Research Program Annual Freshman Survey (N = 252)

Events Predicted	Academic Adjustment Subscale	Social Adjustment Subscale	Personal- Emotional Adjustment Subscale	Attachment Subscale	Full Scale
Academically related					
Change major field	-.28**	-.16**	-.17**	-.16**	-.25**
Change career choice	-.29**	-.19**	-.18**	-.18**	-.26**
Fail one or more courses	-.28**	-.20**	-.17**	-.16**	-.26**
Graduate with honors	.26**	.15**	ns	.13*	.21**
Be elected to an academic honor society	.23**	.17**	ns	.13*	.20**
Make at least a B average	.22**	.23**	.15**	.22**	.26**
Need extra time to obtain degree	-.17**	ns	-.15**	-.12*	-.18**
Get tutoring help in specific courses	-.20**	ns	-.18**	-.10*	-.18**
Seek vocational counseling	-.13*	-.13*	-.14*	-.15**	-.16**
Socially related					
Be elected to a student office	.15**	.24**	ns	.21**	.19**
Join a fraternity, sorority, or social club	.17**	.22**	.11*	.21**	.21**
Get married while in college	ns	-.15*	ns	-.14*	-.11*
Participate in protests or demonstrations	-.15**	ns	-.15**	ns	ns
Play varsity or inter-collegiate athletics	ns	.22**	.21**	.13*	.19**
Participate in volunteer1 community service work	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Work to help pay for college expenses	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Work full-time while in college	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Have to work at outside job while in college	-.15**	ns	ns	ns	ns
Find job after college in field trained for	ns	.16**	ns	.21**	ns
Personal-emotionally related					
Seek counseling on personal problems	-.17**	-.15**	-.33**	-.14*	-.25**
Attachment/goal-commitment-related					
Get a bachelor's degree	ns	ns	ns	.14*	ns
Drop out of college temporarily	-.23**	-.21**	-.24**	-.26**	-.28**
Drop out permanently	-.19**	-.20**	-.20**	-.23**	-.24**
Transfer to another college before graduating	-.20**	-.27**	-.15**	-.45**	-.30**
Be satisfied with college	ns	.17**	ns	.29**	.18**

* = $p < .05$ > .01** = $p < .01$

likely to change major field or career choice or to seek vocational counseling; (b) less likely to fail courses, seek tutoring, or need extra time to obtain their degree; and (c) more likely to earn at least a B average, be elected to an academic honor society, and graduate with honors. As expected, the events in this category correlate to a higher degree more consistently with the Academic Adjustment **subscale** than with the other three subscales.

The results for the 10 socially related future events are less uniform, possibly because of the questionable relevance of many of the future events to effectiveness of social adjustment. In our judgment this would apply to getting married in college, participating in protests or volunteer work, and to any of the four events concerning paid employment. Of the remaining three more relevant events, 13 of the 15 correlations are significant and in the appropriate direction. Students with higher ASACQ scores see themselves as more likely to (a) join social organizations, (b) be elected to student office, and (c) play **varsity/intercollegiate** sports. And the correlations tend to be higher with the Social Adjustment **subscale** than with the other subscales.

The correlations between the one **personal-emotionally** related future event and the ASACQ indices are all statistically significant and in the expected direction. Students with higher ASACQ scores see themselves as less likely to seek individual counseling for personal problems. Also consistent with expectations, the correlation between this expectation and the Personal-Emotional Adjustment **subscale** is highest.

The pattern for the five institutional **attachment/goal** commitment-related future events is uniform and consistent with expectations. Of 25 comparisons, 19 are statistically significant and in the expected direction. Students with higher ASACQ scores see themselves as more likely to be satisfied with college and to get a bachelor's degree and less likely to drop out either temporarily or permanently or to transfer to another college. The correlations also tend to be strongest with the Attachment subscale, dramatically so in regard to prediction of possibility of transfer to another college.

By and large, the data from both items 38 and 25 support the inference that the ASACQ variables do measure what they are intended to measure.

Relation Between the ASACQ and Postmatriculation Behavioral Variables

It has already been shown here that the ASACQ predicts postmatriculation self-assessed adjustment. A more stringent test of the ASACQ's meaning and predictive capacity would be whether it can predict **postmatriculation** real-life behaviors. Some findings already cited indicate this kind of capacity. These include, as indirect evidence, the behavioral correlates of ASACQ/SACQ relations (e.g., level of academic performance, appeals for psychological services, attrition) (Baker et al., 1985). More direct evidence comes from Gerdes' (1986) findings that ASACQ scores predict (a) number of credits earned in college, (b) number of semesters enrolled, and (c) attrition. Also relevant is the finding by Baker and Schultz (1992) that students—with some accuracy—recall their **pre-matriculation** confidence levels several months after the fact.

The remainder of this section will report new analyses of the ASACQ's relation with several postmatriculation real-life behaviors. The variables employed in these analyses are essentially the same as many used in SACQ validity studies (Baker & Siryk, 1989). They include events, or consequences of events, that occur in the course of the college experience, primarily but not exclusively in the freshman year. In all instances it is assumed that the variable is related to the effectiveness of adjustment made in the freshman year. We expected that there would be a stronger relation between such variables and the SACQ, which measures actual adjustment, than the ASACQ, which measures expectations regarding an adjustment process that has not yet begun at the time of testing. But the analyses should help to clarify the degree that a student's prematriculation expectations are associated with subsequent events.

Less information about these behavioral events is available for the 1990 than the 1980 freshmen because of the short time from the end of their freshman year to when this report was written.

For the 1980 freshmen ($N = 327$) there was a significant correlation of $-.18$ between the ASACQ Personal-Emotional Adjustment **subscale** and being known to the campus psychological services center during the freshman year ($p < .01$) and one of $-.12$ for the Full Scale score ($p < .05$). For the 1990 freshmen ($N = 291$)

there were also significant negative correlations with this variable (ranging from $-.12$ to $-.15$, $p < .05$ or better) for all ASACQ indices except the Academic Adjustment subscale. These correlations indicate that the less confident students are prematriculation concerning their adjustive capacity, the more likely they are to be known during the freshman year to a campus psychological services center.

No significant correlations were found for the 1980 or 1990 samples between the ASACQ and freshman grade point average. There is mixed information concerning number of credits in the freshman year. For the 1990 sample ($n = 288$) there were significant positive correlations between number of credits earned in the freshman year and the Social Adjustment subscale ($r = .12$, $p < .05$), the Attachment subscale ($r = .17$, $p < .01$), and the Full Scale ($r = .12$, $p < .05$). However, significant negative correlations of approximately the same magnitude were obtained for the 1980 sample ($N = 327$) on the Academic ($r = -.13$) and Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscales ($r = -.13$) and the Full Scale ($r = -.11$, all $p < .05$).

For the 1980 freshmen there were no significant correlations in the expected direction between ASACQ variables and attrition after the first or second semesters. But, after the first semester there was a significant correlation in the direction contrary to expectation between the Academic Adjustment subscale and attrition ($r = .11$, $N = 327$, $p = .05$, two-tailed test). For the 1990 freshmen ($N = 291$), however, there were significant correlations in the expected direction with attrition after the first semester for the Attachment subscale ($r = -.23$, $p < .01$), the Social Adjustment subscale ($r = -.13$, $p < .05$), and the Full Scale ($r = -.11$, $n = 288$, $p < .05$). After two semesters for the 1990 freshmen, there were significant negative correlations with attrition for the Attachment ($r = -.20$, $p < .01$) and Social Adjustment ($r = -.12$, $p < .05$) subscales.

Information is available for the 1980 sample regarding ASACQ relation with postmatriculation behaviors after the freshman year. There were no significant relations with gaining positions of campus organizational leadership, annual academic honors in the three upperclass years, or election to Phi Beta Kappa. However, significant correlations in the expected direction between ASACQ scores and outcome of application for dormitory assistant positions in the junior and senior years were found for the At-

tachment subscale ($r = .36$, $n = 38$, $p < .05$), the Academic Adjustment subscale ($r = .34$, $n = 38$, $p < .05$), the Personal-Emotional Adjustment subscale ($r = .30$, $n = 38$, $p < .05$), and the Full Scale ($r = .35$, $n = 38$, $p < .05$). Thus, the more confident that entering freshmen were about their adjustive capacity, the better their chances were for being hired if they applied for dormitory assistant positions for their junior or senior years.

Evidence concerning the relation between the ASACQ and postmatriculation real-life behaviors is thus somewhat mixed, though still largely consistent with expectations. Our earlier-cited expectation that this would be a more stringent test of the meaning of ASACQ variables was apparently well-founded, but the yield is sufficient to justify further similar investigation.

Possibly a fairer test of the ASACQ's capacity to predict real-life behaviors would be to employ, as criterion variables, behaviors more contemporaneous with the time of administration of the ASACQ. Several such variables, already cited, indicate promise. Gerdes (1986) fruitfully used high school grade point average. Plaud et al. (1990) used prematriculation decidedness regarding academic major. The earlier-cited variables culled from admissions data (e.g., studying abroad or serving as a tutor in high school) are also relevant in this regard.

A new line of research could explore the relation between ASACQ data collected from high school students and behavioral events from the high school experience. There undoubtedly are many real-life high school behaviors that are relevant to expectations regarding subsequent adjustment to college. These could serve as appropriate variables for examining further the meaning of ASACQ indices and possibly casting new light on the phenomenon of adjustment to college.

Summary and Implications

It is clear from the data considered in this article that ASACQ indices relate consistently and predictably with a number of variables with which they should be expected to relate. When the ASACQ (measuring expectations regarding adjustive capacity) is coupled with the SACQ (measuring actual subsequent adjustment) to yield an index of disillusionment, several correlates of that index are found. Students experiencing disillusionment (a) perform less well academically in college, (b) report less satisfaction

with the college experience, (c) are more likely to be known to a psychological services center, (d) are more likely to withdraw from the college of original enrollment, and (e) are less likely to graduate on time than students not experiencing disillusionment. Additionally, disillusioned students during the latter half of their freshman year have been shown to be aware of the discrepancy between their prematriculation expectations and postmatriculation reality. There is evidence, furthermore, that the consequences of disillusionment may be mitigated by intervention. And the findings regarding disillusionment with one's ability to adapt to college parallel findings of other investigators regarding disillusionment with the college environment. All of these findings deriving from the coupling of the ASACQ and the SACQ imply that the ASACQ is measuring a variable of consequence having something to do with anticipations regarding the impending transition to college.

Other more direct evidence about what the ASACQ measures is available from analyses of the relation between the ASACQ itself—i.e., not coupled with a measure of actual adjustment—and independent relevant variables. A first set of such data concerns prematriculation experiences and behaviors. Thus, soon-to-enter freshmen who have high ASACQ scores (a) had higher secondary school grade point averages and class rank; (b) were more likely to have studied abroad, to have participated in high school student government, to have been tutors in high school, and to have participated in a counseling program intended to facilitate the high school-to-college transition; and (c) were more decided about their college major and more likely to be an early decision applicant to college than those who have lower scores.

A second set of data concerning ASACQ relation with other variables includes **prematriculation** self-assessment of personal characteristics and prognostications regarding one's future. Students with higher ASACQ scores see themselves as having (a) more academic, mathematical, writing, and public speaking abilities and (b) more competitiveness, drive to achieve, and intellectual self-confidence. They report themselves as (a) more socially self-confident and popular, (b) more cooperative and understanding of others, and (c) having more leadership ability. And they see themselves in better emotional and physical health.

Further, students with higher ASACQ scores have (a) a lower expectation of changing major

or career choice or seeking vocational counseling; (b) a lower expectation of needing tutoring, failing courses, or needing extra time to obtain a degree; and (c) a greater expectation of making at least a B average, being elected to an academic honor society, and graduating with honors. They have (a) greater expectation of joining a social organization, participating in organized sports, and being elected to student office; and (b) lower expectation that they will need counseling for personal problems. Also, students with higher ASACQ scores have (a) lower expectation of dropping out of college either temporarily or permanently or of transferring to another college and (b) greater expectation of being satisfied with college and obtaining a bachelor's degree.

A third set of data concerns ASACQ relation with postmatriculation outcomes. The higher the ASACQ scores of entering freshmen, the higher their self-assessed adjustment is likely to be around the middle of both the first and second semesters. With regard to more behavioral variables, students with higher ASACQ scores (a) earn more course credits in the freshman year and over the four years of college, (b) remain enrolled for more semesters, and (c) are less likely to drop out. They are (a) less likely to be known to a campus psychological services center and (b) more likely to be hired if they apply for dormitory assistant positions for their junior or senior years.

These findings overall are largely confirmatory. However, there are a few instances where expected relations were not found, were contrary to expected direction, or were inconsistent as to occurrence or direction of relation. Further research would be desirable to explore more extensively the meaning of the variables tapped by the ASACQ, as well as to explore the uses and usefulness of the instrument both in research and for practical purposes.

A principal practical use of the ASACQ would be for early identification of students who have concerns about their adjustive capacity in college or who may experience problems in that adjustment, as a first step in attempts to alleviate such concerns and problems. Usefulness of the ASACQ in remedial intervention with college-bound high school students has already been demonstrated by Mendelowitz (1990/1991), and his approach could serve as a model for secondary school counselors interested in facilitating the transition of their students into college.

The ASACQ can also be used as an early

warning device by counselors and clinicians at the college level. ASACQ data could be solicited from incoming students after notification of admission until the beginning of the academic year. Consenting students might be informed of results by mail or, preferably, by interview either during the summer or soon after the beginning of the academic year. Scores for individuals could be presented in the context of normative group data for all respondents from the class, with encouragement of constructive thinking about and preparation for the impending adjustment to college. Where there is indication of problems, there could be consideration of sources of help available at the college (see Baker & Siryk, 1986, for similar use of the SACQ).

An especially important potential use of ASACQ data would be in those instances where the SACQ is also administered in the first semester. As described earlier, students showing significant declines from the pre- to postmatriculation responses are at particular risk, and interventions with such students should be especially worthwhile.

In those instances where individual feedback is not feasible or desired, ASACQ group data might still offer a useful means of encouraging students to think about and plan for their adjustment to college. This could be accomplished through general mailings, workshops, or orientation courses, where group data could offer potential implications for individual adjustment. Class members could be encouraged to think about their own status in light of the group data and could be given information regarding available helping services.

Finally, it is conceivable that ASACQ group data could prove useful in (a) the preparation of orientation courses, (b) the planning of residence hall programs, or (c) the training of advisors or upperclass student orientation aides.

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