Recruiting Students in Higher Education in the Age of Social Media

By

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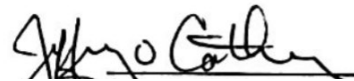In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree(s) of

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Title Page

Abstract

This study aims to develop a deeper understanding of recent integrated marketing communication (IMC) practices by higher education institutions in the recruitment of students. In an ever-changing world, social media has altered how marketing is conducted. Due to my involvement in student affairs (heavily involved on campus with clubs, organizations, and working closely with student affairs faculty) and curiosity in university recruitment, our research question was laid out: What (if any) factors stand out to incoming students when deciding on which university to attend and how well are these factors currently used to market to students. Using both qualitative and quantitative research methods, we present our findings from in-depth interviews and survey results from current students to better understand which promotional and recruitment efforts were successful in attracting them to the current university. Along with in-depth interviews and findings, we also present results from a survey showing that factors such as price, location, and quality of professors are salient in deciding which university to attend. Along with these factors, we find that in-person marketing efforts are more successful than social media targeted ads in capturing a student's attention.

Introduction

This research aims to explore one university's integrated marketing communication strategies and their effectiveness in recruiting incoming undergraduate students. The study is conducted at a master level public university in a rural mountain environment (hereafter called

Appalachian State University). Appalachian State is part of the 17 North Carolina System of Public Universities. The primary objective was to identify what types of marketing are perceived as the most effective in recruiting and communicating with students. I discuss future possibilities of ways to integrate successful integrated marketing communication strategies to serve students more effectively. In this research, we focused on inquiring currently enrolled students on what criteria they looked for in their decision-making and evaluation criteria of different universities. Investigating how and where Appalachian State University markets their top aspects to students will ultimately show us future ways of increasing awareness and knowledge in High School students. The findings should assist in advancing recruitment strategies which may allow for targeting a broader range of students and thereby increasing the awareness and knowledge of the Appalachian State University brand. During an interview with Appalachian State University's communication specialist, it was stated that Appalachian State University did not have a specific marketing budget until this past 2018-2019 academic year. While it is still much less in comparison to competing larger state schools, having this budget "will allow for necessary and long-overdue changes to be made in the years to come." Findings should assist Higher Education Institutions in creating more efficient recruitment strategies.

Literature Review

Factors Affecting Students' Decisions

Previous research illustrates that the location of a university is a factor that can be a major criterion for some students (Maringe 2006). Looking specifically at the current context, Appalachian State University, the institution is located in a unique area that not many other universities can emulate. Situated in a small town within a mountain range, however, does present both opportunities and challenges for incoming students and the overall growth of the university. The unique location provides a way to market the university and the area to incoming students but the university has difficulties to grow due to the limited buildable land available for expansion. Finding the group of students who prefer locations like this is one main challenge when it comes to targeting potential students. A study done at Johns Hopkins University (Koricich, Chen & Hughes 2018) discusses how rurality and socioeconomic status within these rural places affects which students are attending universities. This is important for Appalachian State University, as they recruit many rural students and are constantly looking for ways to improve their recruitment strategies.

Inside Higher Ed Magazine reported that 40 percent of students who decided not to go to their college or university of first choice made their decision based on cost (Seltzer 2017). How universities manage and promote their scholarships therefore determines who applies. We posit that being listed as a value for your money university in Princeton Review and other publications, (which Appalachian State University is) can help universities reach out to and attract low-to mid-income, first generation, and students without chances to obtain scholarships.

A university's brand could be considered the most important part of an organization's marketing efforts when it comes to students deciding on attending a university. How people view the brand and the associations with the brand are what will "stick in their minds" as choices are made. Values, missions, and relationships are all aspects of the university's brand, and it is vital for universities to manage their brand accordingly to what they want their students to associate the brand with. For example, a study by Clark, Fine, and Scheuer (2017) explored how social media engagement impacts relationships between students and the university. In a study with 218 students they found that 18.2% followed the university on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. From this 18.2%, the majority engaged with at least one of these platforms on average more than students who did not follow the university on at least three social media platforms. With more investment of time and money in social media engagements and encouraging students to follow the university on more than two social media sites, they found that high quality relationships were formed, and this ultimately was a major deciding factor for students about which university to attend.

The internet is a great asset and a vital one if used properly when it comes to marketing of universities. Hanover Research (2015) found that the following aspects were useful for gaining students' attention and attracting them to a specific university: responsive website design, search engine optimization (SEO), use of web analytics, strategic social media, mobile development, and customer relationship management (CRM) systems. These systems allow for more personalized use, as the CRM systems allow for universities to have an understanding of potential students history with the university, SEO allows for the university to have ads pop up on websites where the potential student frequently visits, and web

analytics and responsive website designs allow for user friendly interaction and again more personalized messaging through advertisements on the internet, and The use of these social media tactics can target the type of students a university usually attracts and can allow for personalized messages on various platforms. Using these tactics can create a personal feel and connection, which makes students feel wanted and appreciated. Therefore, this is yet another important factor when it comes to college decisions.

Recruitment Strategies

A study by Maringe (2006) examined what kind of recruitment strategies work best for incoming students. Similar to other high-involvement and big-ticket item purchase decisions, Maringe's (2006) study found that students adopt consumerist approaches when looking at different characteristics in deciding which university to attend. The study's findings show that students consider degree programs and price-related issues more than any other elements of universities' marketing mix. Maringe (2006) had respondents rank 35 factors on a scale of 1-10 considering each factor to be rated between least important or most important to their college decision. There was a bias towards females in this study, as one of the participating schools was an all-female school.

Understanding that in-person marketing such as having campus representatives visit High School fairs, organize open houses, family weekends, campus tours, individual visits with current students, alumni, professors, student ambassadors, and admissions staff creates a lasting impression on prospective students, Missaghian and Milian (2018) discuss the importance of first impressions to prospective students at college fairs and open houses. The study was done at a Canadian College Fair, and the researchers aimed to bridge the gap

between brand prestige of the university and to understand the way the brand image was interpreted by students. Knowing how to close this gap can give students a more accurate image of the university and allow for a greater understanding on how to market more effectively.

Continuing the discussion on brand image within Higher Education, Moogan (2011) researched what university attributes prospective students in the United Kingdom are mostly looking for. In addition, Moogan (2011) investigated ways the university could increase the retention rate of students by connecting the factors students cared most about to the ways they marketed the university to them. The results showed that a specific degree program was the main factor in students' choice of school. They also found that students would have preferred more electronic sources of marketing.

Looking at Liverpool University in the UK, yet another study was conducted by Brown, Varley, and Pal (2009). They examined the way students narrow down the factors they are considering to ultimately make a final choice on which university to attend. They presented their results in four sections reflecting the consumer-decision making model: Problem recognition state, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and purchase decisions. From these stages, their main finding was that students have a need for flexible targeting in regards to recruitment strategies. One example was universities that recruit through more aggressive marketing approaches (using several channels of communication to allow for repeated information), and the other was universities that recruit due to a high demand. This means that certain universities (such as Ivy League schools) do not have to aggressively

market to students, as the majority of students who apply to these schools are already aware of what the university can give to them, and they want in. Based on what the students' programs of study were, they may have required more or less attention and more specific target marketing based on the qualities they were looking for in an institution. The results of this study found that students who had received more individualized marketing efforts tended to stay at the university they chose rather than those who had only received generic mass marketing during their time of recruitment, and tended to transfer at some point in their collegiate career.

Method Study 1

In-Depth Interviews

The first part of the current research used a qualitative research method as limited research was found in the literature phase. In-depth interviews with currently enrolled students who were either Freshmen or Sophomores were conducted. The focus of the interviews were to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences the students had had of their own lived-experience during their decision-making process and the University's recruitment efforts. In addition, we wanted to understand their satisfaction level with their choice of said university. Based on our literature review and personal experience in attending and working at Higher institutions of learning, a set of grand tour questions were developed and used as an interview guide (see Appendix C). More specifically, a list of fifteen grand tour questions (McCracken 1986) were asked to eight undergraduate students. Some key questions included 1) why they

chose Appalachian State University, 2) what aspects drew them there, 3) ways they

remember being marketed to, 4) what could have been more effective in the university's

marketing efforts, 5) what resources they use on campus (and how well these are marketed to

students), 6) what they would change about the university, and 7) how satisfied they are with

their decision. Follow up questions and probing were done to get a deeper understanding of

the above topics. The study was approved by the IRB (Appendix A), and all participants

signed a consent form (See Appendix B)stating that their names would not be associated with

any information they provided. Data collection was conducted via purposive sampling where

the researcher identified key informants to participate and later asked for referrals (snowball

sampling). Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the author shortly after each

interview, and then once transcribed the recordings were deleted. Data analysis was

conducted through iterative readings by the author. The complete transcriptions from all

eight in-depth interviews can be found in the appendix D. Please see Table 1 for Informant

Profiles.

Table 1. Informant Profiles

Pseudonym Name	Gender	Age	Major	Class Standing
Erin	Female	18	Biology	Freshman
Libby	Female	19	Economics	Freshman
Kyle	Male	19	Marketing	Freshman
Kayla	Female	18	Social Work	Freshman
Jacob	Male	19	Sustainable Technology	Freshman
Justin	Male	20	Nursing	Sophomore
Jessie	Female	20	Social Work	Sophomore
Max	Male	20	Economics	Sophomore

Findings Study 1

Our findings based on iterative readings of the data showed a lot of saturation in the answers and therefore the main emerging themes are presented here. The commonality between

interviewee narratives were a bit surprising as the informants were diverse in their

backgrounds, came from different areas and had chosen various majors. The three main

factors in the student decision-making when choosing Appalachian State University were

location, price (tuition), and the quality and number of professors. These findings had some

similarity to previous research. Location (Koricich, Chen & Hughes 2018) and price (Seltzer

2017) were both found to be main factors in the student selection process. The factor of

number and quality of professors however differs from other research found. In addition,

other themes emerged throughout the data analysis and will be discussed in this section under

the following headings: Community, Price, Professors, Social Media, and Diversity.

Community

We found that one of the main reasons people chose Appalachian State University was

because of the location, especially the beautiful mountain scenery and all the outdoor

activities that go along with it. Along with the location, many stated that this university felt

like a "home" from the time they first visited, compared to other universities they had visited.

Informant, Kyle stated:

 "Appalachian State was always in the back of my mind as being home, so that was my

ultimate deciding factor."

Another informant, Justin, stated:

"...but I really appreciate the beauty around us no matter the weather. The communities are
always great and it always feels like home"

Price

Besides location, one main factor that every student mentioned in interviews was the price to attend this university. Jessie stated:

"I knew that at the end of the day I'm getting the same great education as people at other state schools but for a much better price."

This same student also stated what the cost of tuition was for the year of 2019-2020. Students comparing what public university tuition costs show that Appalachian State's is significantly less than other schools.

"*For the year of 2019-2020, tuition for an in-state student is $7,651 and for out of state students is $22,458. This compared to other state schools was less expensive.*"

Professors

Quality and number of professors were also factors that emerged from the interview data. Since Appalachian State University is not primarily a research institution, professors are most often the ones teaching classes, even to underclassmen compared to teaching assistants. More specifically, students are receiving an education from professors with terminal degrees in their respective disciplines, rather than from graduate students who work as Teaching Assistants. Not only do students applaud professors because they teach classes, but students rave about how friendly professors are at Appalachian State University. Several informants stated that they were encouraged to stop by during office hours, even if they were not having trouble in the class. For example, Kayla stated:

"I met with the nursing department while I was on my campus tour, and my eyes were opened to how great the professors were right off the bat! I have never had a TA during my freshman year, and the professors are just always accessible and have always helped me when I need it!"

Informant Libby also provided insights on how her experience was with professors at Appalachian State.

"My professors are also really good about wanting us to utilize their office hours. Like my one professor was like please come I get so bored just sitting there so like they make it known that they really are here to help us"

The quality of professors can make or break a student's education experience. Having a university that is known for having high quality professors who are truly there to teach students as their top priority is a great factor to market to potential students. From my own experience, the professors I have had go out of their way to make sure students really understand the materials being taught in class, and are able to apply those concepts to post-graduation life.

During an interview with Appalachian State University's communication specialist, it was stated that Appalachian State University did not have a specific marketing budget until this past 2018-2019 academic year. While it is still much less in comparison to competing larger

state schools, having this budget "will allow for necessary and long-overdue changes to be made in the years to come."

Social Media

Looking more specifically at how universities such as Appalachian State University are marketing to students in the age of social media, our data shows that while all students recalled seeing Instagram ads and Facebook ads, the in-person marketing is still what mattered more to them. During informant Libby's interview she brought up the statement:

"If you want to expand a program, I think it's important to go to the people. People remember the in-person experiences more, and this is ultimately how you will create lasting change."

Several students, such as Kayla, mentioned that:

"I don't even remember seeing a lot of social media ads."

The majority of students interviewed did not receive any social media ads until they visited campus or spoke with a campus representative, but they stated that their interest for Appalachian State University could have increased if they had been targeted with ads sooner. Jessie expounds on this by stating the following:

"I remember seeing random ads on social media, but none of them felt like they were marketed special to me. I got generic ads, but wish I could have seen and heard about aspects of the university that interested me more."

This quote helps reinstate student's views on wanting more personalized social media marketing from Appalachian State. Personalized marketing will also be more memorable, and when the time comes to make a decision on a university, the personalized efforts will stick out in student's minds.

Diversity

A topic that came up from several students was diversity. Students talked about how a lack of diversity on campus was a negative drawing factor to the university, and how they have heard more about diversity than they actually see on campus.

"one thing that kind of bothers me with this school, and maybe I don't see the whole campus, but they always talk about diversity diversity diversity, but I haven't necessarily seen that diversity outside of sexual orientation, which is good, but when I think of diversity i think of like racial diversity, cause that's a big thing" -Libby

"I have noticed that app is mainly white so I think we should try to be more diverse when recruiting new classes" – Jacob

These highlight a few examples of how Appalachian might be focusing more on certain areas of diversity, like sexual orientation, but maybe not focusing enough on racial diversity on campus. Talking with University Communications Associate Vice Chancellor and Chief Communications Officer, Megan Hayes, she discussed that part of the diversity problem here at Appalachian stems from not being able to retain diverse faculty and staff. This then has a trickle-down effect and is part of the reason why we cannot retain racially diverse students.

Discussion Study 1

The overall results from analysis of the interview data shows that price, location, and quality of professors are the main factors that impacted students' decisions to attend Appalachian State University.

Along with the top three factors specified above, it was also found that in-person marketing efforts stood out and had a larger impact on students than online marketing did. These in-person marketing efforts consisted mostly of campus visits including tours and open houses. This coincides with previous research from Missaghian and Milian (2018) who found that in-person marketing efforts at open houses are vital and create a long-lasting impact on students. Open houses were one of the on-campus visits that helped solidify students' decision to attend Appalachian State University as well. Moving forward, we recommend that social media is used more efficiently in recruiting students. This aligns with the research from Clark, Fine, and Scheuer (2017) who showed that students who followed and engaged with the university on various social media platforms were more involved and connected on campus. From the input that students gave, they did not recall seeing any kind of

personalized social media ads from Appalachian, and rather only remember getting generic

emails. We offer that by changing Appalachian State University's marketing plan to include

a wider and broader range of specialized ads, this will in turn reach a wider audience and

allow for students to feel welcomed and wanted. The community around Appalachian State

was also a drawing factor that many people stated as being unique and non-replicable.

Method Study 2

Survey

After reviewing the qualitative data analysis, we conducted a survey consisting of 31

questions to help us answer the research questions:

1) What (if any) factors stand out to incoming students when deciding on which university to

attend and

2) how well were these factors marketed to students?

The survey was designed in a similar manner to that of Maringe (2006) in which students

were asked to rank the importance of 35 factors on a scale of 1-10 (least important to most

important). The survey also considered asking about which recruitment methods created a

more lasting impression based off of the literature review findings of Missaghian and Milian

(2018) in which they stated that first impressions a student has on campus matter when it comes time for students to make a decision on a university. The full survey can be found in Appendix F.

Our method of recruitment for this survey was via a Qualtrics survey administered online to a convenience sample consisting of a mix of students from many different types of classes. It needs to be noted that the students enrolled in Dr. Albinsson's marketing classes were offered extra credit to take this survey, but other students in the convenience sample were offered no incentive. There were 261 participants in the survey, and the data was skewed towards upperclassmen. All participants signed a consent form that can be found in Appendix E. The survey was drafted to result in both quantitative and qualitative (open-ended) data for analysis.

Findings Study 2

Demographics

Data analysis from the 261 respondents were conducted in SPSS. A frequency analysis of the demographic variables provided the following information :

- **Gender:** 40.2% Male (Frequency: 105) and 50.6% Female. (Frequency: 132)

- **Class Standing:** 7.7% Freshmen (Frequency: 20) 9.6% Sophomores (Frequency: 25) 14.9% Juniors (Frequency: 39) 53.6% Seniors (Frequency: 152) and 4.6% other, mostly being graduate students or seniors taking an extra semester. (Frequency: 12)

- **Program of Study:** 6.5% College of Health Sciences (Frequency: 17) 10.7% College of Arts and Sciences (Frequency: 28) 11.5% College of Fine and Applied Arts

(Frequency: 30) .8% Hayes School of Music (Frequency: 2) 1.5% Reich College of

Education (Frequency: 4) 1.1% in the University College (Frequency: 3) and 58.2%

Walker College of Business. (Frequency: 152)

The zipcodes reported from the survey participants are recorded in the wordcloud below.

The top 5 towns from the reported zipcodes are Apex, NC, Lenoir, NC, Cornelius NC,

Newton, NC, and Wake Forest, NC. These areas are all within 178 miles from Boone, NC.

The longest range being between Boone, NC and Apex, NC (178 miles) and the closest being

Lenoir, NC. (29 miles)

Results

The first survey question asked, "How were you informed about Appalachian State

University?" The top three answers were Twitter, (Frequency: 251 Percentage: 96.2)

Facebook (Frequency: 244 Percentage: 93.5) and Instagram, (Frequency: 251 Percentage:

96.2). The second question asked for participants to answer questions about the importance

of 11 academic factors in their decision making using a Semantic Differential scale from 1-7, anchored by unimportant (1) and important (7). The top three "most important" responses based on the highest means were the Value of Education (Mean: 6.05, Standard Deviation: 1.23), Quality of Education (Mean: 6, Standard Deviation: 1.25), and Field of Study (Mean: 5.56, Standard Deviation: 1.58). These can also be seen in the histograms below, along with a close fourth factor, which was Reputation (Mean: 5.4 Standard Deviation: 1.43)

With this same list of academic factors, we ran a bivariate correlation (full results found in appendix G) and found that there were very strong correlations among the following factors (r= Pearson correlation coefficient):

- Degree Programs and Field of Study (r=.802)

- Quality of Education and Value of Education (r=.856)

The following had strong correlations:

- Course Content and Teaching Quality (r=.685)

This information tells us that for the factors that were very strongly correlated, that those who reported one factor as being important to them, they were strongly likely to report that the other factor was also very important to them.

The next question on the survey asked respondents to rate how important non-academic related factors were in deciding which university to attend using the same type of Semantic Differential scale as above. . This question had 24 factors for students to rate and the top four most important were: Price (Mean: 5.79 Standard Deviation: 1.51), Location (Mean:

5.71 Standard Deviation: 1.46), Value of Education (Mean: 5.70 Standard Deviation: 1.37),

and Reputation of University (Mean: 5.52 Standard Deviation: 1.43).

We also ran a bivariate correlation between these 24 variables to see whether factors were

correlated. The following factors reported a Pearson Correlation that showed strong to very

strong correlations:

- Clubs and Events on campus (r=.633)

- Food services and Health and Wellness Services (r=.638)

- Transportation and Computer Access (r=.729)

- Health and Wellness Services and Student Union (r=.714)

- Library and Computer Services and Student Union(r=.709)

These correlations also tell us that those who reported one factor as being important to them

were strongly likely to report that the other factor was also very important to them.

The next question asked whether there was an ultimate deciding factor for the respondent.

103 (39.5 percent) respondents answered yes o and149 respondents answered no (57.1

percent). An open-ended follow-up question was asked and the top answers for ultimate

deciding factor were: Location (17), Price and Scholarship (16), and Athletics (14). The next

question asked was an open-ended question, asking if Appalachian State University differed

from other schools. For the students who believed that Appalachian differed, suggested the

following top differentiators: The community and culture of Appalachian (32), Price (19),

and the Environment and Location was very unique. (11)

The next section in the survey contained questions in regards to Appalachian State University's marketing efforts at the time of recruitment and decision-making for students. The first question in this section asked if participants engaged in certain recruitment strategies. With eight options for respondents to choose from the top four were : Off-Campus Group Meeting, (Frequency: 239 Percentage: 91.6%) Community College Articulation Agreements, (Frequency: 234 Percentage: 89.7) Communicating with Already Enrolled Students, (Frequency: 217 Percentage: 83.1%) and Visiting Campus on a Weekend. (Frequency: 207 Percentage: 79.3%)

The next set of questions asked students to respond to statements using Likert-scales anchored by strongly agree (7) and strongly disagree (1). The first asked whether Appalachian State University's marketing efforts were genuine (Mean: 5.6 Standard Deviation: 1.05), the next asked if Appalachian's social media was effective in marketing to future students (M= 4.76 Standard Deviation: 1.39), and the last asked if Appalachian's campus visits were effective in marketing to future students (Mean: 5.77 Standard Deviation: 1.14). We thought that it would be interesting to examine if there were any gender differences in how students perceived Appalachian State's marketing efforts. We therefore ran an Independent samples t-test of the three questions listed above and gender (male and female). The question which asked how students perceived the marketing efforts as genuine M_{Male}= 5.49, std=1.119, M_{Female}=5.70, std=.988, t-value =-1.52- check , p=0.036 was not significant. Next we tested for gender differences of effective social media M_{Male}=4.60 , std= 1.418, M_{Female}=4.89 std=1.349, t-value= -1.63, p=.105 which was not significant. The final

question we tested for gender differences was effective campus visits. $M_{Male}= 5.64$, std= 1.309, $M_{Female}= 5.87$, std=.976 was also not significant.

The next question asked what could Appalachian change in its marketing efforts to better attract students. Some of the more frequent open-ended responses analyzed were to pay professors and adjuncts better so they would be around longer , have more personalized social media, and to have more representatives visit high schools.

The next question asked if the respondent's perception had changed about Appalachian since the time they applied until present day. The frequency for the answer yes was 126 (48.3%). For the answer no, the frequency was 111 (42.5%). We asked an open-ended follow-up question of those who answered yes :

More negative perceptions:

- the atmosphere was more liberal and "hippy" than they had originally thought

- perceived that the campus is more racist than they knew when they chose this university

- perceived that the university's sustainability efforts were marketed falsely, and the campus isn't as "green" as you read about

More positive perceptions:

- Higher quality of education than anticipated - did they offer more examples...do you have frequencies for these and the negative ones?

- More personable and inclusive than imagined

- Less liberal and "hippy" than first thought

Participants were also asked if they had the chance to remake their college choice , would still choose to come to Appalachian State? The frequency for the answer yes was 219 (83.9%). Eighteen (6.9 %) respondents answered no. Unfortunately, no follow-up question was asked, which is clearly a limitation and a lost opportunity to better understand current college students satisfaction level. If we would have asked a follow up question to see why they would not choose to come to Appalachian again, this would have given us more insight on how to move forward and offer more recommendations for the university going forward.

Looking at the topic of diversity, students offered insights that this woud be the area they would like to see changed the most on campus. They believe that the advertising of the university shows to some extent a falsehood about how diverse Appalachian truly is, and that can be found in the quotes below from students:

"I think Appalachian State University should be honest when it comes to diversity."

"Unfortunately I have noticed a lack of culture on campus. While many cultures exist on campus I don't think that the university does enough to highlight diversity on a day to day basis."

"Appalachian should strive for more diversity, and don't claim that we have diversity when the large majority of students are Caucasian."

These show an overarching theme that this is an area that Appalachian needs to focus on, especially when it comes to how to market the diversity at Appalachian.

Discussion Study 2

The above analysis offers insight as to what parts of Appalachian's marketing efforts are most impactful and recommendations from students moving forward. To summarize the results presented, some of the main factors that stood out to students and helped them decide to attend Appalachian were the price, location, reputation of the university, and the value of the education they would receive. Some of the best recruitment strategies were for students to talk to already enrolled students, meeting off campus with a club or organization, and to do campus visits. Our results are interesting because social media and online interaction was not one of the top answers on this question. However a different question asked students how they were informed about Appalachian, listed Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram as the top promotional tools. This ultimately shows that while Appalachian does have an online presence, in the students' mind it is not associated with being a top "recruitment" method, rather just being a way they are informed of Appalachian.

When we ran the independent samples T-test to test for gender differences and the questions of effective social media, genuine marketing efforts, and effective campus visits, no significance was found. The results therefore show that there were no differences in how males or females perceived the efforts. .

While 48.3% of survey respondents answered that their perception had changed about

Appalachian from the time they made their decision to attend verses now, it was interesting

to find that some perceptions had changed for the better and some had also changed for the

worse. An equal amount of qualitative responses were given from both sides when asked to

specify what the perception change was.

83.9% of survey respondents stated that if given the chance to do over, they would still

choose to attend Appalachian State University. This shows that while marketing efforts can

always be improved, overall the marketing and recruitment of students was done using an

accurate portrayal of what benefits the university offers and what life on campus is like.

Moving forward, the results suggest that Appalachian should focus on marketing the factors

such as the price, location, and value and quality of education through effective social media

outlets (i.e., Twitter, Facebook, Instagram). Utilizing social media and promoting the

importance of campus visits, tours, and open houses will also allow for the university to

reach the most number of students and leave a lasting impression on students.

General Discussion

Appalachian State University is a very unique school due to its location and focus on a value-

driven and personalized education setting. It is therefore difficult to compare marketing

strategies of this university to other surrounding state schools. The main reason for the

difficulty for comparison is the unique and rural location. To reach the university you have to

make an effort to drive up the mountain, and rarely would you otherwise come to the location

of the town. Being located about two hours away from several larger cities, Charlotte,

Greensboro, Asheville in NC and Johnston City in Tennessee you don't come here by

accident. Having a beautiful yet distant location makes it so that the university has to target an audience in a way to make them want to come to Boone to visit, since they will not just accidently drive to the town. Professors want to make real connections to students at this university and they go above and beyond to help students get to where they want to be. Comparing the findings with other similar studies, price and location were on other "top ten" factor lists (Maringe 2006), but the quality of professors was a unique factor for Appalachian State University. It was also unique to Appalachian State that in-person marketing creates a longer lasting impact than social media marketing. From our initial research, a study conducted at Johns Hopkins University (Koricich, Chen & Hughes 2018) discussed the way rural living and socioeconomic status affect where and how students attend a university. While Koricich et al.'s research question differed from ours, we found that Appalachian attracts students from many rural towns. This along with the fact that Appalachian State University has the lowest tuition cost compared to other comparable public NC state schools shows that a large number of students choose to attend Appalachian because of the value of education they receive for what they pay. There is a clear cost-benefit and value relationship between these factors.

A surprising topic that surfaced during the interviews and survey were regarding diversity. In both our interviews and survey, students mentioned that they believed for diversity to be a key issue that Appalachian needs to work on in order to help retain students and give a more accurate picture of what life is like on campus at a predominately white institution (PWI). The following are a few quotes from students regarding their views on Appalachian's diversity.

Hosting focus groups and partnering with University Communications and various student groups across campus such as the Multi-Cultural Center and The Black Student Association (BSA) and the National Panhellenic Councils could help to bring new student perspectives to the table on this topic. As the interview data showed, diversity is a topic that warrants further investigation.

Both studies presented results that price and location were significant factors for deciding to attend Appalachian State University. The interviews and the survey qualitative data also both allowed for students to give insights and follow up responses for questions about what recruitment materials created more of a lasting impression, if they were satisfied with their decision to attend Appalachian, and what Appalachian could improve on with marketing efforts. The majority of students from both studies were overall satisfied with their decision to attend Appalachian, and offered insights arguing that both social media and in-person efforts were relevant in the selection process. The interview findings leaned more towards in-person marketing being more beneficial and findings from the survey presented that social media efforts mattered more than in-person marketing. One reason for this disparity could be from the fact that mostly underclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) participated in the in-depth interviews while mainly upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) participated in the survey. While we are unable to generalize these results due to the size of the studies, this does show insight to an area of study in the future.

Conclusion

This study aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of the main factors for current underclassmen at Appalachian State University in deciding on which university to attend. Since most public higher education institutions are ultimately competing for the same pool of students, in-state high school students, , it is vital to know what factors are most important to students and to know the most efficient way to market these factors to students. Our results show that location, price, and quality/value of education are the main factors in deciding to attend Appalachian State University. While social media marketing is important and definitely vital to reach as many students as possible, our research posits that in-person marketing should receive more attention and effort. Students valued and remembered their in-person interactions a year after their decision.. These in-person interactions range from having campus representatives go to different college fairs at high schools, encouraging students to visit campus and take a campus tour, and talking to alumni. Knowing that more efforts needs to go into in-person marketing campaigns and understanding that because of Appalachian State University's rurality, there is still a large audience that could be introduced to Appalachian State. Focusing marketing efforts to effectively and efficiently target a new audience of students (both with an online presence but a more demanding in-person presence) will allow for greater diversity on campus and for more students to feel welcomed and supported. With a new-found marketing budget, Appalachian State University has the potential to reach new audiences and become more successful in recruiting a wider and more diverse student body . Moving forward, more personalized efforts will showcase to students that the university truly wants to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere for students.

Limitations

A main limitation to the interview findings is that there were only eight interviews conducted, so these results cannot be generalized. Another limitation was that individuals chosen to interview were selected through purposive sampling with later referrals. The informants were also asked to recall back on their experiences from their senior years of high school, and this gap of time could have resulted in participants forgetting certain ways Appalachian marketed to them. The limitations in Study 2 were that a convenience sample was used. The sample was skewed by including mostly upperclassmen and business students, and also the sample included some incomplete responses as some questions did not have a forced response. Overall there were 261 survey responses, but as a randomized sample was not used, results are not generalizable to the overall college population.

Future research

It would also be interesting to follow up with the points that were brought up from our survey question when students said they were less satisfied with Appalachian State University now than when they decided to come to campus. Some of the perceptions students have provided by the respondents included that Appalachian may engage in greenwashing by making it sound like they are more sustainable than they really are, that they found it more difficult to get connected on campus (be part of the campus community) than they talked about in recruitment marketing, and that overall the image portrayed of Appalchian in recruitment marketing is a much better image than what life is really like as a student on campus. For example, students described that the resident halls they were showed while on a campus visit

were much nicer than the rooms most students end up in, or that they talk about how there is something on campus for everyone to get involved with, but then some said there was not enough help and guidance to help students find areas to be involved with. While these responses made up some of the 18% of participants who stated they would not choose to come to Appalachian again, that is still a large enough number to look further into this matter. Future focus groups could be conducted with students who are not pleased with their Appalachian experience, and could help in gaining a deeper understanding of the gap between university brand image and the perceptions of students. These insights gained could assist University Communications on how to further improve their communication and recruitment strategies moving forward.

Future research should examine overall trends of North Carolina Public University's marketing and enrollment numbers at the different campuses. We know that social media marketing continues to change every day in an ever-evolving world, yet we must truly understand how it started to grasp students' attention, and how to continue that in today's world. Understanding the right mix of in-person techniques versus online, will help to forecast future trends of social media and allow Appalachian State University to stay ahead of understanding what future students will want to see.

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Appendix A: IRB Approval

To: Rachael Beller
Marketing
CAMPUS EMAIL

From: IRB Administration
Date: 2/07/2019
RE: Modifications for possibly exempt research

STUDY #: 19-0224
STUDY TITLE: Honors Thesis and Marketing of Higher Education
Submission Type: Initial

Thank you for requesting IRB review. Your study may meet the criteria for exemption. To confirm whether your study meets the exempt criteria, please clarify and/or address the study specific details described below so that the review of your study may proceed.

Appendix B: Higher Education Marketing Interview Consent Form

Information to Consider about this Research

How Marketing Strategies Affect Incoming Undergraduate University Students
Principal Investigator: Rachael Beller
Department: Marketing
Contact Information: bellerre@appstate.edu
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Pia Albinsson, albinssonpa@appstate.edu

You are invited to participate in an interview research study about your experience in deciding which university to attend, and how effective different marketing strategies were in your decision process. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked around 20 open ended questions regarding your own personal experience in deciding to come to Appalachian State University.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may change your mind at any point and decide to no longer partake in this interview. You also may choose to not answer any

question during the interview for any reason. Your name will kept separate from the data collected ensuring that this is confidential.

If you have questions about this interview, you may contact Rachael Beller at bellerre@appstate.edu or faculty advisor Dr. Pia Albinsson at albinssonpa@appstate.edu.

The Appalachian State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has determined that this study is exempt from IRB oversight.

By continuing with the interview, I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years old, have read the information above, and agree to participate.

Appendix C: Interview Guide

1. Can you tell me how you decided to come to Appalachian?

2. When did you first hear about Appalachian?

3. What were the aspects of Appalachian that drew you here?

4. What are some things you wish you could have changed about the admissions process?

5. Do you remember how Appalachian marketed to you? (i.e. brochures, social media, on campus tours, etc.)

6. Do you think Appalachian could have had more efficient marketing for incoming students?

    a. If so, what?

7. What are you involved with on campus?

8. Did Apps sustainability attract you here?

9. What resources do you most utilize on campus?

10. Do you think Appalachian does a good job of informing first year students of all the resources available to them?

11. What are some issues Appalachian can get better at?

12. What in general do you think are any changes that need to be made on Appalachian Campus?

13. Overall, how satisfied were you with your decision to attend Appalachian?

14. If you had to choose one thing you love the most about Appalachian, what would it be?

15. reslife

Appendix D: Interview Transcriptions

Interview #1 Erin (Female, 18, Biology, First Year)

Why did you decide to come to Appalachian?

It was kind of already decided, I got into a lot of places

Which places did you get into?

High Point, UNC, UNCW, ECU, I applied to chapel hill b/c my parents made me but I didn't want to go there. I know that college wasn't my choice, I wanted to go but my parents were strict about where I went. ECU was knocked out because it was a party school, high point was knocked out because it was a school for "looks", charlotte didn't have a good bio dept., so it was between wilmington and app. I had already been to app a lot and knew it better, so I chose app.

So you would say your parents influence and the bio programs were your deciding factor?

Yeah def, and what others said. I listened to a lot of people's perspectives, and knew a lot of people who had went here, so I really listened to their input and toured the campus as well.

Did you tour other schools?

I did tour Wilmington, but it didn't make me happy. I liked the beach and the city but it didn't strike me as home.

When did you first hear about App?

In 6th Grade. Um, I did model UN and they held it at APP in the PSU. I remember the flags in the int. Hallway and how cold and snowy it was. The food, and it was not good haha. I went for 2 years for model UN.This was my first experience with college, because my parents never talked about college sports or anything like that. So i was kind of "on my own."

So when it came down to App and Wilmington, do you feel as if your parents made you come to App?

No I wouldn't say that, they narrowed it down to app and wilmington, but then it was my decision. The bio dept. Didn't stand out at wilmington and I heard their business school wasn't good as well. Another big reason I came here is because Chapel Hill is a really hard school, and it has it's different ways and my brother who is super smart is not thriving there because he can't keep up with the work they give him. So if he cannot handle it, I know my limits and I don't think I could. I know if I want to go into Pre-Med I need to focus on grades and GPA's. It doesn't matter where I go, just what I learn and my grades for undergrad.

Besides bio dept, what else drew you to App?

My bff Pablo goes here, and I came up on the admitted students tour and my mom just sat in crossroads and me and him went and explored king street and all of campus, and it's really cliche to say but people were so nice and would come up to me and talk to me and had dogs you could pet.The day I took a campus tour it was perfect. The weather, all the students outside playing guitar, laughing with friends, studying, and of course with the beautiful mountains surrounding the university. I just knew at that moment this is where I needed to be.

What were some things you wish you could have changed about the admission process?

This was the one school I was waiting to hear back from, and it was the last I heard back from. I just want it to go quicker and faster b/c I did turn my app in pretty early, like in mid October and I didn't hear back until Jan. I started writing my essays in May and I didn't finish it until October, I put a lot of time into it. This school mattered most to me and I wish I would have heard sooner.

Anything else that stood out to you about App?

Friendliness! One of my past friends who is an app alum is not practicing immigration law in raleigh, and he used to be in delta chi here at app. He talked to me a lot about App. My other older friends (one went to chapel hill, one went to NC state, and one to app) they would tell us about college and their experiences and how fun it was. App seemed the most appealing for sure. My friend was also born with a defect in his leg, but he was perfectly accepted at App social wise. It's a very accepting school and that is a good thing. I already fit in kind of weird, and I knew i would fit in here as well. That's the issue my brother is having at chapel hill, with he cannot fit in and that's why he's transferring next year. So overall the friendliness, bio program, acceptance, and just the beauty of the mountains. Everyone was surprised when I came here b/c they didn't think I could go for the city to the mtns, but it's such a chill vibe and always peaceful. I always get really anxious when I do schoolwork and so being here makes me less stressed. In a big city i think i would be more stressed.

Do you remember how App marketed to you?

Being honest, I didn't really pay too much attention. I got so many emails from a ton of colleges so it was hard to keep track of it all. I mainly got all my info from old friends who went to app, or current students. The marketing was important though since I didn't have much guidance from my parents so I did try to pay as much attention as I could, but I could have noticed more for sure. People telling me experiences was huge, and also App is just known around North Carolina as well. Growing up when I would think about colleges, I would think of App and Chapel Hill. All the others weren't' a thing.

Did you want to stay in NC or did you ever want to go out of state?

I had thought about going to college out-of-state, but once I realized how much more money that was I began comparing North Carolina state schools to each other. Southeastern stood out since their

tuition was remarkably less than others. I had thought about George Washington University and

Boston College, but even my brother didn't get much merritt so it's just too expensive.

Do you think there could have been more effective marketing?

I know if I see too much it annoys me, so now when i see app advertised I'm proud, but if i'm not

interested in them their advertisements just annoy me. I took like 4 campus tours at app.

Did these tours help shape your opinion of app?

Yes, I don't pay much attention to the tour guide, I just enjoyed walking around and noticing the

students and how they were interacting together and try to envision myself at that place.

What are you involved with on campus?

Right now just Kappa Delta, b/c I'm focusing a lot on my grades since it's so science heavy right

now. It's a lot of work and I get overwhelmed a lot. Next semester I want to be involved with some

kind of cultural club, and the suicide awareness club once i'm mentally prepared for that.

What resources do you utilize most on campus?

I have gone to the wellness center, there's been times I freaked out about my weight so I went to

check that, and there's also been times that I was sick and used it to get medicine. I don't really use

too many resources, and I don't know why because I should use them.

Do you think App does a good job of letting students know what all resources exist and where to

find them?

I think they do I just don't pay the best attention. I tune out easily and when they send everything in

emails it's easy to lose track of it sometimes. At this point I read what professors send me and there

could be another platform, but i'm not sure what it would be. Just asking people if I need something is

what I would do.

What are issues App could be better about?

More timely recruitment. I think we're pretty diverse, we have a lot of people with different interests

and viewpoints, and the people we reach out to is pretty broad. You won't see this at a lot of other

schools.

When you say "see this" what do you mean?

Like people who are open to gender types and who they like and what they like, and people aren't afraid to be who they are here. A lot of people are accepted here and I just think that here i am foreign girl here and lots of people come here, so I think it is diverse.

Where are you from?

Romania. I have lived in the US most my life, but my parents and the rest of my family are all from or currently live there.

Do you think your international view affects your perspective of App?

Well, okay so I do have some issues fitting in with people. People feel comfortable with their options and this can become a stressor for me at times. Like when I talk about pro-choice, gay rights, gender equalities and feminism, well in Romania these things are non-existent and it's a one way street. Being raised in a communist country we were raised to see one way and that was it. My dad especially still stands by this today and my mom is trying to expand his viewpoints. Out of my whole family I'm the most open, and I still struggle and shut down, but other times I'm like yes queen you do you and I want everyone to be happy so whatever they want to be I support it. However the voices in the back of my head of how I was raised stay there.

Do you think there's any changes you would make to app's campus?

Honestly no. The weather kind of sucks and the dorms are difficult though.

Do you think dorm life could affect students decision to app state?

Yes! I had charlotte in my head for awhile just because of how nice their dorms are. Then my mom talked to me and made sure I chose a school for academics not for the living situation. I wish I would have had a suite style dorm, but it was my largest con about app state. I live in White Hall.

How have these experiences been?

There was a mold problem for awhile, and the bathrooms stay pretty dirty.

How did the dorm you were shown on your tours compare to the dorm you live in?

It was almost a false impression because the room was big and clean, but ours is small and dirty. Being small this causes a lot of anxiety, and I stress clean a lot now. I wish they would have shown us a realistic dorm room on the tour.

Overall how satisfied are you about coming to app?

Really satisfied overall, no regrets. Slight moments of doubt when deciding if I wanted to go back to Romania for school or stay in the US, because I could have gone straight into medicine there, but I decided to take this route.

So you do plan on staying at App?

Yes

Any advice for people going through the admissions process?

Really think and weigh the options, like with the dorms and residential life. Staying with a friend for a weekend and not just touring the campus showed me what it was really like here, and I recommend others do that as well. You can see the academics, and the social life. And get ready for the dorm situation wherever you go because it's probably going to suck everywhere.

Ultimately, what do you love about app the most?

I really love my sorority and how everyone gets along so well. Greek life for example, sororities don't rival each other and we all get along. I think this is just a snapshot of all of app. No matter who you are or what you stand for, you will be accepted and you have a place. It makes it easier for me and fitting in.

Interview #2: Libby (Female, 19, Economics, First Year)

Can you tell me how you decided to come to App?

So when I applied to college I didn't apply to that many places, like I kind of had my mind set on one school and I thought my test scores and extra curriculars set me up to go to that school, and then honestly I Applied to App very last minute, uh, I already forgot the question haha

Haha why did you decide to come to App?

When i didn't get into the school I wanted, I was between here and ecu and I just felt like the people at app were focused on sustainability and thought it fit me better than ECU. My plan was to transfer and i thought that App would give me a better, uh, would prepare me more to transfer. Haha i'm not planning on transferring anymore though

Haha that's what I was going to ask, are you going to transfer?

I'm going to be you in two years in case you haven't heard, well not the running part, just the president part.

Haha i love that, fully support it.

I mean you won't be here and won't see it but yes!

So when did you first hear about App?

Um, my dad went to UNC Chapel Hill and has two older brothers, one went to state and one went out App. So i guess my uncle. I used to come with them to games and what not growing up.

So just with family you heard about it?

Yes

When did you first come to App then? Did you do a campus tour?

No I never did a tour, because I applied so late and I was like eh I'm probably going to this other school and app is just for safety. But Probably the first time i came here was when my older brother who's like two years older than me applied to app and we were going through the area and we all got out and walked around some. So not an official tour, but all I remember is the SRC and the creepy statues on Sanford Mall, and that's it.

Do you remember how old you were for this?

Um probably like 13ish

That's cool! What aspects (even though it was last minute) drew you to App?

Um, I knew about the paperless by 2020 and that's pretty dope, like that's a big thing to say, and teachers bring it up a lot. At least in my seminar class it's something that's brought up a lot so I know they're committed to it. Honestly, i don't really know what else. In my supplemental essay I wrote about how I love the color yellow

Haha that's great

Haha so that, knowing how diverse, or well, different the people are that go here than chapel here. If I would have ended up going to UNC Chapel Hill I would have been around basically the same people I went to highschool with, and i've met so many different here that are similar to me yet very different at the same time.

Nice! Is there anything you wish you could have changed about the admissions process?

Um, okay, um, I applied really late right

How late would you say you applied?

Like if the application was due nov. 19th I probably turned it in Nov. 19th, and probably started it

Nov. 18th. Like cool whatever, I know how to work common app already.

Since I applied so late and this was my own problem, but I couldn't get into the honors college and

like, the way that my like, academics were in highschool I def could have been/should have been.

And that was my own missed opportunity, but i wonder if like, i don't know, i wonder if my

experience would have been different if i would have been in the honors college. I'll probably do, oh

what is it when you're in your major and do honors for that?

Yeah that's what this research is for actually!

Yeah, and Idk if I would have been able to actually pull off all the work of the honors college, it's a

lot of work for a tiny title, but it would have been good if they would have made the deadlines more

known for things like the honors college.

So do you think they should like make it more known about deadlines?

Yeah like the deadlines for those, Like I thought they would email me after, I didn't realize you had

to have a seperate application at a different time for that. That could have been made more clear.

Awesome thank you! So How did app compare to the other schools you were looking at?

I'm lucky enough I don't have to pay for my education, my parent's take care of that for me. But I'm

pretty sure App is the cheapest in NC, right?

Yeah it's pretty hard to beat App's tuition

Yeah so I mean i was dead set on carolina, which is more expensive but not the most by any means,

and it's a very different geography up here. Like getting used to the cold weather and the hills has

been interesting, like I feel like I walk up hill even when I'm walking downhill but whatever,

probably because I'm not exercise savvy but, I really do like how the campus is.I didn't really know

until classes started since I didn't tour, but the buildings are so close together and maybe that's

because I live on east side and don't have to walk across the street, but even when I do have to walk

to Walker it's still walkable unlike some of my friends schools that literally have to take a bus to get

around campus.

Yeah the convenience of the buildings really is nice

Yeah, and like I know some people have classes in convo or in the new building, but even then it's still doable. Pretty much it's just a really nice campus. I'm really glad I don't have to take the appalcart cause that thing is just a mess. I came here a week early for my RLC and um, they had us ride the appalcart and stuff and now I simply don't take it. Lol i'll take a beeper

Haha do you think relating that to your app state experience then, do you think transportation is something that could be better?

Oh god yes. I always say I have people who are like ,"do you have your car here?" and I'm like yes, but no.

Where do you park?

105, which is like, I have to either pester older people to help me get there, I've taken a beeper, i've taken an uber to get all the way out there so that's definitely rough. And I mean i've been using maddie's shampoo for the past two weeks because I just can't get to the grocery store. And even when I have my car that's not my top priority, or I hate losing my oncampus parking spot on the weekends because it's so hard to find another one.

Haha yeah that is rough. So on a different note, do you remember how app marketed to you? Like brochures, social media, etc?

I feel like the only time I really got stuff was after I applied. Since I'm instate I just knew this was an option, but like after I'd applied and while i was waiting for a decision, I got a lot of instagram ads, got added to a bunch of facebook groups, a million emails.

Do you think it's a positive thing with how many emails they sent you?

Um, so like i would say it's a good thing once you've actually applied, but so many schools that will keep sending you like those, haha "extended deadline, one extra day to apply!" and like the deadline already passed so just leave me alone. They send you a lot of emails, so I think after you've applied and actually care about that school then it's okay, but when it's past the regular time of applications it's really annoying to get a million emails from all kinds of random schools.

Do you think this could even turn you away from a school?

Oh yes def, just because it's really annoying. LIke i've already applied, if I want to go, i'll go. Getting a lot of info is good, but it can turn into info overload. Like even for the acceptance letters you just skim it to see if you got in and got any scholarship money, and then you stop reading. But if you got something in the mail, like big text and good stuff about the school, it could help you decide between schools. So like getting all those emails was just like stop I don't want to hear about this.

Gotcha, so going along with that, is there more efficient ways app could market to incoming students/is there more diverse populations we should be marketing to?

Going off that second question, one thing that kind of bothers me with this school, and maybe I don't see the whole campus, but they always talk about diversity diversity diversity, but I haven't necessarily seen that diversity outside of sexual orientation, which is good, but when I think of diversity i think of like racial diversity, cause that's a big thing

Definitely

Yeah, so like I know on my hall there's one girl on my hall that's had a lot of problems with people calling her really explicit things and slurs, you know not good stuff, and she was like you know I came here because they talked about diversity and I thought that's what I was going to get, but it wasn't.

So do you think it's false advertisement, or no?

Yeah, and not to say you need to be like "we're diverse on this scale" but in the future I hope they expand their multicultural programs here, b/c I know they have the LGBT and women's center, but I think there could be more in this outlet.

So how do you think we should market to get more diverse students?

I think having representatives going into schools in places like Greensboro, because you know people will go to schools that are close to them, and going to the mountains is kind of a random step. Like snowboarding could attract students, but you trek into Boone so you have to have a reason to come here. And like campuses that are diverse to me in my head, are like UNCG, i have a lot of friends that

go there and they say it's diverse. But that goes back to the kind of people that live in that area already. So having reps from app going into schools like that,, and I know they sent reps to schools in Carrboro and like that's def not a diverse place, but if they want to expand the program this is what they're going to need to do.

Going along with that, do you think in person marketing is more important that indirect marketing?

I think when you want to keep things the same and get the same kinds of students, then it's fine to keep doing the same things like sending emails and sending reps to the same schools. But like I said earlier, if you want to expand a program, i think it's important to go to people. People remember the in person experiences more, and this is how you will create lasting change.

Awesome thank you! Now on a different note, what are you involved with on campus?

Kappa Delta! My favorite thing haha. I literally say all the time that I came to this school with a mindset of transferring after a year, and what's the date today? Two days ago I got a guaranteed sophomore transfer, but after joining Kappa Delta, I do not want to leave anymore. I have just made the best friends ever and they make this place home. I'm also involved with my RLC

Which RLC?

The business one! And i'm in Emerging Leaders, and about to start doing PSE. So that's about it

I mean that's a lot that you're doing!

Yeah I mean like when I came to school I wanted to do something super service orientated, but I haven't had the chance yet for that. I mean KD is that, but I could do a lot more. College is very self serving and I want to do something that truly gives back to the community, instead of just taking from it.

Wow that's a really good point. I think you are going to make a big impact while you're here. On a different topic, what resources would you say you most utilize on campus?

The library, i'm in there 24/7. Um, I guess I'm also pretty good friends with my RA, so I confide in him about things. Nothing ever too formal, but like it's a great casual relationship. Um, trying to

think, I haven't used the writing center yet just because I haven't had a class where I have to write a lot yet, but I know I will probably use that once I start getting more into those classes. I'm pretty, um, stubborn and independent so I don't like to ask people for help, and that's my worst part of leadership too is that I cannot delegate things. LIke that's why I'm in Emerging Leaders so I can try to work on that. So because of all of this I don't reach out and use a lot of resources, but I know they're there if I ever do really need them.

Going off of that, do you think App does a good job of letting first year students know about what all resources are available to them?

Yes! I get emails all the time about what resources are available especially after something bad happens. My professors are also really good about wanting us to utilize their office hours. Like my one professor was like please come I get so bored just sitting there so like they make it known that they really are here to help us. And also even just in the student union, the centers like the LGBTQ and Womens Centers, the doors are always open so I know they are welcoming.

Awesome. On the flip side of that, what are some issues you think app could get better at?

Um, definitely the diversity thing. Public transportation as well

Do you think these things could be "turn offs" for incoming students?

The diversity thing yes, but for public transportation I feel like you just don't really know until you're there, and then it's too late haha. Like i've already had my car towed once and ticketed, yeah that was a rough day hahaha. But yeah those two things, I'm trying to think of others…..I guess that this one is more personal for me, but the academics so far haven't been too challenging, and I feel like it could be harder. And I imagine it will get harder, but yeah. I'm really glad I didn't get into UNC at first because this place really has become home for me.

So no other changes you would make on campus?

Not that I can think of

So obviously you feel satisfied with your decision to come to app, but how would you say your experience with residence life has been?

Um haha so I am in East, which is a bad thing like isn't it getting tore down here soon? Yeah it needs that bad haha. Idk, the first three months my roommate and I didnt even sleep under the blankets because our room was SO hot, like no air moving. Once everyone on my hall started getting closer we all agreed to keep our doors open so the air could move better, but if one person closed their door it affected everyone and we went after them haha. But the one thing I would say that is bad about East, is that like my hall has gotten to know people well, but like East is a hallway and other dorms are arranged in a circle so it's more inviting and there's better communal spaces so I think other people have it better when it comes to getting to know the people around you. The layouts should be like that in every dorm. It's so hard to make friends anyway, and if it wasn't for KD I don't' know how I would have made friends, like it is so hard haha.

Yeah that is really hard, and different dorms def. Have their challenges. So my last question is what do you love most about Appalachian?

Kappa Delta, not even because you're my president, but because all my friends are in it, and like we were all put in it because of our values but yet we're all so different. I just found my home, my people, what I value, and what I want to grow to be because of this organization, and I hope everyone finds their home like I did.

Interview #3 Kyle (Male, 19, Marketing, First Year)

How did you decide to come to App?

I came to app because my mom actually came here, and I wanted to be a legacy. I was up here my whole life, and it kind of became a second home town while I was growing up.

Cool! So along with that, how did you first hear about app?

Literally since the day I was born haha.

Great, haha so on your own accord, what made you like App?

It was that home vibe, I guess like you know which college you want to go to when you since "home" when you visit. And that's how I felt when I came to App.

Nice. So is there anything you wish you could change about the admissions process?

Um, it was pretty easy for me. I didn't really have any issues or could even think of anything.

Gotcha. So how did App compare to other schools you were looking at?

App was one of my number 1's, and so was NC State and Carolina. App was always in the back of my mind as being home though, so that's what won out in the end.

Love that. Was there anything else besides the "home" aspect that drew you here? Like degree programs or resources?

Yeah the business school here was awesome and that's what I wanted to go into. KNowing they had what I wanted to go into along with the hometown vibe, it was just a perfect match.

Do you remember how App marketed to you?

I did a campus tour, but most of it was just growing up coming here. I came to like 8 football games before I actually started coming here, so that's what stood out to me.

Gotcha. Do you remember seeing any social media?

Oh yeah. There was a bunch of social media. On all platforms it seemed like advertisements for them were always popping up. I do remember getting brochures as well.

Do you think App could be more efficient in their marketing efforts?

Maybe now with more social media, like specific targeted. Since mailing addresses aren't always accurate and people move around, or it could be that if parents are divorced or student's move between homes that they don't receive all the same information as students that live in one house.

Oh that's a good point that I hadn't thought of. On a different note, what are you involved with on campus?

I am the President of a fraternity

Oh which Fraternity?

Lambda Chi, and uhh, I'm in the crossfit club, and that's about it.

Nice. what resources would you say you most utilize on campus?

I use the library a lot to study in, but also to have some personal time in their as well. I always see people I know and so it's a win win anytime I go to the lib. Um, trying to think of any others. I use the SRC a lot I guess.

Cool! So do you think app does a good job of informing students about the resources available to them.

I don't think they do a great job of it, I think it's more of a learning process wants you get here. Like if someone didn't go on a tour they don't really know where anything is here. So maybe doing a better job of pointing out where buildings are or where resources could be obtained.

How do you think app could go about that?

Um, maybe during orientation like just giving those tips as to where they need to go and where they can access things. You hear about resources, but then don't know where to go to find them.

Gotcha. Do you think that's most beneficial by handing out pamphlets, emails, etc?

For me it's visual. So if someone was actually like "this is the SRC" i'll remember that, but an email or pamphlet won't really help as well, but could still be useful.

Gotcha. So what are some issues you think app could be better at?

Um……(big pause) can we come back to that one?

Yeah definitely. So looking at the kinds of students that app recruits, are there any changes that could be made with the population we get?

I think app is very diverse. Like there's a bunch of different people up here and everyone somehow meshes together, so it's cool to get to know people from all different walks of life here.

That's great! How would you say your residence life experience is?

It's awesome. I love my hall!

Which hall do you live in?

I live in Cannon.

Okay cool! So overall, how satisfied are you with your decision to come to app?

Oh, i'm 10/10. Just being here and being able to be in that home vibe that I said, and meeting new people from all walks of life is really cool to see. Like how others interact with you and you with them is great. I'm sure you can get this at other places, but there's just something really special about it here.

Amazing. So if you had to choose one thing you love most about App, what would it be?

The atmosphere for sure. The mountains and being able to do things outside, but also getting a great education at a "smaller" school is something you can't find at a lot of places.

Interview #4 Kayla (Female, 18, Social Work, First Year)

How did you decide to come to Appalachian?

Well i lived at the beach and wanted a complete change, and i um also wanted to kind of get away

and go somewhere far away. Um a lot of my friends went to state or charlotte and I guess I just

wanted to do my own thing. There's not a lot of people from my highschool go here, only like 10

Oh wow! So what schools were you deciding between?

Uh yeah it was between here and chapel hill. I only applied to three, but my parents went to chapel

hill and my whole family thought I was going to go there, but once it got closer to it I uh got

waitlisted there. After this I like took a step back. If i would have gotten in I would have went there,

but now looking at it I'm really glad I'm at App. I was like you know that's not what I want out of

undergrad. It was too big, and I wouldn't be able to do things like ACT Team or greek life because it's too expensive there, so like I just had more opportunities here. I even took my name off the waitlist so I don't know if i ever got in or not.

Oh wow that's crazy! Do you regret that decision?

Haha no not at all. I feel like i've been way happier here and don't think I would enjoyed it there as much. I do think I want to go to grad school there though.

Okay!

Also my sisters in highschool and she wants to go to UNC so we could be there at the same time if i do grad school there.

Ah so cute. So what are you majoring in?

Social work, and I plan on doing the nonprofit management minor.

Gotcha, so you'd go to chapel hill for your masters in social work?

Yes. Because app has the advanced standing program so that means I can get my bachelors degree here and then go to any UNC school and get my masters in one year.

Dang that's awesome! Smart plan for sure. So when did you first hear about App?

Um, i mean there would be a few people from highschool that would come here, so I heard about it from them a little. I also had a cousin who's a junior at app so I guess some from him too. I mean I guess i've just kind of always known it was there, but I never looked at it until I toured which was the fall of my senior year.

Gotcha. So what specific aspects drew you here besides just wanting to go far away from home?

Yeah, so I think my favorite thing is that it's a big school, but it's still small at the same time. I didn't want to go to a small school, but not an insanely large one either. I love it because I can walk around campus and always see someone I know, and you get to know people but yet it's still a big school with a lot of opportunities.

That's awesome! Is there anything you wish you could have changed about the admissions process?

Um (pause) I'm trying to remember. I guess I applied on common app...the only places I applied was here, UNC Chapel Hill and Charlotte. They were all on common app i'm pretty sure.

Nice so you just had the one application and then you were done?

Yeah, but I also applied to the honors program and watauga and got Watauga, but I didn't hear about that until way later after I found out I got accepted to app.

Awesome! So how did app stand out to the other schools you looked at?

Yeah, so I toured a bunch of places my junior year but when it came time to apply I only applied to the three. I never even really liked charlotte haha I just felt like I needed to at least apply to three schools. Haha. It was really between here and chapel hill, but there's more of a community aspect here, easier to get involved, and like I don't regret it at all.

Ah that's great! Do you remember how App marketed to you?

I got a lot of emails

When did you start getting them?

Um, after my tour I think. I remember them being about deadlines to apply, and I got invited to the uh like, "inside app event" to look at honors and watauga

So when was that?

That was uh….um I don't remember if I just toured and then did the event or if it was all at the same time, hahaha I'm sorry I can't remember

Haha no worries at all, time clashes together! So either way of when it was, how did you feel about app before your tour verses after?

Um, Yeah it changed my perspective. It made me more aware of all the opportunities i guess. And honestly like before I came to app, I had only been to Boone like maybe four times, haha so I hadn't been up here much really! Just cause I live so far away. But def changed my perspective.

Nice. So do you think app could have had more efficient marketing?

Um yeah I guess. I remember the emails, but I don't really remember a lot of social media.

Is that something that would have helped to influence you moreso?

Yeah I think so. I check all my accounts like everyday so I would have noticed it.

Got it. So on a different note, what are you involved with on campus?

Well, I'm in Watauga, haha then Alpha Gamma Delta, and the ACT Team. Oh also I just applied to be a mentor for Western Youth Network.

Oh wow! That is incredible, you are going to do so good at that!!

Haha thank you! So i'm really excited to be paired up with a younger child and get to mentor them, like super super excited for that.

I can tell! You are going to have a blast doing that wow! So moving on, what resources do you most utilize on campus?

Um, I go to the gym a lot does that count haha?

Haha yes definitely!

I got the rec center a lot cause it's like right next to my dorm. Um, I've been to the writing center before, and my watauga professors are super good about 1:1 stuff and office hours. There's 100 people in my freshman watauga class, and then, there's like 5-6 professors so they really do a good job of telling us what resources are available and i know I can meet with my advisor for things too.

That's great! I'm glad you've had a good experience so far! Do you think app does a good job of informing first year students of all the resources available to them?

Um (pause) yeah i think so. I remember the first weekend we moved in they had all that stuff you could go to, and that helped me learn more I guess. And then like i know they do career fairs all the time, and I've been here almost a year and I feel pretty familiar with what is available to me.

Gotcha. So on the flip side, do you think there's any issues that Appalachian could be better about?

Like with resources or anything?

Anything really!

Um….. (pause) I don't know, I'll have to think about it.

We can come back to it!

Okay!

Um, so in general are there any changes that need to be made on campus?

I would say parking is one thing I would change. I don't have my car last semester but I do this semester, but I try to have it on the weekends but having to back and forth from campus to the APH, which is where I park, it's really tiring. Also, saferide is extremely inefficient. I've definitely gotten left from there multiple times, and for how much I need to use it it's really annoying. They need a better system for that.

Oh wow that's good. Anything else?

Um….. oh um so like as far as food and dining halls go, I feel like it's super expensive. Since you have to buy everything individually here it adds up really quick. I Know a lot of schools like Charlotte, do it so that each meal is like only one swipe and you have a certain number of swipes, and I think that would work better. And like the markets they have it's like 3x what you would pay at walmart, it's crazy.

Wow, thank you for sharing. So moving on, overall how satisfied would you say you are with your decision to come to app?

Um, I mean I love it here and I Don't wish I went anywhere else.

Do you plan on staying here?

For undergrad yes, probably no for grad school. As of right now, I don't see myself leaving at all.

Awesome. And Lastly, if you had to choose one thing you loved about App the most, what would it be?

Mmm, probably the people i've met and how everyone is so welcoming. I was nervous going through sorority recruitment, and it was such an easy transition. Same for the ACT Team, I was so nervous and I remember at our retreat I was like omg I don't know anyone, but everyone is so nice and you see them everywhere around campus so that just makes me feel better too.

That's great

Yeah I feel like I've had a really smooth transition from high school to college, and like I haven't been homesick at all.

That's great! Oh and I forgot I do have one more question. How would you say your residence life experience is?

Well I think my experience is a lot different compared to others because of my RLC, (Watauga) and I live in the LLC, but it's really nice! Pretty big and we have a huge bathroom we share with suitmeets, but as far as that it's really nice. But the people I live with i'm in class with fro 6 hours a week, but i've gotten really close to some of them.

That's great. That's all I have so thank you!

Interview #5 Jacob (Male, 19, Sustainable Technology, First Year)

- **Can you tell me how you decided to come to Appalachian?**

    Yeah I was uh, choosing between App and nc state, but I got waitlisted there so app it was.

    Awesome, so when did you first hear about app?

    My highschool had some representatives come from different schools so uh I guess that was the first. I mean I just always have kind of known app because you hear about their football team and what not.

- **Yeah that makes sense! Were sports important to you when deciding on a college?**

    Yeah definitely. I've played basketball and football in highschool so like having intramural teams was important, but also having a good football team was important because I think that's a big part of the college experience everyone talks about.

- **I totally get that! Besides the football team and intramurals, what were the aspects of Appalachian that drew you here?**

    Um, I guess the business program was one. I didn't know a lot about it but I've heard more now about how it's like one of the best in the state. Besides that, I love the outdoors and app has the outdoor programs so it's perfect.

- **Awesome! What are some things you wish you could have changed about the admissions process?**

Um, that's kind of a hard one haha. I guess hearing back earlier would have been nice. I didn't hear until like March but I applied early January. Besides that I guess everything was okay.

- **How did Appalachian compare to other schools you were looking at?**

I mean it wasn't my first choice to come here, so originally I liked NC State better I think just because it's bigger and thinking about football there was fun, but now that I'm here I love it and can't see myself anywhere else.

- **That's great! Do you remember how Appalachian marketed to you?**

Like with social media?

Yeah that's one way they could have!

Oh okay, yeah I remember seeing ads for app on instagram, and I got some things in the mail

Was this before you applied to app state or after?

Uh, after

- **Awesome! Do you think Appalachian could have had more efficient marketing for incoming students?**

Um, I mean maybe like have some more personalized ads, like it would have been cool to see more about football since that's what I'm interested in ya know?

Yeah that's a good point! On another note, what are you involved with on campus?

I play on intramural basketball and soccer teams, and I go to RUF every now and then.

- **Awesome. What resources would you say you most utilize on campus?**

Um, let me think for a second

Yeah for sure!

I mean i go to the gyms, and I go to the writing center a lot!

Great! Do you think Appalachian does a good job of informing first year students of all the resources available to them?

I knew of some of them, um, but like mainly the ones my friends told me about. At orientation it was really overwhelming because they told us all about them at once and it's hard to remember where to find what

Do you think there's a more efficient way to find all this information?

Um, I mean I think just like knowing you can ask your professors and friends about where you can find things is the best way to find stuff.

- **Great. On another hand, what are some issues Appalachian can get better at?**

I have noticed that app is mainly white so I think we should try to be more diverse when recruiting new classes. Like this one time my professor was talking to the only black kid in our class and was just like, "what sport do you play?" but he didn't play one, he just stereotyped him because usually that's the case.

- **Wow, yes I agree that diversity needs to be a main focus. What else in general do you think are any changes that need to be made on Appalachian Campus?**

Um, like big important stuff or just anything haha

Anything!

Parking, it's awful in every aspect

How was your experience with residence life?

I live in Coltrane. It's really really small but at least the people there are cool

- **Haha I agree with that! Overall, how satisfied were you with your decision to attend Appalachian?**

Really satisfied

- **Great, and If you had to choose one thing you love the most about Appalachian, what would it be?**

Um, hmm. It would have to be the people. People who are kind and love the outdoors are my kinda people, so it's the perfect place.

Interview #6 Justin (Male, 20, Nursing, Second Year)

Can you tell me how you decided to come to App?

Okay um, I think I started being interested in app when my friend who was a senior (I was a freshman) and she came to app. We stayed friends and she just had so many good things to say about it. I loved the mountains and the environment, and when I found out they had a nursing program that was like a make or break thing. When i came up here I was like, I couldn't imagine myself anywhere else. It's kind of laid back and people are free to express themselves here and I really like that about it.

You kind of answered this maybe, but how did you first hear about app?

Well, so il ike like an hour and 15 min away, in elkin, so a lot of my teachers all graduated from app, it was a really popular place for kids from my school to go to, So i just kind of always knew about it. I probably started exploring more into though my freshman and sophomore year of high school.

That's awesome! So then, what were the aspects of app that drew you here?

Definitely the location. I like that its a large university but it doesn't feel too large. I like that it's a compact campus and for the most part you can walk everywhere. People were really polite, and I def got that vibe when i took my tour the first time and when i came up for inside appalachian and scholars day as well. All of those experiences were really good, and this was one of the only places I applied to so it's just been a good fit.

Where else did you apply?

Duke, haha. So that was my reach, but I knew that I wanted to go to app, I just wanted to see if I would even get in

Well good for you that's awesome that you went for it! What were some things you wish you could've changed about the admissions process?

Um, honestly it was pretty smooth. I got to interview for scholarships and I remember the admissions counselor called me personally congratulating me on getting to come to scholars day, and she tore me a letter so that stood out to me and made me feel valued before I even decided.

That's awesome that you had such a personalized experience and that you felt so welcome here!

Yeah it was really cool

Awesome! So then, how did appalachian compare to duke/why did you decide to just apply to two?

Hmm, yeah okay. So I really like the location of app, i love boone, it's not far from my home but it's a completely different atmosphere. I'm from a small town so I didn't want to go to a big city school like unc or nc state. But then I also had to narrow down to which schools had a nursing program, so after all of this app stood out. App's nursing program is really good and the more I researched it the more good I found from it. I already loved the environment at app, and then with nursing, it was just meant to be.

That's great! So do you remember how app marketed to you in highschool?

Let's see, um, I know our college what are they called, the college advisor people, would market a bunch of different schools and we could talk to them about applications and all of that, so they did a good job of marketing a bunch of schools and we got to tour a lot of these schools.

Did you take a campus tour at app?

Yes I did through my school, which I think was kind of an abbreviated tour compared to when you actually sign up for a tour, but then when I came to Inside Appalachian um, that was when I found out more about the honors programs and scholarships, and I even got to meet with the head of the nursing department that day which was a really cool opportunity

Wow, that's incredible!

Yeah, I got to talk about my interests with her and it helped answer a lot of my questions.

Did this personal experience affect how you viewed app overall?

It did open my eyes to how great the professors are here. Like I haven't had a class taught by a TA my whole time here, and the professors are welcoming and want to teach. They're super accessible and have always helped me when I need it!

That's great, and I agree that is a rare thing with colleges now! However, do you think app could have had more efficient marketing for students?

Um, I feel like it's possible. LIke so much I knew was from word of mouth, so I didn't'[t know much about it as a school until I started doing research on my own. I knew lots of people who went there, and that it was a good education school, and I didn't know much about app beyond these things.

Okay cool, so maybe better advertisements of programs?

Yes!

Awesome. So what are you involved with on campus?

Ah yay this is a fun question haha, so I'm involved with the ACT Office (Appalachian and the Community Together office) I'm a service advisor here, so um haha, and then I'm also a part of the Appalachian Wesley Foundation which is a campus ministry, so I lead a small group once a week, and I'm also in the honors college

How has the honors college been?

I think the perks of the community like access to advisors and priority registration has been amazing, and like all the honors seminars i've had have been good, but I'm still filling out how I'm going to go about the whole thesis process.

Yeah especially as a nursing major I'm sure

Yeah, I did talk to an advisor recently though and she was like it's more doable than people make it out to be, so I think it is a good opportunity that I'll have to feel out here soon. Plus it would feel so good to kind of be an expert in an area and have that on my resume

I totally get that and agree! What resources would you say you most utilize on campus?

Um, I use the library a lot and go to app hall where the honors students have 24 hour access to, So i

go there to study a lot. All of the student union haha, health services, gyms, the counseling center

Oh wow, so you've had your hand in a lot of things!

Haha yes

How would you say your experience with the counseling center was?

It was pretty good honestly. Like um, I think finding information on campus is pretty easy, like

counseling and wellness they all do a good job of advertising their events and services, I actually

check those org sync emails haha and

You check those? Wow good for you haha

Haha yes I use those as a way to seek out things going on!

Great, do you think app could have marketed those resources better?

Um, yes. Orgsync can be hard to understand. So just getting emails and what not is easy, but when

you try to get deeper and connect with more organizations it gets tricky and confusing. It's also only

talked about at like orientation but then you forget about it when you actually need it

Yeah I agree, lots of these platforms are too confusing to operate

Yeah definitely, also finding resources offices can be really confusing because some are in the union,

but some random ones like student success is in IG greer and random buildings like that, and no one

is going to know where to go to find all of them.

That's a really going point, thanks for mentioning that! In general, do you think there are any

issues app could get better at?

I feel like app needs to be more transparent with the students about suicides and controversial issues.

LIke I know racism and what not will get us emails from the chancellor, but for me that comes across

like they checked it off their list that they mentioned it and moved on, rather than actually checking in

on students and doing follow ups. Back to marketing though, orgsync being more accessible and

promoted, I haven't really used handshake yet, but all of these little platforms are hard to keep track of. It's almost too much now

Talking about residence life, how has your experience been?

It's been good! I lived in Cone my freshman year and in summitt now. Cone was good, it was small and dark, but my community was great and some of my best friends are still from that floor I lived on. We had a lot of good times there haha. Summit is a lot nicer layout, and feels like a more, uh, like living is more homey and peaceful and not as closed off and dorm like, but the community within summit is different than cone.

Thinking just on your first year, how was your RA?

My RA was completely peaced out. I mean he did required things. He was cool and knew most of the residents, but I don't think people felt comfortable hanging out with him and I don't know if I would feel turning to him about something i needed to talk about. He did the fun things but not the serious stuff.

Gotcha. So last question then, overall how satisfied would you say you are about your decision to come to app?

Very satisfied, um, I like, I mean I've made it this far and made it into the nursing program. I've really enjoyed it and I'm ready for the outdoors to get nice again so we can get out and do things, but I really appreciate the beauty around us no matter the weather. The communities are always great and it always feels like home.

Interview #7 Jessie (Female, 20, Social Work, Second Year)

So can you tell me how you first decided to come to App?

OK so I originally liked my number one school is George Washington. But I was also terrified that because I'm a first generation college student and so I was like I feel like I wasn't ever gonna get into a college. I didn't know what the process was like. So I just applied to every school in this state. Yeah well it was like that it was kind of easier to get into. You know I mean yeah just kind of the backup. So when I went I applied so I went to George Washington after I got in it like to see what it was like and was like I can't do this like it's too big it's too much. So after that I was kind of like I didn't really like think of what I was going to do after that. So it was kind of between app and then I had Wilmington and Charleston. So it's just kind of between like mountains or beach culture. And I knew I wanted to do social work.

 So I also looked at the price and app was just kind of like the cheapest of the options

Gotcha gotcha. So then along with that. When did you first hear about app state?

 So the first time I actually heard about app was my guidance counselor in high school.
  She graduated from app and she was like I remember I sat down with her sophomore year and she was like asking me what kind of school they want to go to and I told her like I have you know like maybe like Carolina or something. She told me about App and she was like I think you would really like.I didn't come here for the first time until after I accepted or like the I enrolled or whatever yeah. I didn't come here until after that.

 Oh so you never visited and you never took a tour or anything like that? Were you nervous?

Like oh my god I was.

Yeah I was so scared. But it was also kind of like I was scared. But it was like I didn't have another option and wasn't like I was giving up anything else because like George Washington was what I wanted and I could have. It was too expensive it was just too much.

So it's like I mean I think I think I would have felt that way no matter where I went because I don't really look into anywhere else. Like I didn't visit any other schools except like the only formal visit I took was George Washington.

So you already kind of mentioned like going between like mountains and beach but like were there any other things that made you choose app besides like the program and location and the price I guess you said?

I don't know. Those are kind of the only things before I came. So like right after I like said I was coming. My roommate actually now her brother was already up here. So he came ah we came up after I accepted he gave us like an informal tour, which is probably the best thing that could have happened. To see how it actually was. Yeah yeah. And it was kind of. I mean Ty he's just going to one of those people but he just knows everybody. So we were just walking around campus and I thought the campus was huge but literally everywhere we went he was saying hi to someone, that's so cool.

Yeah. And so I was like This is obviously like a very close knit. Yeah yeah I like that.

Was there anything that you would have changed about the admission process?

No, um it was a separate one on an uncommon app because I had an awesome commonapp essay but then had to redo it all just for App.

Yeah.

Do you remember how marketed to you like did you get things in the mail or like social media or anything like that.

I remember seeing random ads on social media, but none of them felt like they were marketed special to me. I got generic ads, but wish I could have seen and heard about aspects of the university that interested me more. I mean I got flyers and stuff in the mail and I got a lot of e-mails. I remember getting a lot of emails but I think the biggest thing was like at least for in-state students.
 There's a lot of people that really love app so I was in like a high school where a lot of people I graduated from while they were at State families like my roommate. Her family is an app family. Noah his family is an app family so it's larger every day. Those influences. Yeah I feel like app has that like ability they don't really have to do a lot because it's like word of mouth.

 Do you think that they could have had more efficient marketing for incoming students.

 Yeah I feel like they could do more with social media. I think it's definitely a bigger thing now. So yeah you like do the fun giveaways or something on like Instagram or something smart.
 Yeah I think that if you really like interactive things, while they are just like sending you things right.

Gotcha gotcha gotcha. So on a different note. What are you involved with on campus?

I'm in the social work club,
I'm in love and they do like a lot of community outreach stuff and I'm trying to get more involved like with community outreach as opposed to like on campus but like doing that is from like finding the

resources on campus to get me into the community more. I've been at the career center a few times

I've been to the ACT office a few times. Kind of like see where I can go out in my community to find

service and stuff.

Gotcha. Are there any other resources that like you utilized on campus.

I use orgsync. Yeah I remember last year a lot. I was like just kind of like scrolling through in August

and looking at the clubs.

 You know that I feel like that's like the whole website is super underrated.

 It has like everything you need it's like yeah.

Yeah that should really amp that one up a lot. Yeah.

So you think they could like broadcast that more and more people know about it.

Yeah they should definitely broadcast it why make it maybe a little more user friendly.

 Because it's kind of it's a lot and I know they're changing it over the summer. Tell you I have

completely different platforms so definitely it's easier to use not harder to hear.

Yeah yeah I agree. That's like I did that my freshman year and just like scrolling through them

like oh that's a cool club.

 So did anything like app's sustainability stand out to you like in your decision to come here?

No haha, I didn't even know about it until this year but they were super sustainable.

Gotcha.

Do you think App does a good job like thinking back to your first year of letting first year students know what resources they have on campus?

 I think they try, but I think the way they go about it is kind of outdated.

 It's just very like come to this and we'll tell you about it. Or like there's a meeting in this room if you come we'll tell you about it.

And I feel like it's kind of split it's up to you to go like you're in college now, but also you are the one that has to search for it. But if they're like really wanting to let everyone know of what's available to them. I think they need to be a little bit more like imaginative now like they do that because I feel like I mean how when I was last year before classes you go to that thing like orientation.

Yeah.

 I never went I would go because they pressured me and then me my roommate would leave after we sat down because.

 Gotcha.

I don't know I just felt like I didn't really want to sit there for an hour and a half. Yeah.

 So. So I guess making stuff less boring got you like more interactive.

 Yeah I think interaction is sort of thing like yeah. Definitely. Especially if it's stuff that you're not going to get tested on so you're not going to listen. It's just for your benefit.

Like make someone's day and not make them actually want to remember. Yeah I think. Yeah that's good.

Do you think there's any issues that app could be better at?

I know just recently the study abroad is a big problem. I think it's really kind of hard to use in light of impossible to like figure out. I also feel like kind of like what you're talking about the other night. Like just making it more like even the bad things like we're a community and they really want to drive home this community. So kind of bring it together even when there's bad things and share that. But finally the positive in it too like the strength in it. Like with the suicides and that kind of. Yeah. Or even like you know sexual assault and stuff like bring it more into the center because those are things that need to be like. Like important. Yeah. Exactly. And finding a solution. But in a more positive way and a constructive way that's pulling like this strength out of it to actually build this community.

Going back to the study abroad like what makes it so tricky and difficult?

I just think there's so many hoops to jump through and it's like you can call one day and get one answer and then call the next day and someone else lands you and I'll give you something else interesting. Yeah and then me personally since I'm a social work major like all I wanted to do coming in was study abroad. And I just sat down and they're were like Yeah there's like not really any options for you for study abroad. Doesn't to my advisor said.
I mean she told me though she was like honestly like you know I think it's a waste. She didn't say this but the gist was yeah if you're gonna like go abroad it might as well be on vacation rather than for school what today.
So I mean that's true but at the same time. Yeah. I mean they have faculty led programs, So there's that but not anything like long term like this semester.

Yeah yeah that's a bummer I'm sorry about that. So then do you think things like any changes that I can make. Like realistic ones.

I mean there's always changes.

 Yeah.

I think they're really good about like I know how many at the top of my head and I think apps really good at like always trying something new in life.

They don't really define themselves as this like well established like old school you know. I mean that has the reputation to be a leader willing to change. Exactly. There's still this like we're trying to be better. We're trying to build and expand.

So I think they're always like whenever our problems raise they're going to address it and try to find something to fix it whereas like a school like Carolina they're going to be like set in their ways. Yeah. Yeah. It's like well if you don't like you like get out you don't I mean you know obviously like a top school. Yeah. So I think I was really good about trying to always like better themselves. Which is what I like about it. Yeah.

How was your experience with resident life on campus.

I loved the dorms.

Where did you live.

I lived in lovill.

I think I had a really unique experience because I did live in lovill so it's like mixed freshman and upperclassmen.

Oh OK.

So the dorm that I lived in I think was majority upperclassmen interested and only a few freshmen, so it just made the experience a lot different.

That's awesome.

**So then overall how satisfied would you say that you are with your decision to come back. **

Like the truth?

 Yeah, give me the truth.

OK.

So overall like I'm happy with app but if I had to do it over again I probably wouldn't come here. I would try to find somewhere more competitive within the state like over the summer I was talking about transferring like to Elon or something.

Gotcha

But that's just because like I just once I wanted somewhere that was competitive like George Washington more competitive academically. Yeah. Yeah. That pushed me a little bit. Just because like in high school I was like stressed 24/7 to the point where it was like that was like what drove me you know to me. And then last year I came and I didn't know what to do with myself because it was like all this time yeah I had all this time and I never like had to study like I could just go in and like do it. But it's something I know will be a little bit harder this year. So yeah it's kind of stepping up.

 Okay, thank you!

 Yeah. Maybe a little bit more each year but yeah.

But I know I felt like I definitely felt like that last year that I needed more. But I feel like at the end of the day I'm still going to get the same education as someone in a harder school and it's going to be at a better price and will probably be like your price to the same job.

Is it like four plus one will get your masters in social work?

Yeah, so I think so like the dream is to go to law school. Yeah. I wanted to go to law school forever but it's kind of like I'm at this point where is how much am I going to have to pay in student loans or just how much am I gonna make for the rest of my life. I don't want to like start out especially for not doing like corporate law.

Oh I see!

Exactly like I feel like everyone just assumes that if you have a law degree you're going to make like billions of dollars and like you'll be well off but if you're you know 200 thousand dollars in debt. So it's going to be definitely like weighing that. But I think I am going to go straight into the plus one is this one extra year.

And then if you want to do all swatted out like you can take a year off and yeah you still have options.

Yeah. That's what I've talked about a lot with my mom. It's like going here and getting my masters and then working for a couple years like that's what it's like on the inside. Yeah. And I don't want to like I've just been in school and been so driven in school since the beginning of time. Yeah. That I don't want to be like 30 or however many like start living. Yeah yeah. So I want some time out in the real room to know what I'd really want to do. Yeah. I go and make that decision. That's the plan. Yeah. But it's also kind of scary because it's like once you get out in the real world are you actually going to want to come back.

Yeah yeah it's like that catch 22. Yeah. So we'll see. It's exciting.

And my last question is What's your favorite thing about App?

really enjoy the warm months up here. Like it really is just a whole different world and there are so many opportunities to go out and do things, and everyone takes advantage of it which I love. It's starting never come I go really big like I'm starting like us we're talking about community earlier. Yeah and I've had like a few friends you know up here so far below.

Well thank you so much!

Interview #8: Max (Male, 20, Economics, Sophomore)

Can you tell me how you decided to come to Appalachian?

Um for me it uh, ultimately came down to the money. I got into UNC and Wilmington as well as

here, but uh this is where I could get the most bang for my buck. I also really like the mountains here

so it all just worked out

That's awesome! When did you first hear about Appalachian?

Probably like uh, my sophomore year of high school maybe? I remember we had a rep come from

there to my school and she had pamphlets and posters and all that kind of stuff. I mean I had heard of

the university before, but that was the first time I like actually took time to learn about it.

That sounds good! What were the aspects of Appalachian that drew you here?

Again kind of like I said before, but the tuition expenses and the outdoors

I can definitely see that! What are some things you wish you could have changed about the

admissions process?

Um… that's kind of a hard one. I didn't have any problems with the process and I heard back pretty

quick so I don't think I would change anything.

Okay thank you! Do you remember how Appalachian marketed to you? (i.e. brochures, social

media, on campus tours, etc.)

Um… haha hold on I have to think for a second. I remember getting like a million emails from

Appalachian, but they all seemed pretty generic. I also got stuff in the mail, especially after I

committed to App.

Okay! Do you think Appalachian could have had more efficient marketing for incoming students?

Yeah, I think social media could have been used more since that's like all we look at really now-a-days haha, but um i mean they might have had some social media stuff that I just don't remember seeing. That was a few years ago

What are you involved with on campus?

I'm in a fraternity here on campus, and then I play a lot of intramural sports too!

If you don't mind me asking, what fraternity are you in?

Yeah I don't mind haha, i'm in Sigma Nu.

Awesome! How has your greek experience been?

I've enjoyed it, but uh I mean it's not like it's my whole life or anything like that. I've made some good friends though and had some good times for sure so I don't regret it or anything.

Thanks for sharing. On a different note, did Apps sustainability attract you here?

Um..I mean I think it's cool that app is a sustainable school, but it's not what made me come here. It's just like a nice add on kinda

Gotcha! What resources do you most utilize on campus?

Um, haha I gotta think about that one

Haha take your time

I guess like the SRC if you consider that a resource, I'm in there a lot. And then the library for late night studying and what not.

Do you think Appalachian does a good job of informing first year students of all the resources available to them?

Um, I mean I think everyone just already kind of knows about the library and what not automatically, but I remember RA's talking about other resources you might could use and such from freshman year

Awesome. What are some issues Appalachian can get better at?

I think App does a good job at handling hard stuff, but the parking does kind of suck. So maybe that

Okay! And what in general do you think are any changes that need to be made on Appalachian Campus?

The parking is the only thing I can really think of right now

Thank you! Overall, how satisfied were you with your decision to attend Appalachian?

I'm really happy so far about coming to App. I know I'm not even halfway done yet, but i've really enjoyed the people and the town of Boone

How was your experience living in the residence halls?

It wasn't the best time per say haha, but I mean given that you're stuck in a small little room with another person can only be so good. But I mean they kept it clean for the most part and the people were mostly nice, so I can't complain.

Great, thank you! And lastly, if you had to choose one thing you love the most about Appalachian, what would it be?

Ahh, I uh gotta think for a minute. I think the people though. Like everyone is so nice up here in Boone and I've made great friends.

Thank you so much!

Appendix E: Higher Education Marketing Survey Consent Form

We are asking you to complete this survey for research. You do not have to complete it if you decide not to. Your answers will be anonymous--we will not be able to trace them back to you.

Information to Consider about this Research

How Marketing Strategies Affect Incoming Undergraduate University Students
Principal Investigator: Rachael Beller
Department: Marketing
Contact Information: bellerre@appstate.edu
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Pia Albinsson, albinssonpa@appstate.edu

You are invited to participate in a survey research study about your experience in deciding which university to attend, and how effective different marketing strategies were in your decision process. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked 15-20 questions regarding your own personal experience in deciding to come to Appalachian State University.

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may change your mind at any point and decide to no longer partake in this survey. You also may choose to not answer any question during for any reason. Dr. Albinsson will be giving out 5pts extra credit (less than 1% of the overall grade) if you choose to participate in this survey, but an alternate assignment will also be available if you choose not to partake in the survey.

If you have questions about this survey, you may contact Rachael Beller at bellerre@appstate.edu or faculty advisor Dr. Pia Albinsson at albinssonpa@appstate.edu.

The Appalachian State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has determined that this study is exempt from IRB oversight.

By continuing with the survey, I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years old, have read the information above, and agree to participate.

Appendix F: Higher Education Survey

Start of Block: Higher Education Survey

Q1   Higher Education Marketing Survey   Information to Consider about this Research   **How Marketing Strategies Affect Incoming Undergraduate University Students** Principal Investigator: Rachael Beller Department: Marketing Contact Information: bellerre@appstate.edu Faculty Advisor: Dr. Pia Albinsson, albinssonpa@appstate.edu   You are invited to participate in a survey research study for an honors student thesis about your personal experience in deciding which university to attend and how effective different marketing strategies were in your decision process. The survey takes about 5 minutes to complete.   As part of the Marketing Research and IMC class, Dr. Albinsson is offering 7 pts course credit for completing this survey.   If you have questions about this survey, you may contact Rachael Beller at bellerre@appstate.edu or faculty advisor Dr. Pia Albinsson at albinssonpa@appstate.edu.   The Appalachian State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has determined that this study is exempt from IRB oversight.   By continuing with the survey, I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years old, have read the information above, and agree to participate.

Page Break ——

Q2   How were you informed about Appalachian State University during your decision process?
Check all that apply

☐   Brochures (1)

☐   Instagram Ads (2)

☐   Twitter Ads (3)

☐   Facebook Ads (4)

☐   Had a representative visit your high school (5)

☐   Direct mail (6)

☐   Emails (7)

☐   Offered a campus tour (8)

☐   Not listed (9) _____

Q3 How important were the following academic related factors in regards to your decision in coming to Appalachian State University?

	Unimportant 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Important 7 (7)
Scholarships (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reputation of Appalachian (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Job Placement Rate (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Degree program of your choice (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Classroom size (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of education (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Value of education (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Your field of study (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Research Quality (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Teaching Quality (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Course Content (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Not listed (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q4 Please rank how important these factors were when deciding to attend Appalachian State University.

	Unimportant 1 (1)	2 (2)	3 (3)	4 (4)	5 (5)	6 (6)	Important 7 (7)
Price (1)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Scholarships (2)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Location (3)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Reputation of Appalachian (4)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Friends/family opinion (5)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Appalachian's Rank (6)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Able to live close to home (7)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Far from home (8)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Residence life (9)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Size of school (10)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Value of education (11)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Your field of study (12)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Appalachian Athletics (Varsity) (13)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Club and intramural sports (14)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Campus clubs (15)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Greek life (16)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Events on campus (17)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Residence Life (18)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Food services (19)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Health and wellness services (20)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Student union facilities (21)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Library and computer access (22)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Transportation options (23)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Accommodations (24)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Q5 Was there an ultimate deciding factor for you?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q6 If yes, please describe below:

_____

Q7 Does Appalachian State University differ compared to other schools? If so, please explain.

_____

- -

Page Break   ——————————————————————————————————

Q8 This section is interested in your experiences and opinions of Appalachian's marketing efforts at the time you were considering to apply.

Q9 Did you partake in any of the following recruitment strategies?

☐   Campus Open House Events (1)

☐   Campus Visits for High School Students (2)

☐   Weekend visits for high school students (3)

☐   Encouraged to apply on admissions website (4)

☐   Encouraged to schedule campus visits on admissions website (5)

☐   Community college articulation agreements (6)

☐   Off campus group meetings for prospective students and or/parents (7)

☐   Already enrolled students in recruitment/marketing (8)

☐   Not listed (9) _____

Q10 Which, if any, of the above mentioned recruitment strategies had the most influence on you?

_____

Q11 Appalachian State University's marketing efforts were genuine?

    ○ Strongly disagree (1)

    ○ Disagree (2)

    ○ Somewhat disagree (3)

    ○ Neither agree nor disagree (4)

    ○ Somewhat agree (5)

    ○ Agree (6)

    ○ Strongly agree (7)

Q12 Appalachian's social media was effective in marketing to future students?

    ○ Strongly disagree (1)

    ○ Disagree (2)

    ○ Somewhat disagree (3)

    ○ Neither agree nor disagree (4)

    ○ Somewhat agree (5)

    ○ Agree (6)

    ○ Strongly agree (7)

Q13 Appalachian's campus visits were effective in marketing to future students?

○ Strongly disagree (1)

○ Disagree (2)

○ Somewhat disagree (3)

○ Neither agree nor disagree (4)

○ Somewhat agree (5)

○ Agree (6)

○ Strongly agree (7)

Q14 In your opinion, what could Appalachian change in its marketing efforts to attract students?

_____

Q15 Has your perception changed about Appalachian from the time you first applied to present day?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q16
If yes, how so?

_____

Q17 If you had the chance to do over, would you still decide to come to Appalachian State University?

○ Yes (1)

○ No (2)

Q29 Now please tell us about yourself.

Page Break

Q18 College (where your program of study is offered)

○ Beaver College of Health Sciences (1)

○ College of Arts and Sciences (2)

○ College of Fine and Applied Arts (3)

○ Hayes School of Music (4)

○ Honors College (5)

○ Reich College of Education (6)

○ University College (7)

○ Walker College of Business (8)

Q19 What is your major?

_____

Q20 Gender

○ Male (1)

○ Female (2)

○ Not listed (3) _____

Q21 Zipcode of home town (before attending Appalachian)

_____

Q22 Class

    ○ First Year (1)

    ○ Second Year (2)

    ○ Third Year (3)

    ○ Fourth Year (4)

    ○ Other (5)

Q23 Age

_____

Q30 In order to get credit for your participation in this survey please write your first and last name.

_____

End of Block: Higher Education Survey

Appendix G:

Bivariate Correlation Chart for Academic Factors

Correlations

		academic_sc holarships	academic_re putation	academic_jo bplacement	academic_de greeprogram	academic_cla sssize	academic_qu alityofed	academic_val ueofed	academic_fiel dofstudy	academic_re searchquality	academic_te achingquality	academic_co ursecontent	academic_no tlisted
academic_scholarships	Pearson Correlation	1	.190**	.156*	.154*	.041	.192**	.217**	.244**	.235**	.172**	.146*	.228
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002	.013	.015	.519	.002	.001	.000	.000	.006	.020	.066
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_reputation	Pearson Correlation	.190**	1	.549**	.313**	.218**	.578**	.508**	.330**	.261**	.388**	.353**	.154
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.216
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_jobplacement	Pearson Correlation	.156*	.549**	1	.524**	.299**	.534**	.505**	.446**	.452**	.466**	.486**	-.186
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.013	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.138
	N	251	251	251	250	251	250	249	251	250	251	251	65
academic_degreeprogra m	Pearson Correlation	.154*	.313**	.524**	1	.219**	.419**	.394**	.802**	.346**	.396**	.449**	-.135
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.282
	N	251	251	250	251	251	250	249	251	250	251	251	65
academic_classsize	Pearson Correlation	.041	.218**	.299**	.219**	1	.365**	.359**	.212**	.265**	.373**	.293**	-.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.519	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.995
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_qualityofed	Pearson Correlation	.192**	.578**	.534**	.419**	.365**	1	.856**	.434**	.376**	.578**	.515**	.036
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.775
	N	251	251	250	250	251	251	249	251	250	251	251	65
academic_valueofed	Pearson Correlation	.217**	.508**	.505**	.394**	.359**	.856**	1	.446**	.409**	.565**	.504**	-.020
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.874
	N	250	250	249	249	250	249	250	250	249	250	250	66
academic_fieldofstudy	Pearson Correlation	.244**	.330**	.446**	.802**	.212**	.434**	.446**	1	.328**	.427**	.465**	-.179
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.151
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_researchqualit y	Pearson Correlation	.235**	.261**	.452**	.346**	.265**	.376**	.409**	.328**	1	.547**	.541**	-.128
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.308
	N	251	251	250	250	251	250	249	251	251	251	251	65
academic_teachingqualit y	Pearson Correlation	.172**	.388**	.466**	.396**	.373**	.578**	.565**	.427**	.547**	1	.685**	-.005
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.968
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_coursecontent	Pearson Correlation	.146*	.353**	.486**	.449**	.293**	.515**	.504**	.465**	.541**	.685**	1	.104
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.405
	N	252	252	251	251	252	251	250	252	251	252	252	66
academic_notlisted	Pearson Correlation	.228	.154	-.186	-.135	-.001	.036	-.020	-.179	-.128	-.005	.104	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.066	.216	.138	.282	.995	.775	.874	.151	.308	.968	.405	
	N	66	66	65	65	66	65	66	66	65	66	66	66

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).