The Effects of the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip on Freshmen's Adaptation to Princeton University: A Study of Pluralistic Ignorance

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this experiment was to (a) examine incoming freshmen's expectations about Princeton University for self-other discrepancies, and (b) measure the effects of the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip Program in helping freshmen adapt to Princeton. Self-other discrepancies were the focus of this study because pluralistic ignorance research has identified some interesting consequences that arise when individuals misperceive group norms. These consequences include (a) changing one's behavior to be more in line with the perceived norm even if the behavior was previously viewed as unacceptable and (b) a general sense of alienation from the group. The Outdoor Action Frosh Trip is a pre-registration wilderness orientation trip. Groups of approximately 10 freshmen spend 6 days hiking through the woods with two upper-classmen leaders. The trip helps freshmen adapt to Princeton in two ways. First of all, freshmen are introduced to a new group of friends. Second of all, the discussions on the trip provide an excellent opportunity for the freshmen's misperceptions to be corrected because students are continually talking about their expectations and anxieties. This study showed that the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip helps to correct student's misperceptions about the alcohol norms on campus and it is speculated that the Trip helps students to fit in better socially.

INTRODUCTION

I still remember the day that the "YES!" letter from Dean Hargadon arrived in the mail. I had been getting the mail every day for the past week because it was mid-December and I knew that I would be finding out very soon whether I was going to be spending the next four years of my life in the Garden State. I noticed a small envelope from Princeton and my first thought was of disappointment; many of my friends had heard from schools and I knew that small equaled "No thanks," whereas large meant "Yes please." I examined the letter more closely; trying to read through the envelope and noticing that it had some depth when I looked at it from the side. This could mean good news, but I wasn't about to get my hopes up. Full of anxiety, hope and fear, I brought it inside and told my Mom that I had received something from Princeton.

What this letter said was either going to validate four years of hard work, or force me to complete the applications for my back-up schools. My Mom, who may have been more excited than I, was looking over my shoulder as I opened the envelope. It was funny because the "YES!" was above the crease and I started reading the body of the letter which said something like, "We are pleased to tell you…" My Mom, on the other hand, saw the "YES!", immediately knew what it meant, and screamed out loud with excitement – she knew what the letter said before I did.

Well, needless to say, that was a very happy day in my life. I was finally rewarded for all the hard work that I had done in high school. These feelings of accomplishment and pride, however, quickly gave way to other, more conflicting and confusing feelings. I didn't know what to expect from Princeton and this worried me. My concerns were of two varieties: academic concerns and social concerns. Princeton is obviously an intellectually challenging institution, but I was confident that I would be able to do the work. For instance, I knew that I compared favorably with the rest of the class on SAT scores and Advance Placement Exams. My worries about fitting in socially were not as easily dealt with; there is no numerical comparison that one can do to see how well they are going to fit in.

My worries were exacerbated by the fact that I believed I had little knowledge of Princeton compared to the average student. In my distorted view of Princeton, I falsely thought that all of the other students had either

gone to prep-school, had family members who were alumni, or had friends or other students from their high school who had attended Princeton. In addition to having these connections, I felt that every other student had, through these connections, been informed of what to expect of the Princeton social scene. Coming from a public high school, and not knowing anyone who had gone to Princeton except for a friend of my mother, I had no source of information about the school. It came down to the fact that I thought I wasn't going to fit in as well as the other freshmen.

If I came to campus with this misperception, I may misattribute other student's behavior and further strengthen my own misperception without even being aware of the trap that I had laid for myself. Let's go through a quick hypothetical situation to explain this point. Many students, like myself, arrive on campus unsure of how well they are going to fit in socially. From the start, freshmen are doing two things: (1) presenting themselves as fitting in so as not to stand out, and (2) attempting to gauge how well other students are fitting in. In this environment, I would consequently interpret other student's actions as proof they were fitting in, and attribute my own actions to the fact that I am trying not to stand out. This is an example of pluralistic ignorance.

Pluralistic Ignorance

Pluralistic ignorance is defined as a state where one "believes that their private thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are different from those of others, even though one's public behavior is identical" (Miller & McFarland, 1991, p.287). The classic example of pluralistic ignorance, and a situation almost everyone has experienced, is called the silent classroom scenario. A teacher has just finished presenting a confusing lecture and asks the class if they have any questions. The inwardly confused, but outwardly composed, students look around to see what others think about the lecture. What they see are other students acting just as composed as themselves. Now comes the interesting part. Students misinterpret the silence of the other students to mean that their classmates understood the lecture and they alone are confused.

The term pluralistic ignorance was first introduced by Floyd Allport (Katz & Allport, 1928) to describe a situation in which members of a group privately reject group norms, but publicly accept them. This situation

leads to the perpetuation of group norms in the absence of strong private support because group members are conforming to what they think the other group members support.

In the classroom example, students are afraid to ask the teacher a question because they fear the embarrassment that would accompany their admittance of confusion. A situation that is similar, but more serious in context, is bystander intervention in the face of an emergency. Latane and Darley (1968) showed that bystanders in a group of apparently unconcerned others are less likely to help in an in emergency than if they were alone. This inaction was attributed to a "diffusion of responsibility" and a case of "social influence". It could also be explained by pluralistic ignorance. Bystanders in a group, when confronted with an emergency situation, mask their internal confusion and fear while they try to draw an understanding of the situation from others around them. If the other people in the group are also presenting a façade, the bystander will incorrectly interpret their appearance of unconcern as a lack of concern.

Both the classroom and emergency examples lead to a situation of pluralistic ignorance because participants are presenting a false façade and interpreting other's façade as truth. Another situation that leads to pluralistic ignorance occurs when individuals believe the public actions of others are a truthful representation of their private beliefs. Pluralistic ignorance will only occur in this case when public actions are deviant from private positions.

One such example was reported by Schanck (1932) in his study of the fictitiously named community of Elm Hollow. In this town, the Baptist church exerted great influence and its leaders enjoyed high status in the community. One such church leader was "Mrs. Salt" who was outspoken in her conservative attitudes. Because she was rarely confronted in public, members of Elm Hollow, falsely believed that everyone else endorsed Mrs. Salt's statements. Interviews by Schanck revealed that members of the church believed that other members held private views much closer to those of Mrs. Salt than their own. By not confronting Mrs. Salt, church members are in effect perpetuating attitudes that they do not support.

Building on these studies, Miller and McFarland (1991) articulated a theory of pluralistic ignorance based on self-other differences. They reasoned that "pluralistic ignorance may arise when people mistakenly believe that they differ form others on a dimension that is causally related to the actions they have performed"

(Miller & McFarland, 1991, p.297). They further speculated that the dimension where the self-other differences occur is social inhibition. In other words, actions that are engaged to avoid embarrassment by the self are attributed to different factors in others. The key to this theory of pluralistic ignorance is the divergence of self-other perceptions of similar actions that leads to erroneous attributions.

Miller and McFarland (1991) conducted three experiments to test their theory. The first experiment was designed to test the assumption that seems to be obvious in the silent classroom: individuals will underestimate the percentage of others who will attempt to avoid an embarrassing situation. Participants were brought into the laboratory alone and asked to read an almost incomprehensible paper that they were told would later be the subject of a group discussion. The experimenter then told the participants that they could come and find her if they had "any really serious problems understanding the paper." After reading the paper, participants were asked how many people they thought would ask the experimenter for help. Participants reported that 37% of other participants would ask the experimenter for help, when in fact none of the participants sought assistance. This clearly supported the hypothesis and demonstrates a clear divergence in self-other perceptions.

Whereas the first experiment examined how individuals *thought* others would act, the second experiment looked at how individuals perceive other's actual actions. This experiment was conducted in an identical manner to the first with two exceptions. First of all, participants read the article in groups of 3-8. The second difference was the addition of another condition. In the unconstrained condition, participants were told that they could ask the experimenter for help if they needed it; this condition being similar to the first experiment except that the addition of others results in greater embarrassment for someone who has to ask for help. In the constrained condition, participants were not told that they could ask for help. In neither condition did participants ask the experimenter for help in clarifying the article. After reading the article, participants were asked various questions to assess whether pluralistic ignorance was at work. Supporting the hypothesis, participants in the unconstrained condition evaluated themselves as understanding the paper significantly worse relative to others than participants in the constrained condition. It seems that subjects in the unconstrained condition perceived the other group member's inaction as a sign of comprehension and their own inaction as an attempt to avoid embarrassment.

The third study built upon the first two and addressed the assumption that people believe they are more socially inhibited than others. This assumption, much like the assumption concerning the silent classroom, is crucial to Miller and McFarland's (1991) theory of pluralistic ignorance. To test their hypothesis that people overestimate their own level of social inhibition relative to the other, participants were given a list of 20 trait adjectives and asked to indicate the extant to which each trait described themselves and the average student. Confirming the hypothesis, students judged themselves to exhibit more of the social inhibitive traits than the average other. This study demonstrates that people believe themselves to more socially inhibited than others. Miller and McFarland (1991) propose that this incorrect belief in one's social inhibition is what causes individuals to misinterpret others actions in situations of pluralistic ignorance.

The foundation of Miller and McFarland's (1991) theory of pluralistic ignorance is self-other differences. Individuals think that they are more socially inhibited than others and their similar actions are being done for different reasons. The three studies conducted to support this theory provide two major insights. First of all, individuals feel that their actions are more influenced by fear of embarrassment than the average other's. Secondly, individuals feel that they posses more traits that lead to social inhibition and that these feelings of bashfulness and self-consciousness lead to the fear of embarrassment mentioned above. These findings paint a picture of an individual who is highly susceptible to the double-edged sword that leads to pluralistic ignorance. This individual believes that (a) they are more socially inhibited than others, and (b) because of this they are more likely to engage in actions to avoid embarrassment. Miller and McFarland (1991) articulated a concise and well thought out definition of pluralistic ignorance; the next step is to take a closer look at the consequences of pluralistic ignorance.

Consequences of Pluralistic Ignorance

Two fine examples of pluralistic ignorance have already been mentioned: the silent classroom and emergency situations. In both cases individuals suffer from pluralistic ignorance because they (and the others in the group) are trying to hide their true feelings. It would logically follow that any situation where individuals

are actively presenting a false exterior would be fertile ground for pluralistic ignorance. Prentice and Miller (1993) found such a situation in the drinking attitudes of students at Princeton University.

Prentice and Miller (1993) reasoned that an examination of drinking attitudes at Princeton would yield pluralistic ignorance for a couple of reasons. First of all, drinking is a very important part of social life at Princeton. The majority of upperclassmen are members of eating clubs, which function as the center of social life on campus. These clubs each contain a tap-room that dispenses free alcohol Thursday through Saturday nights. Princeton reunions reinforce the association of alcohol with socializing when alumni return to party with old classmates in an alcohol filled environment. It short, alcohol is closely associated with socializing at Princeton.

In this environment that strongly promotes alcohol use, it is likely that many students would not be comfortable with the amount of drinking on campus. These attitudes could come from seeing the consequences of their friend's abuse of alcohol or from their own. Dealing with drunk roommates, or nursing them the morning after, are not uncommon activities for freshman at college. Furthermore, students could find their own experiences with alcohol unpleasant as they see its effects on their body, relationships, and academic performance. These personal experiences with alcohol probably will affect the student's attitude towards alcohol but not what they perceive to be the social norm. Students, who think that others are more comfortable with alcohol, will present a sense of acceptance of the alcohol environment so as to fit in. Prentice and Miller (1993) hypothesized that if this reasoning were correct, they would find that student's attitudes towards alcohol are characterized by pluralistic ignorance. Furthermore, it was hypothesized that the misperceived norms would be pervaded with an illusion of universality, or the belief that everyone else supports the group's social norm (Allport 1924; as cited in Prentice & Miller, 1993). In addition to investigating whether pluralistic ignorance pervades alcohol use on campus, Prentice and Miller (1993) also wished to measure the consequences of this misperception of the social norm.

In their first study, Prentice and Miller (1993) demonstrated a marked deviation between student's private attitudes toward alcohol use and their perception of the social norm. Students were asked two questions: (1) How comfortable do you feel with the alcohol drinking habits of Princeton students? and (2) How

comfortable does the average Princeton undergraduate feel with the alcohol drinking habits of students at Princeton? Students were also asked to rate the variability of their answers to the two questions above. Students' ratings on these two questions indicated that students are much less comfortable with the alcohol use on campus than they think the average student is. Results also indicated that there was less variability in the typical student's comfort level than in the student's own comfort level.

This experiment provided clear evidence of pluralistic ignorance and the illusion of universality, but two experimental design features allowed for alternative interpretations. First of all, the order of the questions was fixed so that participants may have rated the average student as more comfortable simply because they answered that question second. Secondly, the term "average student" may have been too vague for the participants and not grounded in reality. These two flaws were corrected in the second study by having half of the participants answer the self question first and the other half answer the other question first. Also in the second study, "average student" was replaced with "friend" so that students would be thinking of a less hypothetical and more concrete other. With these improvements on Study 1, the results of Study 2 also indicated that student's attitudes toward drinking exhibit pluralistic ignorance.

Now that Studies 1 and 2 had established that students think they are more uncomfortable than other Princeton students with the drinking habits on campus, studies 3 and 4 were designed to examine the consequences of pluralistic ignorance. Study 3 examined how student's attitudes and practices towards drinking change over time as a result of pluralistic ignorance. Participants in this study were 2nd-year students for an important reason. Sophomores have been exposed to the drinking norms on campus, but they have not firmly established their own drinking habits. In other words, sophomores know what drinking habits are socially acceptable and still may be influenced by the social norms regarding alcohol. In September, participants were asked four questions regarding their attitudes and practices concerning alcohol. The first two questions were taken from Study 1 and addressed the student's personal attitude and what they think the average student's attitude toward alcohol use is. The next two questions addressed the student's use of alcohol. Participants were asked how many drinks they had in the last week and how many drinks they have in a typical week. Approximately 8 weeks later, in December, participants were asked the same four questions again.

The results showed very interesting differences between the sexes. Men for example, brought their attitudes and behavior more in line with what they perceived to be the social norm. Women, on the other hand, responded to the discrepancy between their personal attitudes and their perception of the social norm by feeling more alienated over the course of the semester. Study 3 provides clear evidence that a misperceived social norm can have very negative consequences; men decide to internalize the norm and act more in line with it, whereas women become more alienated because they refuse to change their behavior.

Study 4 examined the effect pluralistic ignorance has on people's willingness to express views counter to what they perceive to be socially accepted by their peer group. In the context of pluralistic ignorance, people may be afraid to express their viewpoints, which are shared by the majority, because they are under the impression that those viewpoints are deviant. A recent keg ban on the Princeton campus provided an excellent opportunity to measure people's attitudes toward an unpopular, yet relatively inconsequential issue. Prentice and Miller (1993) hypothesized that there would be evidence of pluralistic ignorance on the keg ban issue, with students thinking their attitudes to be more positive toward the ban than other's. Furthermore, it was postulated that this deviation would inhibit students from taking action against the keg ban, regardless of their actual attitude toward the ban, and also may cause students to feel a sense of alienation from the University.

To explore whether pluralistic ignorance characterized attitudes toward the keg ban, students were asked how they felt about the new ban on kegs, and how the average student feels about the ban. Students were then asked questions to measure their willingness to actively protest the ban. Participants were asked how many signatures they would be willing to collect and how many hours they would be willing to spend discussing ways to protest the ban. To measure the student's level of alienation they were asked what percentage of reunions they planned on attending and how likely would they be to donate money in the future.

In support of the hypotheses, student's attitudes towards the keg ban revealed evidence of pluralistic ignorance. Students thought that the average student felt more negatively towards the ban than they did. Furthermore, students suffering from pluralistic ignorance were less likely to actively protest the ban and felt more alienated from the university, as indicate by their likelihood to attend reunions and donate money. Study

4 provides strong evidence that pluralistic ignorance will inhibit individuals from acting on their attitudes if they perceive them to be deviant, and that this deviation leads to a sense of alienation.

These four studies provide strong evidence concerning the consequences of pluralistic ignorance. Studies 1 and 2 established that attitudes towards drinking are characterized by pluralistic ignorance; students think that they are less comfortable with drinking than the average student and their friends. Attitudes toward drinking were also characterized by an illusion of universality in that there was less variability in the typical student's attitudes than in the student's private attitude. Study 3 demonstrated that men respond to this self-other discrepancy by changing their behavior to fit in with the perceived norm, whereas women will simply become more alienated. Study 4 showed that the sense of personal deviation from the norm that accompanies pluralistic ignorance inhibits one's expression of their views and also produces a sense of alienation.

Prentice and Miller (1993) concluded that these consequence of pluralistic ignorance result from the fact the students believe that even though they are acting similarly to other students their reasons for doing so are different. They also concluded that the illusion of universality gives these misperceived norms their strength because individuals do not want to conflict with strongly supported group norms. Now that pluralistic ignorance has been defined, and the consequences of norm misperception have been examined, it is time to focus the discussion on diffusing pluralistic ignorance.

Diffusing Pluralistic Ignorance

The consequences of pluralistic ignorance are clear and disturbing. At Princeton University, a false norm concerning drinking habits is being perpetuated because students think that support for this norm is universally shared by their classmates. Because of this misperceived norm, male students are drinking more and female students are feeling alienated. Examining this situation, Schroeder and Prentice (in press) attempted to reduce alcohol use among Princeton students by exposing them to the reality of pluralistic ignorance and how it may affect their decisions.

Schroeder and Prentice (in press) reasoned that an effective way to change student's alcohol use would be to reveal that the assumptions they hold about the attitudes of their peers are incorrect (see Prentice &Miller,

1993). By revealing student's true feelings, the illusion of universality surrounding the drinking norm on campus would be shattered. This in turn would lower the prescriptive strength of the norm so that students would not feel as compelled to bring their own alcohol use in line with the campus norm. The goal of the study was to decrease alcohol among students through weakening the prescriptive strength of the drinking norm.

The participants in this study were entering freshmen who were randomly assigned to participate in one of two types of discussions on alcohol use during their first week on campus. In the peer-orientated condition, students were exposed to the concept of pluralistic ignorance and encouraged to discuss ways in which it may effect one's drinking habits. In the individual-orientated condition, students were asked to discuss ways in which they could make responsible personal decisions in drinking situations. Prior to the discussion, participants were asked to report their own and the average student's comfort with alcohol use on campus, as in Prentice and Miller (1993). Approximately four to six months after the discussion, students were again asked to rate their own and the average student's comfort with alcohol and to report their drinking habits. Schroeder and Prentice (in press) hypothesized that the students in the peer-orientated condition would report lower levels of pluralistic ignorance and alcohol use than students in the individual-orientated discussion.

Results indicate that educating students about pluralistic ignorance had no effect on their construction of the social norm; both conditions exhibited a decrease in self-other discrepancy over time. There was however a difference between conditions in the prescriptive strength of the norm. Students who had been exposed to pluralistic ignorance were less influenced by the social norm and correspondingly drank less. Even though exposing students to pluralistic ignorance did not change their perception of the drinking norms on campus, the fact that it did affect the prescriptive strength of the norm is promising news.

In summary, pluralistic ignorance is a situation where individuals misperceive a social norm because they and everyone else are masking their true feelings for fear of embarrassment (Miller & McFarland, 1991). Most import to this discussion, pluralistic ignorance has been linked to college drinking attitudes (Prentice & Miller, 1993). Furthermore, the misperception of the alcohol norm influences male students to drink more and female students to feel alienated (Prentice & Miller, 1993). Exposing students to pluralistic ignorance,

however, is effective in weakening the prescriptive strength of the norm thereby reducing alcohol use (Schroeder & Prentice, in press).

The Administration's Role in the Transition from High School to College

Now that pluralistic ignorance has been thoroughly investigated, let's get back to the story of my apprehension about coming to Princeton. I am certainly not the only student who has felt anxious about entering college. The transition from high school to college is a stressful one and it is the goal of college administrations across the country to make this transition as easy as possible. Looking at entering freshmen from the administration's viewpoint leads to two very interesting questions that pertain to the investigation of this thesis. First of all, what are the main concerns of the Princeton University Administration in regard to the transition that freshmen face? Secondly, what programs and support networks are in place to make sure these concerns do not become reality? The answers to these questions will lead us to the purpose of this investigation.

An obvious aim of the Princeton administration is that students feel comfortable in their new environment. In addition to earning a superb education, Princeton realizes that is very important for students to feel like they fit in socially. The high priority paid to helping freshmen adapt to college life is attested to by the number of support programs and personnel in place. At Princeton University, there is a one-week orientation program that takes place after registration, but before classes begin, that helps to acclimate students to college life. Various speeches and assemblies are held during this week that help to introduce freshmen to Princeton. Each student is assigned to a Resident Advisor group that consists of approximately 10-12 freshmen and an upper-class advisor. Each student is also assigned to a Minority Affairs Advisor (no matter the student's racial or ethnic background). Both of these advisors are thoroughly trained to deal with any type of situation that may confront freshmen. The purpose of these advisors and programs is to unsure that freshmen make a smooth transition from high school to college.

Another concern of the Administration that has drawn lots of attention recently is the alcohol problem on the Princeton campus. This study is primarily concerned with how freshmen react to the drinking scene at

Princeton, but a quick review of the Administration's current steps toward reducing alcohol abuse on campus would be informative. The most controversial action taken thus far by the University has been to ban all future Nude Olympics (Tucker, 1999). It has been a Princeton tradition that on the night of the first snowfall, the sophomore class throws clothes and caution to the wind, and runs around Holder courtyard naked. Many students, however, are too inhibited to run without first consuming excessive amounts of alcohol. This year, the alcohol consumption was taken to extremes; 6 students were taken to the area hospital to be treated for alcohol poisoning, urine and feces were smeared along the hallways of Holder Hall, and numerous alcohol related injuries were reported. The Board of Trustees decided that it could not wait for a student to die from alcohol poisoning so they recommended to the President that the event be canceled and 1-year suspensions be imposed on students who do run. President Shapiro approved the ban and the event has been effectively cancelled.

The proposal to ban the Nude Olympics came from a subcommittee of The Board of Trustees called the Trustee Committee on Student Life, Health and Athletics. Over the past two years this subcommittee has been formulating strategies to deal with the problem of alcohol abuse (Tooke, 1999). The subcommittee has approached virtually every group on campus to submit a proposal as to how that group can address some aspect of the alcohol problem. This alcohol initiative is expected to be completed in June and will hopefully offer some clear steps the University can take to reduce alcohol abuse on campus (Tucker, 1999). Meanwhile, the real problem seems to be a culture that (a) depends upon alcohol and (b) offers few options to students who don't want to drink. Student leaders and Administrators both point optimistically to the new student center as an alcohol free social center. While giving students more social options is obviously a good idea, no one seems to care about the social psychological factors that influence students to drink excessive amounts of alcohol.

One program that has not mentioned above, but that could serve to alleviate both concerns of the administration (helping freshmen fit in socially and reduce alcohol use among students) is the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip.

Outdoor Action Frosh Trip

The Princeton University Outdoor Action Frosh Trip is a pre-registration orientation program designed to help first year students better adapt to Princeton University. Although Outdoor Action (OA) runs many outdoor trips and activities throughout the school year and summer break, the Frosh Trip is by far its largest undertaking. In early September, prior to registration, groups of approximately 10 first year students spend 5 days hiking in the wilderness under the leadership of two to three upper-class students. This year, approximately 600 freshman (over half of the class) and 160 leaders went out on 67 trips. There were four different types of trips offered: hiking (54 trips), canoeing and climbing (7), hiking and climbing (4), outdoor adventure (2). These trips go out to states on the East Coast as north as Pennsylvania and as south as Virginia, the majority of which hike along sections of the Appalachian Trail.

To become an OA leader, Princeton students go through an extensive training program. The leader-training program includes first aid and outdoors skills classes, group dynamics workshops, and a leader training trip in which the leaders in training lead the trip for a day. In the group dynamics workshops, leaders are taught how to facilitate group discussions that encourage input from all the participants on a trip. It is very important for OA leaders to be able to "de-brief" a "teachable moment." In other words, OA leaders are well trained at taking a meaningful situation, whether it be a participant's fear of heights or a participant who feels they are being picked on, and helping all of the participants in the group to understand what happened and what can be learned from it.

Although all OA Frosh Trips are different (different leaders, participants and location) there are common threads that run through them all. Frosh Trips are great opportunities for freshmen to get to know other freshmen and learn about Princeton from the upper-class leaders. Discussions on the trail range from classes, to high school experiences, to anxiety about Princeton, to alcohol use on campus, to any number of things. Although the majority of discussions are on a one-on-one basis, it is not unlikely for the leaders to answer questions that freshmen have to the whole group because they feel it is a question that other freshmen may have.

From the Frosh Trip's description above, it is easy to see a similarity between it and the peer-orientated discussion groups in Schroeder and Prentice (in press). In both cases student are talking about their feelings and

attitudes concerning alcohol use in a supportive environment. Participants in OA Frosh Trips have not been exposed to the alcohol norm at all, so their perceptions of alcohol use would be easily changed. The trip also provides an excellent opportunity to diffuse pluralistic ignorance because participants spend 5 days with their peers talking about issues that are very important to them. Some Frosh Trips get very close, so it is not unreasonable to assume that some very honest and frank discussions take place on the trail. Frosh Trips are environments conducive to the diffusing of pluralistic ignorance because participants are encouraged to move out from behind their façade and present their true self. If a whole trip is successful in encouraging everyone in the group to talk honestly about their attitudes and beliefs, many misperceptions and misconceptions will be destroyed.

Present Study

The research reported in this thesis was designed to examine freshmen's expectations about Princeton in the context of pluralistic ignorance and to see what effect the OA Frosh Trip has on these expectations and in helping freshmen adapt to life at Princeton. Because pluralistic ignorance is characterized by a discrepancy between self and other perceptions, the measures in this study will look to examine these differences.

It is expected that student's expectations regarding Princeton will provide evidence of self-other discrepancies. On measures of academic expectations and grade point average (GPA) I predict that students will exhibit a self-enhancement bias in regard to the typical student. Entering Princeton students (myself included) have a very high opinion of their academic talent that has been reinforced through four successful years of high school. On measures of anxiety, social fit and desire to party, it is predicted that students will display pluralistic ignorance. Consequently, I expect students to report more anxiety, less social fit, and a lower desire to party than the typical student.

In addition to demonstrating self-other discrepancies in freshmen's expectations concerning Princeton, I also hope to investigate the effect that the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip has on student's adaptation to Princeton. I predict that the trip will have no effect on the measures that displayed a self-enhancement bias. The trip is not designed to effect student's attitudes towards academics and furthermore, I don't think it will cause students to

think that they are going to do worse. I do, however, predict that the Frosh Trip will correct the self-other discrepancies that are affected by pluralistic ignorance, namely anxiety, social fit and party scores. Furthermore, in comparison to students who did not participate in the Frosh Trip, I predict that the freshmen who go on the trip will be better adapted to Princeton. This superior adaptation will be exhibited by a better social fit and a smaller self-other discrepancy on the party score.

METHOD

Pre-Trip Data Collection

Participants

Participants were incoming freshman at Princeton University in the 1998-1999 academic year. Participants were classified into one of three conditions based on their participation, interest, or non-participation in the OA Frosh Trip. The largest group of participants were those who participated in the trip (N=605). In addition, there were two control groups; one group of students who wanted to go on the trip but couldn't (N=58) and another group of freshmen who expressed no interest in going on the trip (N=301). To make discussion concerning these groups easier, the first group of students will be called the Frosh Group, the second group the Wait-List Group, and the third group the No-Pre-Registration-Orientation (NPRO) Group.

A quick explanation of how students are chosen for this trip is necessary. In the beginning of the summer, all students in the freshman class are sent a mailing from OA. This mailing explains the general aspects of the Frosh Trip and contains an application that must be returned by a certain date. The Frosh Trip is very popular and spots are filled on a first-come first-serve basis. Furthermore, the spots on the Frosh Trip are limited by the number of upperclassmen leaders. Consequently, students who did not get the application in on time, or before the deadline but after the trip has filled, are placed on a wait-list. Students who didn't get off the wait-list were placed in the Wait-List Group.

The OA Frosh Trip is not the only pre-registration orientation program offered by Princeton University. The Student Volunteers Council runs an Urban Action program that is similar to the Frosh Trip in its purpose

and form, but different in its locale. There are also programs for freshman who need a stronger academic background before they start freshman year, so they come to Princeton in the summer and take a couple of classes. Fall sports teams also meet before registration so that they can start training. The common thread among these freshmen is that they are all meeting other freshmen prior to registration. In order to see the effects that any pre-registration orientation program has, it was necessary to create a control group of students who did not come into contact with another Princeton freshman prior to registration. Therefore, the third group in this investigation (NPRO Group) was composed of students who didn't want to go on the Frosh Trip or Urban Action, were not a member of a fall sports team, and did not come to campus early to take classes. In sum, the NPRO Group had no exposure to Princeton students prior to registration.

Procedure

At the end of August, a few weeks before they were scheduled to arrive on campus, freshmen in the three conditions received a mailing concerning the present investigation. The mailing included a letter explaining the purpose of the research, a Pre-Trip questionnaire with consent form attached to the front, and a pre-addressed stamped envelope (see Appendices A, B, & C). The timing of the questionnaire was chosen for a few reasons. First of all, it was important to measure the freshmen's expectations before they had been exposed to life at Princeton. It is true that students often know a great deal about Princeton before they arrive. Campus visits, friends and relatives who are alumni, and high school guidance counselors all serve as sources of information about college. This type of exposure, however, pales in comparison with the total immersion that takes place when the student arrives on campus. It was important to measure the student's expectations prior to their arrival because as soon as they arrive on campus those expectations are being affected. Secondly, having the students complete the questionnaire in late August, minimized the amount of time before the Frosh Trip in which the students could have changed their expectations as a results of something other than the trip. Students were asked to return the questionnaire using the pre-addressed stamped envelope provided in the mailing.

Measures

The Pre-Trip questionnaire was a very comprehensive collection of questions that probed students expectations about various aspects of Princeton (see Appendix for the entire questionnaire; only the questions and scales that were analyzed and discussed in the Results will be included here). In addition to measuring freshmen expectations, the questionnaire was designed to examine Self-Other differences. There were two main parts of the questionnaire: one part asked questions about the self, the other part asked questions about the typical student. These two parts were ordered such that half of the subjects answered the Self part first and the other half answered the Other part first. (For ease of discussion, the terms "other" and "typical student" will be used interchangeably.) Therefore, the format of the questionnaire was as follows: two parts (self and other) that contained identical sections that asked questions about student's expectations.

Background Information

Before asking students about their expectations, however, the questionnaire first asked students for background information, including their Social Security Number, gender, ethnicity, age, type of secondary education and whether or not they were accepted Early Decision to Princeton. This section was first on all of the questionnaires. After the background section, students were asked about themselves or other students, depending on whether their questionnaire was self-first or other-first.

Academic Expectations

The second section of the questionnaire asked questions about student's academic expectations. Students were asked: (1) how much importance they place on studying, (2) how much will they study, and (3) how much importance they place on grades. Participants responded on a seven point, with 7 signifying a great deal and 1 signifying not much. This 7-point scale (1 = *not much/none at all*, 7 = *a great deal/extremely*) was used for all the questions in all of the sections, unless otherwise noted. To obtain another measure of student's academic expectations, participants were asked what they thought their first-year GPA would be on four point scale, with 0 representing an F and 4.0 representing an A.

Social Expectations

The next section of the questionnaire focused on student's social expectations. Participants were asked: (1) how confident they were of "fitting into" the Princeton social scene, (2) how important is it that they fit in

socially, and (3) how easily they think they will make friends. Students were then asked two questions that pertain to partying: (1) how many nights per week they expected to "go out" and party during their first year at Princeton and (2) how many nights per week they expected to drink during their first year.

Identification with Princeton

Students were then asked questions that probed their identification with Princeton. These questions were adapted from previous group identification study (Hogg & Hains, 1996) and modified to be appropriate for entering freshmen at Princeton. Participants were asked: (1) how excited they were about starting the school year, (2) how much they like Princeton, (3) how well they think they will fit into life at Princeton, (4) how similar they thought they were to other Princeton students in terms of general attitudes and beliefs, (5) how much they identify with Princeton, (6) how glad they were to be students at Princeton, (7) how much they see themselves belonging to Princeton, (8) how important Princeton was to them, and (9) how involved they would be with Princeton after graduation.

General Anxiety

The seven items in this section measured the student's level of general anxiety towards their first year at Princeton. Students were asked to rate themselves on a seven-point scale on the following measures: (1) anxious, (2) comfortable, (3) confident, (4) worried, (5) insecure, (6) certain, and (7) well adjusted.

In the discussion above, the questions were all framed to ask for the Self score, but it is important to remember that it was necessary to obtain Other scores for the same measures. Therefore, the Other part of the questionnaire was identical to the one described above, except in all the questions "you" was replaced with "typical student."

Post-Trip Data Collection

Participants

All freshmen who participated in the Frosh Trip were asked to fill out a Post-Trip questionnaire. Participants in the two control groups were not asked to fill out a Post-Trip Questionnaire for a few reasons. First of all, the week between student's arrival and the first day of classes is very busy for upperclassmen and freshmen. It would have been very difficult with everything going on to send out the questionnaire and expect

the freshmen to fill it out and send it back. Secondly, the questionnaire was quite lengthy and asking the participants in the two control groups to fill it out for a second time a few weeks after the first didn't make sense because no change in their expectations was expected between late August and their arrival at school in mid September. Finally, the first Follow-up data collection was planned to occur a month after freshman arrived; this would have provided an early assessment of how well the freshman were doing socially, and what effect the Frosh Trip had on their adjustment to Princeton.

Procedure

Before leaders left on their trip, they were briefed as to the purpose of this investigation and what would be asked of them. Leader groups (the two upper-class leaders that are responsible for one Frosh Trip) were each given a water-proof bag that contained the following: enough post-trip questionnaires for each participant on their trip, enough golf pencils for each participant on their trip, and a small reminder of what they were being asked to do. The leaders were instructed to take approximately 30 minutes on the last day of the hike to administer the questionnaire. Leaders were told not to force the students into filling out the survey, and to make sure that each student filled out the questionnaire in private. Leaders were instructed to return the questionnaires to the experimenter when they returned to campus. To make sure that all Post-Trip questionnaires were filled out prior to returning to Princeton, only those questionnaires that were returned by the leaders on the return day of the trip were included in analyses.

Measures

The Post-Trip Questionnaire was identical to the Pre-Trip Questionnaire, except for two differences. First of all, the cover page of the Post-Trip Questionnaire was not a consent form. Students were simply asked to reflect upon their Frosh Trip experience and then fill out the questionnaire (see Appendix D). Students were also asked to write their name on this cover page so that this questionnaire could be matched with their Pre-Trip Questionnaire. The other difference was the absence of the background information questions. The answers to

these questions would not have changed since the Pre-Trip Questionnaire so it was not necessary to ask them again.

Follow-up Data Collection

Participants

Only participants who had completed the earlier surveys were contacted in early April, for the Follow-up Questionnaire. Therefore, participants in the Frosh Group who had completed both Pre and Post Questionnaires (N=233) and participants in the Wait-List (N=21) and NPRO Groups (N=150) who completed the Pre-Trip Questionnaire were asked to complete the Follow-up Questionnaire. In total, 155 participants in the Frosh Group complete all three questionnaires, 20 participants in the Wait-List Group completed both questionnaires, and 63 participants in the NPRO Group completed both questionnaires

Procedure

The procedure for the Follow-up data collection was substantially different from the previous two questionnaires in that it was a Web based survey. This questionnaire was posted on the Web for a number of reasons. First of all, using a Web page eliminated the time and wasted paper that goes along with sending paper copies of questionnaires through the mail and then waiting for responses. Secondly, the Web page afforded much easier data entry. Finally, with computer use so prevalent at Princeton, it was reasonable to expect a high response rate by employing email and the Web.

In early April, participants were contacted via email and asked to go to the Web site where the questionnaire could be found. Additional emails were sent out as reminders to increase the response rate.

Measures

The Follow-up Questionnaire (see Appendix E) was similar to the two previous questionnaires in form (Self and Other Parts), but drastically shorter in length. The goal of the follow-up was to find out how well students were doing socially. Preliminary data analysis on the Pre and Post Questionnaires for the Frosh Group

allowed for a concentration on the measures that showed the most interesting results. Consequently, the follow-up questionnaire looked at two measures: social fit and party score.

Background Information

The first section of the Follow-up Questionnaire asked the students to give their Social Security Number. This was necessary so that their follow-up data could be matched with their pre- and post data.

Social Fit

Students were then asked questions about the social environment at Princeton. These questions were taken from the social expectations and identification questions in the earlier questionnaires. The questions on the Follow-up Questionnaire constitute the social fit scale, which measures how well a student is fitting into the social scene at Princeton. Students were asked: (1) how well they fit into the social scene at Princeton, (2) how important fitting in socially is to them, (3) how easy they have found it to make friends, (4) how similar they are to other Princeton students in terms of general attitudes and beliefs, (5) how strong were their ties to Princeton, (6) how much they saw themselves belonging to Princeton, and (7) how involved they thought they would be with Princeton after graduation.

Party Score

The party score consists of the same two questions that were asked in the previous questionnaires in relation to partying: (1) how many nights per week do you go out, and (2) how many nights per week do you drink.

The second part of the Follow-up questionnaire contained the two sections above, but asked students to answer how they think the typical student would. Only one Web site was constructed, so all of the students answered the Self questions first and the Other questions second.

RESULTS

The central aim of this research was to determine the effects of the Outdoor Action Frosh trip in helping freshmen adapt to Princeton University. The three main investigative avenues reported here will be (1) Pre-Trip

expectations, (2) changes in self-other differences for the participants who went on the trip and (3) comparing the Frosh Group to the control groups who did not participate in the trip.

When a self-other discrepancy is mentioned below, it means that Other score has been subtracted from the Self score (i.e., self-other discrepancy = Self – Other). Therefore a positive self-other discrepancy indicates a higher Self score, whereas a negative self-other discrepancy indicates a higher Other score.

Pre-Trip Expectations of Frosh Group

Investigation into self-other differences in the freshmen's attitudes began with an analysis of the Pre-Trip expectations of the Frosh Group on the measures of anxiety, academic expectations and GPA. The reason for beginning here is twofold. First, these three measure were the only ones to display a self-enhancement bias. Secondly, self-other differences on these measures were not affected by the trip. The Frosh Group was the only group to be analyzed for Pre-Trip expectations because it was the largest group of the three and in the interest of keeping analyses to a minimum, I choose to do Pre-Trip expectation analyses on only one group.

Students participating in the Frosh Trip displayed a self-enhancement bias regarding anxiety, academic expectations, and GPA. On the anxiety measure, a paired samples t-test revealed a significant difference between self and other, with students reporting less anxiety (M=3.87) than the typical student (M=4.73), ($t(153)=4.88$, $p<.001$). Students also demonstrated a self-enhancement bias with reference to academic expectations as a paired t-test revealed a significant difference between self (M=5.79) and other (M=5.49), ($t(154)=4.19$, $p<.001$). A paired samples t-test for GPA scores revealed a significant difference between self and other, with individuals expecting a higher GPA (M=3.40) than the typical student (M=3.22), ($t(153)=3.37$, $p<.001$). These three analyses indicate that the Frosh Group expected to be less anxious, take academics more seriously and do better academically than the typical student.

On the measures that indicated a self-enhancement bias on the Pre-Trip Questionnaire, there were no changes in the self-other discrepancy as a result of the Frosh Trip. There were no statistical differences between the Pre-Trip self-other discrepancy and the Post-Trip self-other discrepancy for the Frosh Group on anxiety, academic expectations, and GPA. On the anxiety measure, after the trip the self-other discrepancy was greater (M=-.53) than before the trip (M=-.40), but this was only marginally significant, ($t(152)=1.82$, $p<.07$).

Furthermore, the increase in the self-other discrepancy was a result of the Post-Trip Self anxiety score (M=3.41) being significantly lower than the Pre-Trip Self anxiety score (M=3.86), ($t(153)=7.20$, $p<.001$). This analysis indicates that the Frosh Group felt less anxious after the trip than before. On the academic expectations measure, there were significant changes in both Self and Other scores, but there were no changes in the self-other discrepancy as a result of the trip. In other words, students reported that both themselves and the typical student were less serious about academics after the trip. A paired samples t-test for academic expectations revealed that Post-Trip Self scores (M=5.51) were significantly lower that Pre-Trip self scores (M=5.79), ($t(155)=6.94$, $p<.001$). Similarly, a paired samples t-test revealed that Post-Trip Other scores (M=5.13) were significantly lower than Pre-Trip Other scores (M=5.49), ($t(152)=6.54$, $p<.001$). These two analyses show that for the academic expectations measure, both the Self and Other scores decreased as a result of the trip which indicates a drop in the importance placed on academics.

Effect of Trip on Frosh Group

Upon preliminary analysis of the Pre and Post-Trip data, the only changes in self-other discrepancies as a result of the trip were found on the social fit and party scores. The Self, Other and self-other discrepancy scores for social fit are summarized in Table 1. A negative self-other discrepancy (e.g. Pre-Trip) on social fit indicates that participants think that other students are going to fit in better than they are. A positive self-other discrepancy (e.g., Post-Trip) on social fit indicates that participants believe they are going to fit in better than typical students. A repeated measures simple contrast revealed a significant difference between the Pre-Trip (M=-.09) and Post-Trip (M=.04) self-other discrepancies on social fit, ($F(1, 152)=6.52$, $p<.012$). Furthermore, students maintained this positive self-other discrepancy on social fit until the Follow-up in April; they did not revert back to the negative perception they had of themselves on the Pre-Trip. A marginally significant difference was found, ($F(1, 152)=3.49$, $p<.064$), with a repeated measures simple contrast between the Pre-Trip (M=-.09) and the Follow-up (M=.03) self-other discrepancies on social fit. Taken together, these analyses indicate that the trip caused the Frosh to feel better about how well they are going to fit in socially and that this positive perception maintained itself until April.

Interestingly, the Frosh Group's anxiety and social fit scores showed a high inverse correlation on Pre-Trip Self scores, Post-Trip Self scores, Pre-Trip self-other discrepancies and Post-Trip self-other discrepancies (Pre-Trip Self, $r(154)=-.37$, $p<.001$, two-tailed; Post-Trip Self, $r(154)=-.46$, $p<.001$, two-tailed; Pre-Trip Self – Other, $r(153)=-.43$, $p<.001$, two-tailed; and Post-Trip Self – Other, $r(154)=-.57$, $p<.001$, two-tailed). This analysis means that a student who reported high anxiety also reported low social fit, and vice versa. The analysis also indicates that anxiety and social fit were negatively correlated for all possible relevant conditions. Furthermore, there were no significant correlations between anxiety and academic expectation, GPA, or party scores. This analysis indicates that even though the Frosh reported less anxiety than the typical student, they were anxious about fitting in socially and that the drop in anxiety after the trip is correlated with a corresponding decrease in the self-other social fit discrepancy.

Table 1
Frosh Group's Ratings of Own and Typical Student's (Other) Social Fit

Measure	Self	Other	Self-Other Discrepancy
Frosh Pre-Trip			
M	5.09	5.18	-.09
SD	.79	.49	.80
Frosh Post-Trip			
M	5.17	5.13	.04
SD	.80	.53	.84
Frosh Follow-up			
M	5.06	5.03	.03
SD	.90	.62	.91

The party score also showed very high levels of self-other differences. Table 2 summarizes the Self, Other and the self-other discrepancy on party scores. The party score is the average of the two questions that were asked regarding partying (How many nights per week do you plan on going out, and How many nights per week do you plan on drinking?). A paired sample t-test revealed that students believed that they were going to party (M=1.75) significantly less than typical students (M=4.26), ($t(148)=25.68$, $p<.001$). This difference (M=-2.47) however, was significantly reduced as a result of the Trip (Post-Trip self-other discrepancy, M=-.68) as revealed by a paired samples t-test, ($t(142)=21.21$, $p<.001$). The magnitude of the Follow-up self-other

discrepancy (M=-.44) was also significantly less than the Pre-Trip (M=-2.51) as revealed by a paired samples t-test, ($t(148)=22.28$, $p<.001$). These two analyses indicate that the self-other discrepancy that students have when they arrive at Princeton regarding partying is reduced as a result of the Frosh Trip and that this effect is maintained until at least April.

Another interesting result is the cause of the decrease in the self-other discrepancy described above. A paired samples t-test revealed that the Post-Trip Other party score (M=2.48) was significantly less than the Pre-Trip Other score (M=4.26), ($t(149)=22.698$, $p<.001$). There was, however, no significant change in the Self score after the trip. This indicates that the self-other discrepancy was resolved by bringing the perception of the other in line with the individual's behavior, not by bring one's behavior in line with the perceived norm, as males in Prentice and Miller (1993) did.

Table 2
Frosh Group's Ratings of Own and Typical Student's (Other) Desire to Party

Measure	Self	Other	Self-Other Discrepancy
Frosh Pre-Trip			
M	1.75	4.26	-2.51
SD	.99	.77	1.16
Frosh Post-Trip			
M	1.82	2.48	-.66
SD	.90	.80	.95
Frosh Follow-up			
M	2.42	2.86	-.44
SD	.86	.54	.98

Frosh Group Compared to Control Groups

To see how well the Frosh Group had adapted to Princeton and what effect the Frosh Trip had on this process, analyses were performed on the social fit scores for all three groups at the Pre-Trip and Follow-up time periods. For social fit, a 2 (time: Pre, Follow-up) x 2 (target: Self, Other) x 3 (condition: Frosh, Wait-List, NPRO) multivariate analysis revealed a significant three-way interaction, ($F(2, 234)=3.51$, $p<.032$). A post-hoc contrast revealed that the Frosh Group differed significantly from the NPRO Group, $p<.01$, but not from the

Wait-List Group, p=.711. Further tests revealed that the Wait-List group differed significantly from the NPRO group, p<.068. These analyses indicate that there were differences between conditions from August to April, but because the Wait-List and Frosh Groups did not differ significantly, the major cause of these differences was self-selection and not the trip.

Examining Table 3 helps in understand these analyses but a further explanation is necessary. The fourth column of the table is the Pre-Trip self-other discrepancy minus the Follow-up self-other discrepancy. This score represents the change of the self-other discrepancy over time. A negative score on this measure indicates that the self-other discrepancy decreased over time, whereas a positive score indicates an increase in the self-other discrepancy. A hypothetical example will help clarify the situation.

The three characters in this scenario are Joe Frosh who went on the trip, Dave Wait-List who wanted to but didn't, and Kevin NPRO who had no desire to go on the Frosh Trip. In August, all three incoming Princeton freshmen think that they are not going to fit in as well as the typical student (Joe Frosh M=-.09, Dave Wait-List M=-.13, and Kevin NPRO M=-.50). In April, Joe Frosh thinks that he fits in better than the typical student (M=.04) so the change in his self-other discrepancy from August to April is negative (-.09 - .04 = -..05). Dave Wait-List thinks he fits in better (M=-.10), but still not as well as the typical student, so the change in his self-other discrepancy from August to April is slightly negative (-.13 – (-.10) = .03). Kevin NPRO thinks that he fits in *worse* in April (M=-.72) than he did in August so the change in his self-other discrepancy from August to April is positive (-.50 – (-.72) = .22).

Table 3
Self-Other Social Fit Differences by Condition

Measure	Pre-Trip Self-Other Discrepancy	Follow-up Self-Other Discrepancy	Pre-Trip Self-Other Discrepancy – Follow-up Self-Other Discrepancy
Frosh Group			
M	-.09	.04	-.13
SD	.80	.84	.83
Wait-List Group			
M	-.13	-.10	-.03
SD	1.17	1.18	1.00
NPRO Group			
M	-.50	-.72	.22

SD	.96	1.11	1.03

Analyses were performed on the party scores for all three groups at the Pre-Trip and Follow-up time periods to determine both how the Frosh Group's attitudes toward partying and drinking compare to the two control groups attitudes and what effect the Frosh Trip had on these attitudes. For party scores, a 2 (time: Pre, Follow-up) x 2 (target: Self, Other) x 3 (condition: Frosh, Wait-List, NPRO) multivariate analysis revealed a significant three-way interaction, ($F(2, 227)=76.04$, $p<.001$). Post-hoc simple contrasts revealed a significant difference between the Frosh and the Wait-List Groups, $p<.001$, and between the Frosh and the NPRO Groups, $p<.001$. There was no significant difference between the Wait-List and NPRO Groups. These analyses indicate that the Frosh Trip was responsible for the significant decrease in the self-other discrepancy experienced by the Frosh Group because the Frosh Group differed significantly from both the Wait-List and NPRO Groups. The fourth column of Table 4 provides the data that supports this statement. Not only does the Frosh Group have a large negative value (indicated a large reduction in the self-other discrepancy), but the Wait-List and NPRO Groups have slightly negative values (indicating a small reduction in the self-other discrepancy) that are not significantly different.

Table 4
Self-Other Desire to Party Differences by Condition

Measure	Pre-Trip Self-Other Discrepancy	Follow-up Self-Other Discrepancy	Pre-Trip Self-Other Discrepancy – Follow-up Self-Other Discrepancy
Frosh Group			
M	-2.51	-.44	-2.07
SD	1.16	.984	1.12
Wait-List Group			
M	-.28	-.18	-.10
SD	.94	1.40	.96
NPRO Group			
M	-.91	-.74	-.17
SD	1.27	1.32	1.13

As before with the social fit data, a hypothetical scenario will help in the understanding of Table 4. The three characters in this scenario will again be Joe Frosh who went on the trip, Dave Wait-List who wanted to go but didn't, and Kevin NPRO who didn't want to go on the Frosh Trip. In August, Joe Frosh (M=-2.51), Dave Wait-List (-.28), and Kevin NPRO (-.91) all think that other students are going to party more than they will. In April, Joe Frosh's gross misperception has been significantly decreased but he still think that others party more than he does (M=-.44), so the change in his self other discrepancy from August to April is a large negative value (-2.51 – (-.44) = -2.07). In Dave Wait-List's case, his August self-other discrepancy has also decreased (M=-.18, compared to M=-2.75 for the Pre-Trip), but he still thinks that others party more than he does. Therefore, the change in Dave's self-other discrepancy is a small negative value (-.28 – (-.18) = -.10). Kevin NPRO is similar to Joe in that his self-other discrepancy has decreased slightly from August to April (M=-.74), but he also thinks that he parties less than the typical student. Like Dave Wait-List, Kevin's change in his self-other discrepancy is slightly negative (-.91 – (-.74) = -.17) and no where near the change that Joe experienced. This analysis reveals that the Frosh Trip had a significant impact on the drinking attitudes of the Frosh by bringing them more in line with reality. Although the Wait-List and NPRO Groups also experienced a decrease in the self-other discrepancy regarding partying attitudes from August to April, this decrease was significantly less than the one experienced by the Frosh Group.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was twofold: to examine the expectations of incoming students, and to see the effect the OA Frosh Trip has on those expectations and how well freshmen adapt to Princeton. It was hypothesized that pluralistic ignorance would characterize the freshmen's expectations and eventual attitudes, so both of these investigations were done through examining self-other discrepancies.

Self-Enhancement Bias on Anxiety, Academic Expectations and GPA

It was hypothesized that the Frosh Group's expectations would demonstrate a self-enhancement bias on academic expectations and GPA, and pluralistic ignorance on the anxiety measure. In other words, I predicted that participants in the Frosh Group would expect to be more serious and do better academically than the typical student. I further hypothesized that the Frosh Trip would have no effect on the academic expectations and GPA measures. With regard to anxiety, I predicted that students in the Frosh Group would report higher levels of anxiety than the typical student. My hypotheses regarding academic expectations and GPA were supported by the data, whereas my predication concerning anxiety was not. In fact, participants exhibited a self-enhancement bias on anxiety as well.

The fact that student's reported a self-enhancement bias on anxiety was not expected and deserves some discussion. There are two possible explanation for this result: (1) students actually felt less anxious than the typical student, or (2) students felt more anxious but did not want to admit to it to promote a strong self-image. The first explanation seems unlikely for two reasons. First of all, pluralistic ignorance research indicates that a negative self-other discrepancy results in situations where individuals are not presenting themselves authentically, and the beginning weeks of college seem like a perfect example of this situation (see the scenario described at the end of the first section of the Introduction). The second reason why I am skeptical that students actually felt less anxious than the typical student is the high negative correlation between anxiety and social fit. Students were anxious about fitting in socially, and they also felt that other were going to fit in better than they, so why would they feel less anxious than others? I will speculate that students felt more anxious than the typical student but are afraid to admit it. Whether students are reporting honest opinions or self-enhancing strategies is an issue that confronts this type of research.

The fact that students reported a higher predicted GPA and more serious academic intentions than the average student is easier to explain than the anxiety results. Students who come to Princeton have excelled academically through out their lives. Achievement and success have come to define who they are as people, so it is not surprising that they would expect to continue this success at college. The strength of these attitudes

concerning academics is also the reason why there were no changes in self-other discrepancies as a result of the trip. There was a decrease in the self academic expectation score, but this was accompanied by a corresponding decrease in the other academic expectation score. It seems that students are willing to admit that they care less about academics after the Frosh Trip, but they also want to make it clear that everyone else also cares less about academics.

In summary, it would be interesting to see in future research whether the self-enhancement bias reported by freshmen on anxiety, academic expectations, and GPA are their honest attitudes or a self-presentation strategy.

Effect of the Frosh Trip

The Frosh Trip had a positive effect on the Frosh Group with regard to their anxiety, social fit and party scores and in their general adaptation to Princeton. As stated above, the self anxiety score decreased after the trip indicating that the trip is effective at alleviating some anxiety associated with coming to college. This decreasing anxiety could be a result of the change in social fit scores after the trip. Before going into the trip, the participants in the Frosh Group think that they are not going fit in as well as the typical student, but after the trip this measure is reversed and Frosh think that they are going to fit in better than the typical student. Even though the change in the self-other discrepancy is small, the significance is in the fact that discrepancy is negative before the trip and then positive afterwards. This is strong evidence that the Frosh Trip is effective in helping freshmen adapt to Princeton.

Further evidence that the Frosh Trip is effective in helping freshmen fit into Princeton social scene can be found in the change of party scores as a result of the trip. The Frosh Group comes to Princeton with a huge self-other discrepancy in regard to their attitudes towards partying and drinking. After the trip, this discrepancy is significantly reduced and the Post-Trip discrepancy level is maintained until April. What's even more interesting is that the large decrease in the self-other discrepancy is caused by a decrease in the perception of others and not an increase in the individual's behavior.

Prentice and Miller (1993) demonstrated that when males are confronted with a self-other discrepancy they will change their behavior to be in line with the perceived norm. If the norm is a level of drinking above what the individual is comfortable with (as the case is) than the individual will increase their amount of drinking to be more in line with the norm. The Frosh Trip, however, is causing the opposite to happen. Freshmen come into the Trip thinking that everyone else is going to party much more than they are. After the trip, they have acted to decrease this discrepancy, but not by moving their behavior in the direction of the norm. Instead, the Frosh Trip helps freshmen to realize that their misperceptions are wrong and to bring their perceptions of others more in line with their behavior. By bringing their perception of the typical student in line with their behavior, freshmen are correcting a norm that would have influenced them to drink more than they were comfortable with. In effect, the Frosh Trip is reducing alcohol use by correcting freshmen's misperception of the alcohol norm on campus.

The proposed mechanism responsible for the changes in the self-other discrepancy on social fit and party scores is the same, so it will be discussed jointly. The Frosh Trip is an environment where students are exposed to the concept of pluralistic ignorance. They may not know what it's called and the leaders have not been trained in exposing it, but through the natural course of a trip misperceived norms are corrected. Discussions on Frosh Trips have a wide variety, but it is almost certain that at some point the group will discuss people's anxiety about fitting into the social scene and alcohol use on campus. If students feel comfortable enough, they will let down their false exterior and voice their true opinions. As in Schroeder and Prentice (in press) the illusion of universality surrounding the misperceived norms will be broken, and freshmen will see that they are less different from the other freshmen than they originally thought.

Comparing the self-other discrepancies on party and social fit scores for all three groups at the Pre-Trip and Follow-up time periods allow for (a) the adaptation of the Frosh Group to be compared to that of the control groups, and (b) the Frosh Trip's influence on this adaptation to be investigated. The fact that the change in the self-other discrepancy on social fit from the Pre-Trip to the Follow-up for the Frosh and Wait-List Groups was not statistically different points to self-selection as the cause of the decrease in the self-other discrepancy on social fit. If these score had been different, then the trip could be labeled as the cause, but since the change in

both groups was statistically the same, this conclusion is invalid. There is evidence, however, that would allow one to speculate that the Frosh Trip did have an effect in changing social fit scores regardless of self-selection. The follow-up social fit score for the Frosh Group is positive, whereas, the Wait-List's social fit score is negative. This means that in April, the Frosh Group thinks that they fit in better than the typical student, whereas the Wait-List Group thinks they fit in worse than the typical student. Further and closer experimentation is required to show what effect the Frosh Trip has on changing social fit.

The Frosh Trip's effect on attitudes toward drinking is much clearer than its effect on social fit. The Frosh Group's change in self-other discrepancy from September to April, is both significantly different that the Wait-List and NPRO Groups and much more negative. A large negative score on this measure means that there was a large decrease in the self-other discrepancy from September to April. It should be noted that part of the reason that the Frosh Group has such a large decrease in their self-other discrepancy is because their initial expectations show a huge self-other discrepancy. This, however, doesn't discount the fact that the Frosh Trip brought the participant's perceptions more in line with reality; correcting for a gross misperception of the partying and drinking norm.

Recommendations for the Administration

The results of this study allow for three recommendations to be made to the Administration concerning alcohol use and fitting in socially. First of all, orientation programs, like the OA Frosh Trip, are beneficial for freshmen because they help to correct misperceived norms. I can't say whether the results found in this study are specific to the Frosh Trip or can be generalized to other pre-registration orientation programs (only further research can answer that question), but I can say that the Frosh Trip helps to correct for misperceptions about alcohol use on campus (to a large degree), and is speculated to reduce self-other discrepancies on social fit (to a small degree).

Secondly, students who do not participate in any pre-registration orientation program are at a high risk of not fitting in socially and misperceiving the drinking norm on campus. The NPRO Group entered Princeton with a large self-other discrepancy on social fit and this discrepancy had increased by April. This is worrying

because neither the Frosh Group nor the Wait-List group had in increase in the self-other discrepancy on social fit. The NPRO group not only thinks they are not going to fit in as well as the typical student in September, but by April they think they fit even less well. In party scores also, the NPRO Group had the largest self-other discrepancy in April. These results indicate that students who do not want to participate in pre-registration orientation programs have a high tendency to misperceive social norms. In this case, the misperception of the norms lead to a sense of not fitting in and a belief that their attitudes toward alcohol are deviant to a large degree. The mal-adaptation experienced by the NPRO Group would suggest that all freshmen should participate in some type of pre-registration orientation program in order to correct for any misperceptions of norms they may be experiencing.

The third recommendation that can be made to the Administration is that they need to find out where students are getting the information that leads to their erroneous expectations about alcohol use on campus. The Frosh Group expected typical students to go out and drink 4.26 nights per week. It is no wonder that there is a drinking problem at Princeton if half of the class (the number of freshmen who participate in the Frosh Trip) suffers from such a large misperception of the drinking norm. The University has to take a serious look at where incoming freshmen are getting the information that leads to the construction of this misperception because it is significantly contributing to the campus' drinking problem in a negative way.

In light of all the discussion about how to solve the alcohol problem on campus, one factor has been missing from the debate. Namely the social psychological influences that cause people to drink excessively. The University is trying to solve the problem by offering more options and handing out stiffer penalties for alcohol related offenses. These policies will be ineffective because students will simply continue to drink and accept whatever punishments are handed down. What needs to change is the culture of alcohol use on campus and that is only going to happen when pluralistic ignorance is exposed and understood by the students. To that affect, the OA Frosh Trip could be a wonderful tool to expose pluralistic ignorance and consequently reduce alcohol abuse.

Methodological and Design Improvements

There are a number of methodological and design improvements that would strengthen the results and conclusions of this study. The first improvement would be to shorten the Pre-Trip Questionnaire. Because I didn't know what measures would show significant or interesting results, I decided to include them all in the questionnaire. A replication of this study would only have to ask the few measures that one wanted to examine. For instance, if I were to replicate this study I would simply ask the social fit, party, and anxiety questions. A shortened Pre-Trip Questionnaire would increase participation and also make the data set less cumbersome.

Another improvement would be to have the Wait-List and NPRO Groups fill out a questionnaire when they arrive on campus so that they would have a measure at the Post-Trip time. This would allow for better conclusions to be drawn as to the effect of the trip. To make this data collection easier (remember that a major reason why the Wait-List and NPRO groups did not receive a Post-Trip Questionnaire was how busy the first week of classes is), the questionnaire could be posted on the Web, much like the Follow-up Questionnaire.

The Follow-up Questionnaire worked so well, that I would recommend putting as many of the questionnaires on the Web as possible. Having the questionnaires on the Web makes easier for the students to fill out and the experimenter to collect the data. In conjunction with this improvement, there should be more follow-ups and they should occur soon after the freshmen arrive at Princeton. I think it would be good idea to have the participants fill out a short questionnaire every couple of weeks so that you can chart their adaptation and their to Princeton. This would hopefully show that the Frosh Trip helps freshmen adapt quicker, something that could not be measured by my design.

The final improvement would be to train leaders in pluralistic ignorance and see the effects that this has on reducing students self-other discrepancies. This present study could serve as a control and be compared to a Frosh Trip where the leaders are trained to explain to students the characteristics and consequences of pluralistic ignorance. If the leaders were well trained and committed to the idea, the Frosh Trip could be turned into a five day group discussion on the misperception of norms! It would be very interesting to see the effect that the trip

described above would have on reducing self-other discrepancies considering the results attained by the present study

Conclusions

Two major conclusions can be drawn from this research. First of all, incoming students displayed self-other discrepancies regarding anxiety, academic expectations, GPA, social fit and desire to party. With regard to anxiety, academic expectations, and GPA, students displayed a self-enhancement bias rating themselves as less anxious, more serious academically and expecting a higher GPA than the typical student. On social fit and party measures, students displayed pluralistic ignorance expecting that they would not fit in as well and party less than the typical student.

The other conclusion that can be drawn from this research is that the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip helped in reducing the self-other discrepancy that participants were experiencing regarding their desire to party and drink. It is also speculated, but cannot be proven, that the Frosh Trip reduces the self-other discrepancy on social fit. Only future research will be able to determine the full effect of the Frosh Trip, on social fit and other measures not yet tested. I hope that this study will provide a strong foundation upon which future studies can be constructed that further examine the Frosh Trip's effect on Princeton freshmen.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Letter to Frosh (two-sided)

Appendix B – Consent form attached to front of Pre-Trip Questionnaire

Appendix C – Pre-Trip Questionnaire

Appendix D – Cover Letter for Post-Trip Questionnaire

Appendix E - Follow-Up Questionnaire (From Internet)

Appendix A – Letter to Frosh (two-sided)

August 7, 1998

Dear Member of the Class of 2002,

I first want to offer you my congratulations and welcome you to Princeton University. I hope that you are enjoying your summer and getting ready for the start of a truly exciting period in your life. The reason for this letter is that I am doing my senior thesis on Outdoor Action Frosh Trips. As a Psychology major and Outdoor Action Leader, I will be looking at the manner in which different Frosh Trip experiences affect how first-year students adapt and acclimate to life at Princeton.

This study is voluntary, but your participation would be greatly appreciated. It will involve completing the enclosed questionnaire, a similar questionnaire after the Frosh Trip, and several short follow-up questionnaires during the year. You may also be offered the opportunity to participate in a follow-up activity with your Frosh Trip, but this will not be a large time commitment and your participation will be voluntary. The enclosed questionnaire should take about 20 minutes to complete.

Your cooperation in filling out these questionnaires is greatly appreciated and I would love for you to participate. In fact, my goal is to have every first-year student on the trip participate in my study. Not only would your participation help me with my thesis, but you would also be helping Outdoor Action as well. From your responses, we hope to improve the Frosh Trip experience so that it will be more beneficial for all future participants.

If you are willing to participate, please sign the consent form, complete the enclosed questionnaire, and return them both in the envelope provided by **August 31**. On the backside of this letter you will find the standard participation acknowledgment form that every participant in a research study receives. If you have any questions, feel free to email me at wardwell@princeton.edu or give me a call at 609-258-3340.

It is important that you answer all of the questions honestly and to the best of your ability. All information will be kept confidential and the analyses will be based on group averages, never individuals. Your name will be matched up with an identification number and all data will be encoded according to that number, not your name. Only my advisor and I will have access to the list of names and corresponding identification numbers.

Again, I want to thank you for your participation and I look forward to seeing you in the fall. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Brian Wardwell

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY: Department of Psychology

1. **Title of Research**: The effects of the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip on first year students' adaptation to life at Princeton University

2. For answers to any questions you may have about this research, you may contact:

Brian Wardwell
213 Henry Hall
Princeton NJ 08544
609-258-3340
wardwell@princeton.edu

Professor Dale Miller
2-S-1C Green Hall
Department of Psychology
Princeton University
Princeton NJ 08544

3. For answers to any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject, you may contact:

Glenn Davis
Secretary, Institutional Review
Panel for Human Subjects
P.O. Box 36
Princeton University
Princeton, NJ 08544

(Phone) 609-258-3092

PLEASE KEEP THIS SHEET FOR YOUR RECORDS

Appendix B – Consent form attached to front of Pre-Trip Questionnaire

STANDARD ADULT CONSENT FORM

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW PANEL

TITLE OF STUDY: The effects of the Outdoor Action Frosh Trip on first-year students' adaptation to life at Princeton University.

INVESTIGATORS: Brian Wardwell Professor Dale Miller

The following informed consent is required by Princeton University for any person involved in a Univeristy-sponsored research study. This study has been approved by the University Institutional Review Panel for Human Subjects.

I hereby give my consent to be the subject of your research. You have given me:

A. An explanation of the procedures to be followed in the project, including an identification of those that are experimental.

B. Answers to inquires I have made.

I understand that:

A. My participation is voluntary, and I may withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the project at any time. My refusal to participate will not result in any penalty.

B. By signing this agreement, I do not waive any legal rights or release Princeton University, its agents, or you from liability for negligence

_____

Print your name

_____

Signature

_____

Date

MAKE SURE THAT THIS FORM IS NOT SEPARATED FROM THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THAT BOTH ARE RETURNED IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED

Appendix C – Pre-Trip Questionnaire

_____

The purpose of this questionnaire is to learn about how you feel, and how you think others feel. There are two major parts to this questionnaire: One asks about you, the other asks about how you perceive others. This parallel structure creates two sets of similar questions, but since they reference two different targets, your answers may vary considerably. Read each question carefully and answer all of them as best you

Social Security Number _____ - ____ - _____ Sex M F Race _____
Age _____

Please check the box next to the type of secondary school education you received

- ❑ Public high school
- ❑ Private day school
- ❑ Boarding school
- ❑ Home schooled
- ❑ Other _____

Were you accepted Early Decision at Princeton? Yes _____ No _____

Below are some reasons people give for participating in the Frosh Trip. Rate how well each one applies to you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Does not apply to me at all **Strongly applies to me**

_____ Chance to meet new people/friends
_____ Have fun
_____ Learn more about hiking/outdoors
_____ Recommended by upper-classmen
_____ Challenge myself physically
_____ Become more a part of Princeton
_____ Enjoy the outdoors
_____ Get more "settled" at Princeton
_____ Be able to talk with people who could relieve my anxiety about Princeton
_____ Parental/family encouragement
_____ Sense that I should go because over half of the class participates

Answer the following questions about your academic expectations.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not much **A great deal**

_____ How much importance do you place on studying?

_____ How much will you study?

_____ How much does your academic success depend upon how hard you study?

_____ How much importance do you place on grades?

On a 4.0 scale, with 0.0 representing an F and 4.0 representing an A, what do you think your first-year GPA will be? _____

Answer the following questions about your social expectations.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						**Extremely**

_____ How confident are you that you will "fit into" the Princeton social scene?

_____ How important is it to you that you fit into the social scene?

_____ How easily will you make friends during your first year at Princeton?

_____ How important is drinking to your social life?

_____ How comfortable do you think you will be with the amount of drinking on campus?

Answer the next two questions with a number between 0 and 7.

_____ How many nights per week do you expect to "go out" and party during your first year at Princeton?

_____ How many nights per week do you expect to drink at Princeton during your first year?

Answer the following questions about your identification with Princeton.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						**Extremely**

_____ How excited are you about starting the new school year?

_____ How much will your experiences at Princeton be tied to the experiences of your friends here?

_____ How similar do think you are to other Princeton students in terms of general attitudes and beliefs?

_____ How much do you like Princeton as a whole?

_____ How well do you think you will fit into life at Princeton?

_____ How important is Princeton to you?

_____ How much do you identify with Princeton?

_____ How strong are your ties to Princeton?

_____ How glad are you to be a student at Princeton?

_____ How much do you see yourself belonging to Princeton?

_____ How involved do you think will you be with Princeton after graduation?

_____ How much will your time spent at Princeton affect your life after graduation?

_____ How often do you predict you will return to Princeton for Reunions?

The following statements are concerns that students in general might have about going to college. Indicate how true each of these statements is of you.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all true of me Very true of me

_____ I often succeed on exams even though I fear failing them.

_____ I will be able to give the impression to fellow Princeton students that I am more competent than I really am.

_____ At Princeton, I will avoid evaluations if possible.

_____ When people praise me for my acceptance at Princeton, I worry that I won't live up to their expectations of me.

_____ I sometimes think that I got into Princeton because I happened to be in the right place at the right time or knew the right people.

_____ I am afraid that my friends, classmates, or professors at Princeton may find out that I'm not as capable as they think I am.

_____ I tend to remember the times in high school in which I did not do my best rather than times I did my best.

_____ In high school, I rarely did a project or task as well as I would have liked to have done it.

_____ Sometime I feel that my acceptance at Princeton was the result of some kind of error.

_____ I find it hard to accept compliments on my acceptance to Princeton.

_____ Even though I have been accepted at Princeton, I am disappointed in my accomplishments up to the present and think I could have done more in high school.

_____ Sometimes I am afraid that my peers will discover how much knowledge or ability I really lack.

_____ I am often afraid of how difficult exams at Princeton will be, even though I have done very well on exams up to this point in my life.

_____ I doubt that I will be able to repeat the success I enjoyed in high school at Princeton.

_____ Because I have received so much praise and recognition for being accepted at Princeton, I tend to discount the importance of that accomplishment.

_____ At times, I feel that my acceptance at Princeton was the result of some kind of luck.

_____ In high school, I often worried about not succeeding with a project or on an examination, even though others around me had considerable confidence that I would do well.

_____ If I am going to receive an award or recognition of some kind, I hesitate to tell others until it is an accomplished fact.

_____ I will be discouraged and disappointed if I do not show myself to be "the best" or at least "very special" at Princeton.

Rate how much each of the factors below contributed to your being accepted at Princeton.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
No contribution Very large contribution

_____ Grades
_____ Interview
_____ Essays
_____ Overall application
_____ Legacy status
_____ Extracurricular activities
_____ Luck
_____ Mistake at the admissions office
_____ Race
_____ Gender
_____ Proposed major
_____ Academic achievement
_____ Athletic achievement
_____ Social skills
_____ Academic ability
_____ Hard work in high school
_____ Standardized test scores

Presently, how do you feel about your upcoming first-year at Princeton?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all Extremely

_____ Anxious
_____ Comfortable
_____ Confident
_____ Worried
_____ Insecure
_____ Certain
_____ Well-adjusted

How do you feel about yourself on the following dimensions?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Low/Negative High/Positive

_____ Self-esteem
_____ Responsibility
_____ Respect for others
_____ Respect for self

_____ Caring

_____ Motivation

_____ Self-concept

_____ Self-worth

_____ Extroversion

This part of the questionnaire asks questions about how you perceive others. When we ask you about "**typical students**" we mean your conception of people of your own gender who will be members of your Princeton class. They don't have to be actual people. We realize that some of the questions will be difficult to answer because you haven't come into contact with many Princeton students, but we ask that you answer all of the questions as best you can.

Below are some reasons people give for participating in the Frosh Trip. Rate how well each one applies to typical students.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Does not apply to them at all **Strongly applies to them**

_____ Chance to meet new people/friends
_____ Have fun
_____ Learn more about hiking/outdoors
_____ Recommended by upper-classmen
_____ Challenge himself/herself physically
_____ Become more a part of Princeton
_____ Enjoy the outdoors
_____ Get more "settled" at Princeton
_____ Be able to talk with people who could relieve my anxiety about Princeton
_____ Parental/family encouragement
_____ Sense that they should go because over half the class participate

Answer the following questions about the typical students' academic expectations.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not much **A great deal**

_____ How much importance do typical students place on studying?
_____ How much will typical students study?
_____ How much does typical students' academic success depend upon how hard they study?
_____ How much importance do typical students place on grades?

On a 4.0 scale, with 0.0 representing an F and 4.0 representing an A, what do you think a typical student's first-year GPA will be? _____

Answer the following questions about typical students' social expectations.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						**Extremely**

_____ How confident are typical students of "fitting into" the Princeton social scene?

_____ How important is it to typical students to fit into the social scene?

_____ How easily will typical students make friends during their first year at Princeton?

_____ How much effort will typical students exert to fit into the Princeton social scene?

_____ How important is drinking to typical students' social life?

_____ How comfortable do you think typical students will be with the amount of drinking on campus?

Answer the next two questions with a number between 0 and 7.

_____ How many nights per week do you expect typical students will "go out" and party during their first year at Princeton?

_____ How many nights per week do you expect typical students to drink at Princeton during their first year?

Answer the following questions about typical students' identification with Princeton.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all						**Extremely**

_____ How excited are typical students about starting the new school year?

_____ How much will the experiences of typical students at Princeton be tied to the experiences of their friends?

_____ How well do you think typical students will fit into life at Princeton?

_____ How important is Princeton to typical students?

_____ How much do typical students identify with Princeton?

_____ How strong are the typical students' ties to Princeton?

_____ How glad are typical students to be students at Princeton?

_____ How much do you see typical students belonging to Princeton?

_____ How involved do you think typical students will be with Princeton after graduation?

_____ How much will the typical students' time spent at Princeton affect their life after graduation?

_____ How often do you predict typical students will return to Princeton for Reunions?

The following statements are concerns that students in general might have about going to college. Indicate how true each of these statements is of <u>typical students</u> at Princeton.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all true Very true

_____ Typical students often succeed on exams even though they fear failing them.

_____ Typical students will be able to give the impression to fellow Princeton students that they are more capable than they truly are.

_____ At Princeton, typical students will avoid evaluations if possible.

_____ Typical students are afraid that they will not be able to live up to the expectations that come with attending Princeton.

_____ Typical students sometimes think that they got into Princeton because they happened to be in the right place at the right time or knew the right people.

_____ A typical student is afraid that his or her friends, classmates, or professors at Princeton may find out that he or she is not as smart as they think he or she is.

_____ Typical students tend to remember the times in high school when they did not do their best rather than the times they did do their best.

_____ In high school, typical students rarely did a project or task as well as they would have liked to have done it.

_____ Sometimes typical students think that their acceptance at Princeton was the result of some kind of error.

_____ Typical students find it difficult to accept compliments about their acceptance at Princeton.

_____ Even though typical students have been accepted at Princeton, they are disappointed in their accomplishments up to the present and think that they could have done more in high school.

_____ Sometimes typical students are afraid that their classmates and professors at Princeton will discover how much knowledge or ability they really lack.

_____ Typical students are often afraid of how difficult exams at Princeton will be, even though they have done very well on exams up to this point in their lives.

_____ Typical students doubt that they will be able to repeat their success in high school at Princeton.

_____ Because typical students have received so much praise and recognition for being accepted at Princeton, they tend to discount the importance of that accomplishment.

_____ At times, typical students feel that their acceptance at Princeton was the result of some kind of luck.

_____ In high school, typical students often worried about not succeeding on a project or examination, even though others around them had considerable confidence that they would do well.

_____ If typical students are going to receive an award or recognition of some kind, they hesitate to tell others until it is an accomplished fact.

_____ Typical students will be discouraged and disappointed if they do not show themselves to be “the best” or at least “very special” at Princeton.

Rate how much each of the factors below contributed to <u>typical students'</u> being accepted at Princeton.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
No contribution Very large contribution

_____ Grades
_____ Interview
_____ Essays
_____ Overall application
_____ Legacy status
_____ Extracurricular activities
_____ Luck
_____ Mistake at the admissions office
_____ Race
_____ Gender
_____ Proposed major
_____ Academic achievement
_____ Athletic achievement
_____ Social skills
_____ Academic ability
_____ Hard work in high school
_____ Standardized test scores

Presently, how do typical students feel about their upcoming year at Princeton?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not at all Extremely

_____ Anxious
_____ Comfortable
_____ Confident

_____ Worried
_____ Insecure
_____ Certain
_____ Well-adjusted

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. We ask that you go back and make sure that you have answe
every question, and please, **don't forget to mail it back to us in the envelope provided by August 31**.

Because of Outdoor Action's desire to constantly improve their assessment tools, we would appreciate hear
comments or criticisms you have of this questionnaire. You can use the space below.

Again, thanks for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. We sincerely appreciate you participation

Appendix D – Cover Letter for Post-Trip Questionnaire

Dear Frosh Trip Participant,

Now that you are at the end of your Frosh Trip, please take this time to reflect on your experience. Think of the various feelings you had about Princeton before your Frosh Trip. How do you feel about Princeton now, after your Frosh Trip? What did you get out of this experience that you plan on taking back with you to Princeton? What kind of issues did you have to deal with on your Frosh Trip that you will also deal with at Princeton? In other words, how does the experience that you had for the past six days relate to your upcoming year at Princeton? Once you have thought about these questions for a few minutes, please take the time to complete this questionnaire.

Your name needs to go on this sheet so that your identification number can be matched to your questionnaire. Just like with the original questionnaire, your data will be encoded according to your identification number, not your name, and all analyses will be based on group averages, never individuals.

Again, thank you for your cooperation with this study and I wish you the best of luck during your first year at Princeton!

Sincerely,

Brian Wardwell

Your name (Please print)_____
First Last

Your trip _____

Appendix E - Follow-Up Questionnaire (From Internet)

Frosh Study

Conducted by Brian Wardwell and Professor Dale Miller

Welcome. This questionnaire is a follow-up to the surveys that you completed at the begining of the school year. Before we begin, we would like you to answer a couple of background questions about yourself. Your social security number is needed so that we can match the data from this questionnaire with the data from the earlier surveys. Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire and feel free to contact me if you wish to see the results.

If you are having difficulty viewing this page, make sure your browser window is opened to its maximum size.

Background questions

Social Security Number (with no dashes eg., 123456789)

Residential College

Answer the following questions about the social environment at Princeton.

Not at all ---------- Extremely

How well do you fit into the social scene at Princeton?

How important is it to you that you fit into the social scene?

How easy have you found it to make friends at Princeton?

How similar are you to other Princeton students in terms of general attitudes and beliefs?

How much do you identify with Princeton?

How strong are your ties to Princeton?

How much do you see yourself belonging to Princeton?

How involved will you be with Princeton after graduation?

How many nights per week do you go out?

How many nights per week do you drink?

Answer the following questions about how typical students perceive the social environment at Princeton.

Not at all ---------- Extremely

How well do typical students fit into the social scene at Princeton?

How important is it to typical students that they fit into the social scene?

How easy have typical students found it to make friends at Princeton?

How much do typical students identify with Princeton?

How strong are typical student's ties to Princeton?

How much do typical students see themselves belonging to Princeton?

How involved will typical students be with Princeton after graduation?

How many nights per week do typical students go out?

How many nights per week do typical students drink?

Comments can be sent to me at wardwell@princeton.edu