REPORT OF AN EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP AT THE COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC INCLUDING A RESEARCH REPORT ON STUDENT SATISFACTION WITH COUNSELLING SERVICES AS MEASURED BY THE STUDENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

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Report of an Educational Psychology Internship at The College of the North Atlantic Including a Research Report on Student Satisfaction with Counselling Services as Measured by The Student Satisfaction Survey

by

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ABSTRACT

This report describes various aspects of an educational psychology internship undertaken at the College of the North Atlantic from September to December of 1997 in St. John's, NF, Canada. Aspects include a statement of goals and objectives followed by a description of activities and personal reflections indicating how well these goals and objectives were met during the internship. The research component focussed on the degree of satisfaction that second year students experienced with Counselling Services. The findings suggest that overall students are satisfied with the present state of operations at the College. However, issues of increased awareness need to be addressed on a campus-wide basis. It was found in this sample that the demographic effects of gender, program type, and GPA did not show any statistically significant differences between users and non-users of Counselling Services. However, a significant difference was found between age categories and usage of Counselling Services, in that older students reported using aspects of Counselling Services more than younger students. Recommendations and suggestions for future research are provided. The Student Satisfaction Survey and 46 references are included.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for Internship

The Masters of Education (Educational Psychology) program at Memorial University of Newfoundland requires graduate students to complete either a thesis, internship, project, or paper folio as partial fulfilment of the degree. This candidate chose to pursue the internship route in order to gain an alternate perspective and counselling experience in a non-clinical post-secondary setting. Prior to the internship, the intern completed two clinically-oriented practicums at the Waterford Hospital within the St. John's Health Care Corporation. While at the Waterford Hospital, the intern worked primarily with adults displaying various types and degrees of psycho-pathology. These practicums provided professionally rewarding experiences in a mental health setting.

An Educational Psychology intern should seek out many diverse experiences in order to continue developing their counselling style, competence, and adaptability. The intern's chosen setting included both the Prince Phillip Drive and Engineering Technology Centre campuses of the College of the North Atlantic (formerly known as Cabot College of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education). At the College, the intern had an opportunity to work with a population with somewhat different concerns, issues, and needs.

The Internship Setting

The public college system in Newfoundland & Labrador has recently been reorganized and the 18 community colleges throughout Newfoundland & Labrador united under a new administrative structure and name. The name of the college is now the College of the North Atlantic and its headquarters are located in Stephenville. Individual campuses were categorized under a system of districts. District 7 is composed of Prince Philip Drive (PPD), Engineering & Technology Centre - Ridge Road (ETC), Seal Cove (SC), and Topsail Road (TRC). The College also offered a program in Textile Studies at the Anna Templeton Centre (ATC) campus. During the internship, the intern was associated, for the most part, with both the PPD and ETC campuses.

The College of the North Atlantic is probably best known throughout Newfoundland and Labrador as an educational institution offering a wide variety of programs. The array of courses is intended to reflect the needs of the student and the community at large. Typically, there are approximately 3000 full-time students from various age groups attending the College of the North Atlantic in Adult Basic Education (ABE), Industrial Trades, Engineering Technology, Medical Sciences, Business, Community and Applied Arts, and Continuing Education programs. Enrollment in the fall of 1997 was approximately 1200 students at the PPD campus and 1100 students at the ETC campus. An additional 500 students were enrolled at both Topsail Road and Seal Cove campuses combined.

The internship began in September, 1997 and continued for 12 weeks. Prior to the internship, field supervisors noted this period would be a very busy time for Counselling Services and suggested that this internship would provide the intern with a valuable field

experience.

Daily scheduling for the internship was determined primarily by office space availability and was organized in the following manner: Monday's and Wednesday's were devoted to the PPD campus, Tuesdays and Thursdays to the ETC campus. Friday's were set aside as dedicated research days. During the internship, the intern participated in activities aimed to broaden his knowledge base and provide opportunities to enhance counselling skills. Among other things, these activities included direct interactions with students and supervisors, extra readings of relevant literature, and preparing for and conducting Student Success Seminars for students interested in topics such as budgeting, test anxiety, stress management, time management, and study skills.

Faculty and Field Supervision

The intern was affiliated with the Division of Student Services at the College of the North Atlantic. Ongoing on-site supervision was provided by John Harnett, counsellor and registered psychologist, and Brenda Newhook, counsellor. Additional supervision and consultation with regards to the Woodcock Johnson - Revised Cognitive and Achievement batteries was provided by David Touchings, former Learning Disabilities Specialist at the college.

Drs. Norman Garlie and Dennis Sharpe acted as faculty co-supervisors to the intern. Two supervisors were chosen by the intern to supervise differing aspects of the internship. Both faculty supervisors were involved with their respective areas of expertise. Dr. Garlie provided ongoing supervision of counselling and Dr. Sharpe supervised the research component process.

Research Component

The intern was also required to complete a research project relevant to the internship setting. The intern chose to investigate the degree of satisfaction that second year students at the College of the North Atlantic have experienced with Counselling Services. This was directly related to the objectives outlined below, and allowed the intern to develop an increased understanding of what effective counselling services should be, and the extent to which the needs of students are being met. The area of student satisfaction is also essential to the college, and periodic formative evaluation is essential to maintaining a high level of student services. The College of the North Atlantic reports to have based its institutional mandate on certain assumptions regarding education. This includes the assumption "that learning is a life long process which is vital and necessary both as a personal and a social experience. This, by definition, requires that continuing education programs should be comprehensive in order to meet the needs of all individual persons and groups within the society". Secondly, the college assumes "that continuing education also has an obligation to assist in community development by offering programs of community education and service directed towards the goals of the community at large as these goals have been identified and assessed by the community" (College of the North Atlantic, 1997, p.3). Within the context of these broad assumptions, the College developed the following goals:

1) Promoting formal and informal adult learning in the regional community;

2) Providing individual and group counselling in the establishment and achieving of educational goals;

3) Receiving input from advisory and other committees to implement an ongoing process of educational needs definition; and

4) Offering full-time and part-time programs in academic, applied arts, vocational, technical, personal development and community service education in response to the educational needs of the community. (College of the North Atlantic, 1997, p. 3).

The research component describes an evaluation based on the second goal listed above. Another function of this research was to provide feedback to the counsellors and Student Services division in accordance with the third goal. This involved submitting the results of the research, as well as recommendations to the College of the North Atlantic upon completion of the report.

Internship Goals and Objectives

According to the Faculty of Education Graduate Student Handbook (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1996) the purpose of the internship is to provide opportunities for:

1. The development of personal and professional competencies for each intern based on his/her needs, previous experiences, and career plans;

2. Practical experiences that will bring into focus the theoretical component of the program;

3. Practical experiences that will enable the intern and the Faculty to evaluate the intern's professional and personal competencies;

4. The development of research and problem-solving skills appropriate to the needs of the intern and the setting, considering the nature of the placement and the intern's career goals; and,

5. Feedback to the Faculty which will serve to inform further program development (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1996, Appendix H, p.1).

Bearing this in mind, prior to the internship at the College of the North Atlantic, the intern developed an internship proposal which stipulated specific goals that were to be pursued. These goals were grouped under four main categories:

Counselling

1. To become familiar with the programs and services provided by the college;

2. To take an active role in counselling students in a post-secondary institution environment;

3. To explore and practice counselling skills, making refinements where necessary. This included becoming increasingly effective in addressing both personal and career counselling issues; and

4. To attend regular meetings with on-site supervisors on a weekly basis and with faculty supervisors at least three times during the internship to discuss progress and specific cases.

Psycho-Educational and Vocational Assessment

5. To administer and interpret a number of available assessment tools relevant to the setting which may include the use of intelligence tests, Career/Interest inventories, achievement batteries, and other diagnostic instruments.

Consultation

6. To develop collaborative relationships and consult where appropriate with instructors, co-ordinators, District Administrators, and Associate District Administrators concerning both student and faculty needs.

Development of Knowledge

7. To seek out, read, and apply additional literature/information when necessary to mutually benefit the college students and the intern;

8. To participate in any in-services, workshops, or professional development meetings that occur during the internship period; and

9. To examine, through research, the area of student satisfaction with specific aspects of Counselling Services, a Division of Student Services.

In the following chapter, and throughout the remainder of the report, the manner in which these goals were met are described.

CHAPTER II

COUNSELLING

This chapter provides a description of the internship activities experienced by the intern during a 12 week internship held at the College of the North Atlantic which began September, 1997.

The Counselling Process

At the College of the North Atlantic, the focus of Counselling Services was on short-term counselling for students with personal, career, and/or academic problems. This covered a wide variety of difficulties which students often encountered during their course of study. These difficulties ranged from requiring specific program information, to coping with anxiety, to obtaining additional academic help through the peer tutoring program, to discussing personal issues which were impeding academic pursuits.

Counselling sessions usually lasted about 60 minutes, depending upon the circumstances which each client presented. Some cases occasionally required sessions lasting up to two hours as well as multiple sessions during some weeks.

All counselling sessions were kept confidential within the limits indicated by the Canadian Psychological Association Ethics guidelines (Canadian Psychological Association, 1992). At the onset of counselling, it was made clear to each student that confidentiality may be breached in situations where child abuse, and/or potential harm to the student or others was suspected. It was also made clear to the client that a condition of the intern's counselling placement included weekly review of cases with supervisors and that confidentiality would be maintained at all times.

Counselling Experiences: Reflections on Case Studies & Salient Learnings

During the internship, the intern was able to work with many students, each demonstrating different needs. These divergent student needs translated into diverse experiences for the intern: Five case studies were created and reviewed internally with the intern's supervisors as part of the internship supervision process. The studies incorporated many student issues related, but not limited to, career counselling, academic counselling, psycho educational assessment, budgeting, self-esteem difficulties, assertiveness training, addictions counselling, and relationship problems. Some of these issues presented interesting challenges to the intern who then sought additional information and other resources to further assist students.

Upon reflection, the following observations were made:

- The client doesn't always readily disclose the true nature of their help seeking behavior until a certain level of rapport is established. Without this rapport and sense of security, the course of counselling can be abrupt and ineffective.

- Some clients may want the counsellor to "solve" all their problems without assuming any responsibility for change themselves. Many clients approach the counselling process with the idea that simply seeking help would "cure" their problems or that the counsellor would have "all the right answers" to their particular dilemma. They sometimes do not want to work on their issues, but would rather the counsellor and/or significant others to take responsibility for their issues.

- One has to accept that sometimes the client will decide not to deal with the issues and that this is their decision. This was difficult for the intern to accept at first because it was felt that perhaps there was more that could be done to help remove some of the client's hurtful feelings. However, upon further reflection, no one can force a client to take action if the client is not ready to take action themselves, including the counsellor.

- Knowledge of community-based twelve step support programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and Gamblers Anonymous, etc., are quite valuable to the counsellor in order to get a sense of the possible effects that addictions can have on a client's life. In general, members relate their personal negative experiences with addictions as well as their positive experiences with rehabilitation through the program. It can often be a truly moving emotional experience to observe the genuine acceptance and support espoused by the group as a whole. The intern gained some general insight into the nature of addictions counselling and the types of behavior typically presented by persons addicted to alcohol and other substances.

- A bibliotherapeutic approach can be effective and was often incorporated into counselling sessions. For example, Nathaniel Branden's (1992) The Power of Self-esteem is a fine resource for self-esteem work, particularly when discussing the concepts of self-efficacy and self- respect. The Relaxation & Stress Reduction

Workbook (Davis, Eshelman, & McKay, 1996) can be helpful when developing an assertiveness training program. Perhaps one of the most useful structured exercises for developing assertive behavior during the internship was the LADDER concept. This concept presents a sequence of steps to follow when acting assertively. Specifically, the LADDER process involves:

1) Looking at the clients rights, wants, needs, and feelings about a situation.

2) Arranging a time and place to discuss issues of contention which is convenient for both the client and relevant parties.

3) Defining the problem situation as specifically as possible

4) Describing the client's feelings so that the other party has a better understanding of how important an issue is to the client. This section included the use of "I messages" to express feelings clearly and assertively.

5) Expressing the client's request in one or two easy to understand sentences being firm and specific.

6) Reinforcing the other party to give you what you want by describing positive consequences of the action. (Davis, Eshelman, & McKay, 1996; p.198).

- An excellent resource for communication training is The 30 Minute Guide to Better Relationships (Barnett, 1995). It provides 20 concrete tips on how to enhance communication patterns in relationships. It highlights the importance of using "I statements", practicing active listening, and other techniques for improving interpersonal communication.

- One of the roles in which a counsellor may find themselves is that of consultant/mediator between two or more parties. The parties may include

government agencies such as the Department of Education, Social Services, school boards, parents, teachers, and students. It has been suggested in the literature that a number of factors are involved when providing effective consultation. These include counsellor qualities such as "friendliness, warmth, listening skills, empathy, openness and the qualities of being supportive, flexible, efficient, non-threatening, non-evaluative, understanding, and offering concrete suggestions" (Cole & Siegal, 1990, pp. 55-56). The intern had an opportunity to fulfill this role during the internship period.

DEVELOPMENT OF KNOWLEDGE

Conferences & Professional Development Workshops

The intern was very fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend the Provincial Student Services Conference held at Kildevil Conference Centre in Lomond, NF, and also take part in the Career Employability Services Professional Development workshop held in Gander, NF.

Provincial Student Services Conference

The Provincial Student Services Conference was hosted by campuses in the western districts and ran from October 15-17, 1997. The conference theme was "Exploring the Connections, Discovering the Value". This theme was woven throughout events and speeches, and particularly reiterated during Dr. Ron Sparkes' key note speech during the introductory session. Dr. Sparkes outlined ten specific guiding principles which demonstrated a strong commitment by the Board of Executives to the students and the college as a whole. The 10 principles suggested the need for a strong commitment to:

1. a student-centred college;
2. quality and relevance in programs and services offered to the students;
3. supporting and encouraging ongoing professional development for all personnel;
4. flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of staff and students;
5. participatory decision-making through team involvement;
6. change and innovation in terms of the process and the product offered by Student Services;
7. sharing accountability for an effective and efficient system;
8. meaningful partnerships on multiple levels. These include local, provincial, national, and international ties;
9. the socio-economic development of the community in terms of providing rural development initiatives; and
10. the institution as a whole.

Through the incorporation of these 10 guiding principles, Dr. Sparkes felt that the College of the North Atlantic would be in a better position to provide for the needs of the student and the community-at-large.

Dr. Sparkes then described the role of Student Services staff as being that of the "skilled helper" - with the essential elements for counsellors being able to establish a relationship, to understand others from their point of view and communicate this to them, and to help people develop new perspectives about themselves, their problems, and their opportunities.

This presentation and the conference overall strengthened the Intern's learnings in

the "skilled helper" role and provided an opportunity for networking and team-building within the college.

Collaborative Action Planning:

A College-Based Career/Employability Consultation Model

This professional development workshop was held in Gander November 17-21, 1997, and was co-presented by Mr. Brian Tobin, District #4 - College of the North Atlantic, and Dr. Phil Patsula of the University of Ottawa. Mr. Tobin recently conducted research in the area of career employability and made recommendations to the provincial College based on this research at this workshop.

College-based Collaborative Action Planning (CAP) describes the process used in providing initial and ongoing career and employability consulting services to the student from the time prior to enrolment in a particular program to post graduation from a program. The needs of the student can vary at these points along the student's academic career. CAP tasks are arranged in the following phases: identifying and clarifying career and employability issues; and establishing an action plan. Using this "Skilled Helper" approach similar to Egan's (1994), CAP was designed to involve students and consultants to focus on:

1. Personal and environmental issues that are helping and/or hindering students from choosing, getting, and progressing in College programs and/or employment opportunities.

2. The formulation of a realistic action plan, taking into account the resources available to the student, both personal and environmental, through which the student is able to assume greater responsibility for action which leads to increased self-sufficiency with respect to his or her academic pursuits, employability and consequent employment (Patsula & Tobin, 1997; p.ii).

One of the primary outcomes of the workshop was the goal to develop & implement individual Career Employability Centres (CEC) at campuses throughout the province. This task was started towards the end of the internship placement, and the intern had the opportunity to act as a contributing team member for District 7, attending weekly and/or bi-weekly CEC Development Committee meetings. The focus of the team meetings was on some of the logistics involved in the creation and maintenance of the centre.

Student Success Seminars '97

Student Success Seminars were offered this year that focussed on several areas that have, in the past, presented students with difficulties in achieving their academic potential. These areas included issues with budgeting, study skills, exam preparation, stress management, time management, and test anxiety. Seminars were offered at both the Ridge Road and Prince Phillip drive campuses, and lasted approximately 50 - 60 minutes. These seminars were scheduled at times when it was anticipated that most students could attend. They were delivered throughout the term by staff counsellors as well as the intern. A schedule of seminar times was posted well in advance and advertised in both locations. However, attendance at the seminar series was poor overall despite careful planning and preparation. It was later discovered that the scheduling of these seminars was in fact problematic for many students. Those who were interested in attending may not have been able to do so because of a work term placement or a conflict with their class schedule. Scheduling was made difficult because programs varied with respect to their slotted in-class periods, even though the selection of seminar times fluctuated in order to accommodate the

most students. These seminars usually occurred near or during lunch break, and therefore may have conflicted with student council meetings, intramural sports, or extra lab time. The fact that lunch break was one of the few chances to relax during the day possibly made it difficult to attract large numbers of students. It is anticipated that these factors should be taken into consideration in future offerings in order to maximize the opportunities for student attendance (and benefit). On a positive note, feedback received from students who did attend was generally favourable.

Review of Internship Objectives

Objectives for the internship were met in the manner described below.

Counselling

1. **To become familiar with the programs and services provided by the college.**

This objective was accomplished during the first few weeks of the internship by means of comprehensive orientations provided by Ms. Newhook and Mr. Harnett, and by daily experiential learning through interaction with both students and faculty. Often during that initial period there were instances where the intern did not know the answers immediately when attempting to respond to student inquiries. The process would then involve jotting down telephone numbers and getting back to them, with the appropriate response, shortly after consultation with either Ms. Newhook or Mr. Harnett. Much knowledge was gained regarding the general structure of the various programs and the college as a whole. A knowledge of, and positive working relationship with, the District Administrators, Associate District Administrators, program co-ordinators, and instructors were absolutely necessary for

the implementation of the Student Satisfaction Survey utilized for the research component of the internship.

2. **To take an active role in counselling students in a post-secondary institution environment and;**

3. **To explore and practice counselling skills, making refinements where necessary. This included becoming increasingly effective in addressing both personal and career counselling issues.**

These two objectives were obviously fundamental to the counselling internship experience. Objective three is ongoing, and in a sense, could never truly be attained within a three month internship. It is the intern's belief that a practising psychologist/counsellor assumes a commitment to lifelong learning and is therefore constantly refining skills and developing a personal style of counselling. This belief aside, the intern was successful in working with various students during the internship and was able to make some improvements with regards to counselling approaches and further learning. The intern became more consciously aware of allowing the client to set the pace through the counselling process. Often, the intern found himself wanting to jump right into the problem solving component instead of waiting for the client to be at that point as well. Furthermore, perhaps the most difficult lesson to learn concerned being able to recognize the impact of the student's motivational level in addressing their presenting complaint. Often mere lip service is not sufficient to initiate lasting change, as this requires strong commitment and action. The intern wanted to believe that students wished to change their maladaptive behaviors however, some students may not have sufficient motivation to completely commit to change.

Another useful approach that the intern applied with several cases was the bibliotherapeutic approach. Bibliotherapy is closely related to the psycho-educational approach and allows the student to actively take more responsibility for their therapeutic goals. This way the student feels that they are doing something, which tends to increase motivational levels in some students. Again, I found that the more motivated a person became, the more successful they would be in achieving set therapeutic goals.

4. **Attend regular meetings with on-site supervisors on a weekly basis and with faculty supervisors at least three times during the internship to discuss progress and specific cases.**

Meetings were arranged and attended in accordance with agreements with both faculty and on-site supervisors. These meetings were very important in addressing any concerns dealing with the Intern's caseload, and for providing feedback on the direction and development of the Student Satisfaction Survey. The intern feels grateful to each individual who was able to work with him as each consultant was able to present slightly differing views of a specific case, thereby allowing the intern to consider viewpoints that may have been different from his own.

Psycho-educational and Vocational Assessment

5. **To administer and interpret a number of available assessment tools relevant to the setting which may include the use of intelligence tests, Career/Interest inventories, achievement batteries, and other diagnostic instruments.**

This objective was met in part during the internship through supervision, administration, scoring, interpretation, and resultant recommendations of the Canadian Adult

Achievement Test (CAAT). The CAAT is an assessment tool which is used to assess levels of adult achievement in students who are applying to the college as a Mature Student. According to the Mature Student policy, mature students are those applicants who do not meet the educational pre-requisites for the program they wish to enter, are at least 19 years of age, and have been out of high school for at least one year. It was recommended that all mature student applicants write the CAAT. Feedback on the student's performance was intended to provide the student with an indication of the likelihood of successful completion of his/her chosen program. It also provided counsellors with an objective basis on which to recommend program choices to the mature student.

There were a number of students that were interested in exploring their career interests and abilities. For these students, the Self Directed Search (SDS) was used as well as CHOICES 98. The SDS attempts to classify the student's area(s) of interest and match them with a number of relevant occupations. Another interest inventory frequently used was IDEAS which like the SDS, is a paper and pencil interest inventory incorporating Holland's occupational groupings. CHOICES 98 is a computerized program that contains an interest inventory as well as up-to-date educational requirements for occupations. Each occupation is cross-referenced with a list of colleges/universities/institutions that offer programs to attain such educational requirements and skills. During the term, the intern attended a CHOICES 98 in-service. The format of this program is very simple to use and the intern noted that most students were able to learn how to navigate within the program fairly quickly. Another interesting aspect of the program was that the student could compare two occupations and print a comparison report listing pertinent information such as job title, salary, and

educational requirements.

The intern met with David Touchings, Learning Disabilities Specialist for an overview of the psychometric qualities of the Woodcock Johnson - Revised, since this particular assessment tool had not been specifically addressed in formal studies. It was noted that there were many similarities between the Woodcock Johnson Cognitive Abilities section and the WAIS-R; as well as similarities between the Woodcock Johnson Achievement section and the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT) and the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (KTEA).

Consultation

6. **To develop collaborative relationships and consult where appropriate with instructors, co-ordinators, District Administrators, and Associate District Administrators concerning both student and faculty needs.**

This objective was met in a number of ways. During the development of the Student Satisfaction Survey, a number of faculty members were asked for their input as to what should be included in a survey. Also, through College conferences and professional development workshops, a true sense of teamwork was developed. It was further exemplified by group work in the creation of policies regarding standardized assessments for use in the College, as well as during the planning of the Career Employability Centre initiatives as a direct extension of the Employability Skills Professional Development sessions held in Gander.

Development of Knowledge

7. **To seek out, read, and apply additional literature/information when necessary to mutually benefit both the college students and the intern.**

This objective, like Objective 3, is one that is constantly being revisited and added to. For example, during preparation of the Student Success Seminar on Test Anxiety the intern consulted many sources of information. Another valuable self-esteem resource is McKay & Fanning's (1987) Self Esteem text. Literature aimed at helping the counsellor better understand the nature of addictions include the Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) literature and The Addictions Workbook (Fanning & O'Neill, 1996). With respect to career counselling, the intern frequently turned to the Occupational Monographs, National Occupation Centre (NOC) listings, and Job Futures series to help students find the information they required.

8. **To participate in any in-services, workshops, or professional development meetings that may occur during the internship period.**

This objective was met through participation in the various in-services (CHOICES 98), conferences (Provincial Student Services Conference held in Lomond, NF), and professional development workshops (Employability Skills Professional Development workshop held in Gander).

9. **To examine, through research, the area of student satisfaction with specific attributes of Counselling Services, a Division of Student Services.**

This final objective was met though the development, administration, and interpretation of the Student Satisfaction Survey. The intern wanted to develop an instrument that would help assess students' satisfaction with aspects of Counselling Services from the perspective of the

student while incorporating salient learnings from the Masters of Education (Educational Psychology) program and other essential standards applicable to counsellors working in a post-secondary institution.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH COMPONENT

Statement of Purpose

An additional requirement of the internship in Educational Psychology involved conducting a research study related to the intern's activities at the chosen setting. The intern was directly involved in delivering counselling services to students at the College of the North Atlantic. Therefore, the intern decided in collaboration with the college, to develop the Student Satisfaction Survey to evaluate the degree of satisfaction that second year students at the College of the North Atlantic have with Counselling Services.

Significance of the Study

A study of this nature is significant to both the intern and the College of the North Atlantic. In conducting this research, the intern was able to collect students' perceptions of Counselling Services and the counselling process. The development of the survey instrument itself was a valuable learning experience in that it provided an opportunity to examine counsellor qualities and the counselling process from the student's perspective.

The art of counselling can be found in the interaction between counsellor and the student. The results of the survey aimed to provide the college with a view to the student's perspective of this interaction, as well as perceptions of other aspects of Counselling Services. Feedback of this type is very important for the continuous evaluation of services provided by the college. This survey was designed to help further develop an accurate picture of how the needs and characteristics of students are related to the services provided

by Counselling Services.

With further revision, the survey could be used to evaluate counselling centres at other post-secondary institutions. This could become the focus of future follow-up studies involving the use of this survey instrument.

Literature Review

Assessing Counselling Services

Researchers have pointed out that assessing counselling services in any organization is a difficult process (McLeod, 1992; Robertson & MacDonald, 1995). Indeed, McLeod wrote that "counselling is an activity in which, almost uniquely, the quality of work and the outcome of effort is largely hidden from external scrutiny and affirmation" (McLeod,1992; p.359).

Evaluation of counselling may be further complicated by the fact that many counsellors themselves have different points of view as to what counselling *is* and how they *do* it. For example, some counsellors may hold one particular theoretical orientation such as 'pure' behaviorism, while others may choose to be theoretically eclectic in their professional roles as counsellors and psychologists. It is important when surveying students about counselling services not to dwell on the distinctions between the underlying theoretical schools, but rather to investigate some of the basic essential qualities and universal techniques that effective counsellors should possess and employ, regardless of theoretical orientation. To help delineate these qualities, as well as the counselling process, a number of sources including Egan's (1994) The Skilled Helper, Amundson's (1995) career

counselling model, and Robertson & MacDonald's assessment approach which uses the Statement of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Counselling Services within the College of Applied Arts and Technology (Ontario College Counsellors, 1984) were reviewed.

Egan (1994) proposed "the Skilled Helper" model which consists of three main stages: (1) reviewing the problem situation and unused opportunities; (2) developing the preferred scenario; and (3) determining how to get there. Stage One involves listening and attending skills which enable the client to describe their situation, identifying and challenging inconsistencies, and prioritizing presented difficulties. It further emphasizes the importance of the client working on their presenting difficulties both during and between sessions. Egan noted that the counsellor should "help the client tell their story as clearly as possible" (p.25); "help the client discover and deal with the kinds of blind spots that keep them from seeing problems and opportunities clearly and moving ahead" (p. 26); and "help the client identify and work on problems, issues, concerns, or opportunities that will make a difference in their lives" (p. 26). Stage Two deals with planning for preferred outcomes. Egan suggested that the counsellor's main role at this point is to "help clients develop a range of possibilities for the future" (p. 30). Next, the counsellor would help the client to "choose realistic possibilities and turn them into viable goals" (p. 32). Once these goals were decided upon, the counsellor would help the client decide whether or not they were willing to commit to change. If the client was not truly committed to change, then very little change, if any at all, might occur. In Stage Three, the counsellor and client work together and brainstorm the best ways to arrive at the desired outcome. The counsellor would help to develop a list of strategies and resources that would enable the client to reach their goal(s). The final step

would be to help the client develop these strategies into a concrete, step-by-step plan and then follow it.

A skilled helper should possess both basic and advanced communication skills. The counsellor should be able to establish working relationships with clients and help clients challenge themselves. Also needed are counselling skills in problem clarification, goal setting, development of an action plan, and ongoing evaluation of the helping process. Furthermore, the competent counsellor shows respect for the client, is genuine, and enables the client to enhance their self-responsibility (Egan, 1994).

Using a similar approach, Amundson (1993; 1995) developed a four phase model for use in employment counselling which took into consideration psychological, social, and economic factors. In Phase One, the working alliance is developed and established. Amundson (1993) noted that "counsellors need to create a mattering climate where the client feels acknowledged, respected, and valued" (p. 146). Amundson describes "mattering" as involving not only positive interpersonal interactions but also providing a physical environment which helps to establish rapport and protect the client's privacy. During this phase, Amundson suggested that the client's expectations and needs should be addressed before progressing to the next phase. Any misconceptions about the nature of employment counselling should be addressed initially, and an assessment of readiness completed. The focus of Phase Two is aimed at career exploration and assessment on both the personal and external levels. On the personal level, elements such as the student's interests, values, skills, strengths & limitations, and style were explored to help the student discover more about themselves through qualitative and quantitative assessments. External factors such as past

work/leisure experiences, educational background, and labour market options are also assessed. Amundson suggested that the search for employment relies heavily on an interaction between these two levels. In Phase Three, the data is collected and evaluated to see how viable certain options are. Often, because of the variability between people's individual interests and job opportunities, compromises are necessary. In order to make such compromises, counselling may then involve challenging commonly held myths about careers such as "once you make a career choice you are committed for life" or "if you choose correctly you will be guaranteed a successful future". The final phase of commitment, action planning, and follow through simply involves the setting of attainable goals, developing action plans, and acting on them.

Like Egan, Amundson (1993) stated that effective counsellors help guide clients through the phases through the use of good communication skills and structured exercises. He identified the following communication skills as being helpful in this process: paraphrasing, clarifying, empathy, information giving, open ended questioning and summarizing, reframing, constructive critical reflection, immediacy, self disclosure, advanced and accurate empathy, supporting, limiting, and confrontation. Some examples of these structured exercises would include role playing situations such as the job interview, as well as presentation and debate of possible solutions.

Robertson & MacDonald's (1995) approach to assessment utilizes team evaluation efforts along with individual self-evaluative activities. Their program Assessment Guidelines: Reviewing and Renewing Counselling Services is a four phase model which emphasizes proactive planning. It was developed in part with the Ontario College

Counsellors (OCC) and the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario under a grant from the Counselling Foundation of Canada. Throughout the four phases, the individual counsellor and the counselling unit have many opportunities to explore and assess areas of strengths and weaknesses. Areas for evaluation were based primarily on 14 core competencies as set forth in the Statement of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Counselling Services within the College of Applied Arts and Technology (Ontario College Counsellors, 1984). Robertson & MacDonald noted that the OCC have defined competencies "...not as aspects of a given job, but as special characteristics and skills of the people who do the job best" (p. 41). The authors caution that the list of competencies was not "exhaustive" nor "sufficient... but rather identified those salient competencies upon which all counsellors are prone to agree" (p.41). In fact, the list is very similar to those competencies outlined above by Egan (1994). Clearly these models have similarities both in terms of the process and the types of competencies necessary to bring about positive counselling outcomes. A closer look at these competencies is presented in the following section and should be applicable to colleges in general.

Statement of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Counselling Services within the College of Applied Arts and Technology

The Statement reports the following core competencies:

1. Effective communication skills in interpersonal relationships.
2. The ability to perceive accurately and articulate clearly the client's needs.

3. An understanding of, and an ability to use effectively, a variety of recognized counselling approaches.

4. The ability to assist clients to mobilize their own resources to effect the meeting of client needs.

5. The ability to engage clients in those processes which will most appropriately assist in meeting client needs. Such processes may include: individual counselling, group experiences, structured classes.

6. An awareness of their own strengths and limitations and the arranging of appropriate referrals based on this awareness.

7. A knowledge of appropriate resources within and outside of the college community and the use of appropriate methods and procedures when making referrals.

8. The ability to facilitate the development of those values, attitudes, and skills most conducive to self-directed problem-solving.

9. The ability to consult effectively with other persons within the counselling unit and other individuals, groups and organizations within and outside the college.

10. The ability to assess and to acquire those resources as may be necessary to implement delivery modes appropriate to counselling and counselling-related activity.

11. The ability to assist in the identification of the changing needs of the client population, toward the planning and implementation of those delivery modes most suited to such needs.

12. The ability to assess critically and to acquire those values, attitudes and skills necessary for effective delivery of counselling and counselling-related programs.

13. The ability to recognize those activities and programs which fall within their own capabilities and the ability to recognize those which fall outside of such capabilities and to take action consistent with such conclusions.

14. The ability to apply those principles and practices associated with learning and effective teaching. (p. 43)

These 14 statements describe fundamental skills which counsellors working in a post-secondary setting should hold. They range from developing specific interpersonal counselling skills, to identifying needs of changing student populations, to the ability to critically reflect on one's counselling abilities to ensure that the counselling needs of the students are always being met.

Earlier Counselling Services Research

Redovich (1982) surveyed the student population at the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) with regards to their opinions on many aspects of the college services and programs, including counselling services. Redovich's survey was developed through recommendations of staff members from all divisions of the college. It consisted of 14 background information items and 31 evaluation items directed at the functions, services, and facilities of the district. Of the 30 evaluation items in this study, only one was directly related to counselling. It read as follows: "The services provided by the Counsellors (assistance in choosing a major, career planning, resolving personal problems, etc) at MATC are ..." (Redovich, 1982; Appendix A, p. 21). Unfortunately, the four point scale used (excellent to terrible) was too vague to provide other than a cursory perspective of counselling services. Redovich concluded that each individual department should further analyse relevant responses and "incorporate the results of this analysis into the continuous planning efforts of their division" (p.17). He noted that "through this analysis, together

with planning and resultant improvement-oriented activities, it is anticipated that the areas of strength will be maintained and that the limitations indicated by the surveys responses will be addressed" (p.17).

Dennis-Rounds (1980) surveyed a number of undergraduate students and students who had successfully completed their program of study. He was interested in issues dealing with quality of instruction, quality of financial aid guidance, tutoring services, academic guidance, and placement office guidance. It was found that over half of the undergraduates were unaware of, or had never used, any of the guidance services (except for academic guidance). Between 40 % and 50% of graduates did not know guidance services well enough to comment about the quality of such services.

Waddell & Hunt (1982) conducted an eight part needs assessment of the Cochise County Community College District, Arizona, to determine the post-secondary needs of the county. The population surveyed included high school students, business people, the general population, as well as students and faculty of the College. The broad-based sample was necessary in this case to determine how the college could better serve, not just the students, but the community as well. Survey questions varied between the groups, but most contained forced-choice questions plus a few open ended questions. School services, including counselling services, were ranked by students along a four point scale from important to unimportant. Interestingly, only 22.7% of the students (n = 128) considered personal counselling important. As well, students were asked to rate the quality of a number of college services including counselling services. However, specific aspects of the counselling services were not assessed, only the overall quality. About 70% of the 128 Cochise College

students surveyed responded "don't know" to the quality of counselling services, reflecting a high percentage of students who likely had not used the services or were not aware they existed.

The Need for Further Evaluation

Throughout education, a common theme of continual change can be found, especially with respect to student characteristics and their needs as well as the ability of the institution to provide sufficient resources and services to best serve the students and their changing needs. One of the basic tenets underlying the Counselling Services division at the College of the North Atlantic is that students can go there and receive confidential help with concerns that are interfering with their personal well being and/or academic performance. Concerns may include social, personal, academic, financial or career issues, coping with daily pressures of college life, or ways to improve study habits. The dynamic nature of counselling services suggests that periodic review and modifications are necessary for continued effectiveness.

The Canadian Labour Force Development board conducted a survey of career and employment counselling in schools, colleges, universities, community agencies, and the Canada Employment Centres (CEC) across Canada (Kellett, 1994). The authors found that little evaluation of counselling programs occurred there and even when evaluation was conducted, a standardized evaluation format was lacking. They concluded that studies must be developed to assess new methods for the evaluation of counselling.

Similarly, Hiebert & Conger, (1995) as well as Conger, Hiebert, & Farrell, (1993) also found that there is a strong need for evaluation in all aspects of career counselling. In

their 1995 study, up to 40 % of counsellors reported doing no evaluation of their work with clients. When evaluation was done, it tended to be with the client in the session, presumably by asking the client if the session was useful. Virtually no assessment was made of the impact of counselling on the client's presenting problem. The authors found that counselling programs were rarely evaluated for the purposes of improvement, and when such evaluation was done, the clients were not usually consulted in the process.

> Career counsellors continually evaluate their work; they draw conclusions and develop action plans based on numerous activities: homework completion; client engagement; acquisition of interview skills or relaxation skills; numbers of employers contacted, and so forth. Both counsellors and clients typically know when counselling is successful. Unfortunately, the evidence used to gauge success often is not considered evaluation, is not documented, and therefore cannot be used to back up claims that counselling has been successful (Hiebert & Conger, 1995; p.89).

Process

Despite a general lack of research in the assessment and evaluation of counselling, some researchers are examining the link between counselling processes and outcomes in order to help determine what constitutes an effective counselling session. For example, Cummings, Barak, and Hallberg (1995) conducted research on short term counselling by comparing session helpfulness to the outcome evaluation of the session. Their goal was to identify the variables specific to the session that were related to positive client outcome. Cummings, Barak, and Hallberg (1995) used a Helpfulness Rating Scale (Hill, O'Grady, Balenger, Busse, Falk, Hill, Rios, & Taffe, 1994), as well as the Session Evaluation Questionnaire (SEQ Form 4; Stiles & Snow, 1984, cited in Cummings et al., 1995). These scales were completed after a session by both the counsellor and the client. The scales were

reported to measure the participant's perceptions, feelings, beliefs, and attributes about the effectiveness of counselling from both the client's and counsellor's point of view. It was found that clients rated sessions of greater "depth" as being more helpful. It was also found that clients who felt happy and good about themselves after the sessions tended to rate the sessions as being helpful. Hill et. al. (1994) suggested that perceived helpfulness can be a useful measure of session outcome because if clients find sessions helpful, they are more likely to be involved in the "therapeutic change process", and an outcome reflecting positive change would also be more likely.

Kirschner, Hoffman and Hill (1994) investigated the counsellor-client interaction by evaluating the impact of seven sessions of career counselling with a 43 year old, career dissatisfied, speech therapist. Prior to counselling, career goals and attitudes about expected outcomes of the career-exploration process were measured. During counselling, assessments of the counsellor's intentions and the client's reactions to therapy were conducted using a questionnaire. A post-counselling assessment was conducted and follow-up assessments were carried out 18 months and 5 years later. They found that when the counsellor focussed more on "feelings, insight, challenges, and the reinforcement of change, the client experienced a corresponding increase in self-understanding, hopefulness, assumption of responsibility, and attainment of new perspectives " (Kirschner, Hoffman and Hill, 1994; p.218). The authors suggested that the counselling relationship itself was crucial to the client's successful experience.

Flynn (1994) noted that when evaluation on career and employment counselling is carried out, it has focussed on methods and outcomes rather than on counsellor-client

interactions. Further knowledge regarding the interaction and process of counselling is necessary in order to evaluate its effectiveness. Therefore, one of the goals of the Student Satisfaction Survey in the present study was to attempt to identify and evaluate selected aspects of the counselling process as well as those specific counsellor skills fundamental to an interactive counselling experience.

Awareness

Some literature has reported that the majority of students are not aware of counselling services (Cook, Park, Williams, Webb, Nicholson, Schneider & Eassman, 1984; Henggeler, Harbin & Sallis, 1982; McGrath, 1995). McGrath (1995) suggested that "it's very likely that a person's lack of awareness of professional help sources is a result of their belief that personal problems can be dealt with using a number of alternative help sources" (p.17).

However, in an earlier study by Lewicki & Thompson, (1982, cited in McGrath, 1995), 90% of their sample reported an awareness of the college's student services of guidance, counselling, and testing, but only 47% of this sample used those services. Other studies have suggested greater use of counsellor services. For example, Sworder (1992) conducted a general survey to assess the effort that students put into using existing college facilities. His research also included the extent of student participation in college activities and the quality of the college environment. The survey consisted solely of forced response "yes/no" questions. With respect to counselling services, 70% of 490 respondents indicated that they had consulted a counsellor about courses to take, course pre-requisites and other requirements, as well as about education plans in general. Fifty-five percent said that they

had discussed vocational interests, abilities and ambitions with a counsellor, while 32% indicated they had talked to a counsellor about personal matters related to their college performance. These findings imply that awareness does not always guarantee usage. What are some reasons then for these findings?

Student non-use is a significant problem since it has been reported that college students are generally underutilising college counselling centres (McGrath, 1995). Unfortunately, many of these students may become so overwhelmed that they end up failing academically, dropping out, or worse. Obviously, counselling could be very helpful to these students but students have to be willing to use these services.

Why do some students not seek help for personal problems ? Carney, Peterson, and Moberg (1990) suggested that one possibility is that students continue to associate counselling services with guidance counselling received earlier in high school. The authors suggested that as a result of this association, students are more likely to believe that counselling is for academic and pragmatic issues, and not personal problems. Therefore, they may not turn to counselling services for help with personal problems, unless perhaps the personal problem has become severe, recurrent, or is of an urgent nature (Watson & Ault, 1983, cited in McGrath, 1995).

Another reason for not seeking professional help may be due to the stigmatization associated with mental health services. For example, the perception that others may view the help seeker as inferior or helpless may still present an obstacle to students who need to seek help. This may be especially true for men more so than women. In addition, Kushner & Sher (1991, cited in Deane & Chamberlain, 1994) suggest that "fear of treatment" may

also be attributed to fears of embarrassment and change.

A third reason for non-use may include a preference for self-reliance as opposed to reliance on external sources of help (Cimbolic, Thompson, & Wald, 1981; Cook et. al., 1984). McGrath (1995) examined sources of help which college students (n=113) would turn to when facing personal problems. In that study, he found that students ranked the sources of help as follows: 1) self; 2) close friend; 3) close relative; 4) clergyman; 5) counsellor; 6) faculty member; and 7) staff member/advisor. The author queried nine specific problem areas: 1) romantic relationships; 2) family; 3) friends; 4) substance abuse; 5) sexuality; 6) depression; 7) interpersonal relationships; 8) self understanding; and 9) emotional stability. Results indicated that college students generally preferred to rely upon themselves or a close friend for help with all nine problem areas. Counsellors were ranked as fifth choice. He also found that students who had previous counselling were more likely to seek counselling again. Also, the type of student problem influenced whether or not a student would seek counselling for help (McGrath, 1995).

In another study of 922 university students and employees, Bush & Radecki-Bush (1995) asked respondents where they would most likely turn to as a preferred source of help. Most endorsed self-help (72% rated "handle it yourself") and informal helpers (18.2% consulted a friend or relative). Only 9.2% said they would consult with a psychologist.

Silker (1994) has noted that among help-seekers in his study, the most commonly listed personal concerns were those dealing with anxiety, stress, depression, self-esteem, relationship issues, and family problems. These areas were explored using the Student Satisfaction Survey to help identify those areas which were of most concern to the students

in this sample.

Demographics

Demographic variables including age, gender, and GPA have been studied in the literature in relation to counselling service usage with contrasting findings. For example, Carney et al. (1979, cited in McGrath, 1995) found that those students who were most receptive to counselling tended to be younger, undergraduate students living on campus with lower GPA's. Conversely, another study by Downey & Sinnett (1980, cited in McGrath, 1995) showed that the counselling service user was older, a graduate student, married, in the college of arts and sciences, and employed. Recent studies (Bush & Radecki-Bush, 1995; Deane & Chamberlain, 1994) found that in general, females and 30-40 year olds were more inclined to seek services from psychologists, than were male and younger and older respondents.

It has been widely reported in the literature that females are twice as likely to seek counselling as do males (Deane & Chamberlain, 1994; Research Consortium of Counseling and Psychological Services in Higher Education, 1992, cited in Good & Wood, 1995; Johnson, Ellison, & Heikkinen, 1989; Noldon & Sedlacek, 1995; Wills & DePaulo, 1991; Wiseman, Guttfreund, & Lurie, 1995). Some research has shown that one in three women as opposed to only one in seven men seek psychological assistance during their lifetime (Collier, 1982, cited in McGrath, 1995; Cook et al., 1984). This does not necessarily mean that women have more problems than men, but that they are more willing to seek help than are men.

Noldon & Sedlacek (1995) found that men seemed to be more neutral on seeking

educational and vocational counselling than were women and tended to disagree with seeking counselling for emotional and social difficulties. The authors also suggested that women disagreed less with seeking counselling about emotional/social issues than did men and agreed more with seeking educational and vocational counselling.

GPA

A student's academic performance as measured by GPA has also been investigated with regards to counselling services usage. One of the methods for evaluating counselling programs at universities is the utilization-focussed evaluation model developed by Patton (1986, cited in Schwitzer, 1997). This method focuses on measuring retention effects of specific counselling services. Schwitzer, McGovern, & Robbins (1991) used this model to examine their freshman orientation seminar. They compared the use of the seminar with changes in social adjustment and the outcome goal of academic achievement. They found that this program did not significantly alter the students' social adjustment to college life. However, they noted that students participating in the seminar had higher GPA's, increased retention into the second semester, and increased maintenance of full time status as compared to university averages. Thomas & Schwitzer (1993) studied the effectiveness of a minority peer support program using the utilization-focussed model. Similarly, they found that students using the program had lower GPA's, but also had increased retention and increased program work completed towards graduation.

A study by Schwitzer, Grogan, Kaddoura & Ochoa (1993) examined the outcome of mandatory college counselling. In that study, they identified students with financial need

who were at an increased risk of having academic problems and gave them a one session counselling intervention. They examined the use of the counselling centre and the general nature of visits to the counselling centre after this initial session. An inverse relationship was found between a student's GPA and the number of voluntary counselling sessions. That is, the students using the counselling centre most often had lower GPA's. Increased usage of the counselling centre was associated with maintenance of enrolment and graduation in the appropriate time frame. Of interest, only 4% of the mandatory meetings involved personal concerns, while 18% of the voluntary sessions had to do with personal matters.

Summary

The counselling models of Egan (1994) and Amundson (1993;1995) as outlined above are methods by which to conduct both personal and career counselling. These models were quite useful as a standard with which to compare the intern's continual development as a counsellor, as well as a basis to construct components of the instrument developed for this study. Furthermore, the intern also attempted to meet the core competencies as indicated in the Statement of Ethics and Standards of Practice for Counselling Services within the College of Applied Arts and Technology (Ontario College Counsellors, 1984). An opportunity was created through research to both critically reflect upon personal growth as a counsellor and to provide the college with some feedback in terms of student satisfaction with Counselling Services. The latter goal was pursued with the intentions of contributing to the betterment of the Counselling Services unit, and Student Services at the College of the North Atlantic as a whole.

A number of studies have indicated that there is a strong need for research in the area of counselling assessment and this study is in response to this need. Research completed in this area has shown that many college students are not aware that Counselling Services exists and/or are not using such services. One of the purposes of this research was to determine to what degree second year students at the College of the North Atlantic were aware of, and utilized selected services. Reasons for non-use were also elicited.

Attempts were made to investigate both the process and outcomes as well as the general interaction between the counsellor and the student. The present research also sought to determine the relative perceived importance and helpfulness of various counselling services by both users and non-users of Counselling Services. It was hoped that from this analysis, an indication of student needs could be delineated. If perceived helpfulness is a good predictor of successful outcomes, then knowledge of these perceptions can serve to strengthen and/or maintain present levels of student service.

Another aspect of the current study explored the impact of student demographic variables such as gender, age, GPA, and program on Counselling Services usage. As previously noted, it has been widely reported in the literature that females tend to seek counselling up to twice as often as do males and that older students tended to seek counselling more than younger students did. Based on these previous findings, it was hypothesized in the current study that female students would report using Counselling Services more so than males. It was also hypothesized that older students would report using Counselling Services more than younger students.

From previous research, it appears that students using counselling centres most often

had lower GPA's, however, they were more likely to stay in school and persevere in their studies. In the current study, it was hypothesized that students with lower GPA's tended to use Counselling Services more than those students with higher GPA's.

The type of program that the student was enrolled in was investigated to determine whether or not there were any significant differences between usage and the program type (either Engineering Technology, Medical Sciences, Community and Applied Arts, or Business). Very little literature was reviewed that would indicate any predisposition for Counselling Services usage based on program type, with the exception of "being in the college of arts and sciences" (Downey & Sinnett, 1980, cited in McGrath, 1995). This program status label could apply to either of the four main programs examined in this study, therefore, it was hypothesized that students from the four program categories surveyed were equally likely to seek assistance from Counselling Services.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Introduction

The intern chose to develop an instrument to elicit students' level of satisfaction regarding their experiences with Counselling Services. The survey was also used to assess essential counselling competencies and to promote an awareness of Counselling Services at the College of the North Atlantic. The intern constructed the Student Satisfaction Survey to address a number of areas regarding:

1. level of student awareness of available Counselling Services;
2. student satisfaction and perception of Counselling Services;
3. aspects of Counselling Services which students found most helpful;
4. anticipated student needs regarding Counselling Services; and,
5. impact of demographic variables (gender, age, program type, and GPA) on usage of Counselling Services.

Development and Structure of the Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS)

The SSS consisted of three sections. Section One consisted of 15 categorical response questions which were designed to collect sample demographic information from all respondents. The functions of Sections Two and Three were to gain information and feedback regarding aspects of Counselling Services from both those students who have used Counselling Services and those who had not, respectively. Section Two consisted of 10 questions of varied type (categorical response, 4- and 5-point Likert scale types, open ended,

and forced choice true/false questions). Section Three consisted of only four questions using similar formats as those found in Section Two (see Appendix A). This type of design was necessary to generate data from both Counselling Services users and non-users. In order to provide content validity, item content for Sections Two and Three of the survey was based on a review of the literature and from ideas generated through discussions with counsellors at the college. The intern selected questions which could be grouped according to the following classifications: awareness of services; use of Counselling Services; the counsellor's skills and knowledge; the counselling process; degree of perceived helpfulness; student needs assessment; and perceptions of the physical features of the counselling environment(s).

Field Testing

Before administration, the instrument was field tested with several students at the Engineering Technology Centre campus. The field test subjects were predominantly male ranging in age from 19 - 30 years of age. One-third of the field test subjects indicated having used some aspect of Counselling Services; while two-thirds said that they had not used Counselling Services. On average, users completed the survey in approximately 18 minutes, whereas non-users completed it in approximately 10 minutes. After administration, the intern requested reactions about the overall design of the survey, item clarity, format, and content. Students reported that the survey content was presented clearly and was easy to complete. However, during subsequent discussion some students recommended that both Sections Two and Three should have taken similar amounts of time to complete. The implication was that

some students might falsely report that they had not used Counselling Services to complete the survey in a shorter amount of time. However, during field testing the intern observed that all students completed the survey in the anticipated manner, that is, users completed Section Two without comparing the number of questions in Sections Two and Three. Similarly, non-users completed their respective sections. Despite the non-user group completing the survey quicker, both groups began their respective section at approximately the same time without prior knowledge of any discrepancy in the relative lengths of Sections Two and Three. The assumption was that completion of either Section Two or Three was dependant on the student's response to the last question at the end of Section One and not on the number of questions posed in each section. As a result, the intern decided to maintain the proportion of questions in the two sections. Section Two had the potential to become quite lengthy since its aim was to find out as much as possible about students' experiences with Counselling Services. Before field testing, the intern had condensed Section Two so that it could be completed within 20 minutes, and thus use less class time for administration. The intern did not expand Section Three since its function was different from Section Two: it served to provide the basis of a needs assessment of potential student users, and obtain reasons for non-use of Counselling Services. Additionally, Section Three was included to foster an awareness of Counselling Services within the non-users so that more of these students might then consider using them.

Research Questions

As noted in the previous section the objectives of the current research were to collect and analyse data related to student awareness, satisfaction, perceptions of helpfulness of

Counselling Services, and anticipated student needs. Demographic variables that might impact usage of Counselling Services were also explored. Specifically, the research questions generated for this study were:

1. What are some reasons for use and non-use of Counselling Services ?
2. Are students aware of selected aspects of Counselling Services?
3. How did users become aware of Counselling Services ?
4. To what extent were students satisfied with selected aspects of Counselling Services?
5. What aspects of Counselling Services were most and least helpful?
6. What aspects of Counselling Services do students consider important and necessary?
7. Does gender, age, program, or GPA have an impact on Counselling Services usage?
8. How do students perceive the Counsellor and the Counselling Process?
9. How do students perceive the physical features of Counselling Services?

Methodology

Second year students at the College of the North Atlantic were given the opportunity to express their opinion of Counselling Services by completing the Student Satisfaction Survey. The rationale for selecting second year students for this sample was based on the premise that: (a) first year students may not have used Counselling Services, and (b) second year students who had not used Counselling Services would still have time within their program to do so, if necessary. Further, limiting the size of the current sample to include only second year students was necessary to ensure that the project was manageable.

Sampling and Administration Procedures

The College of the North Atlantic offers a variety of programs that can be grouped into three categories: Certificate Level; Diploma Level; and Post-Diploma programs. Of these categories, the following program areas were longer than one year in duration: Engineering Technology; Business; Community and Applied Arts; and Medical Sciences.

To collect relevant data quickly and efficiently, the intern asked that instructors within these program areas volunteer 15-20 minutes of class time to administer and collect the SSS. During administration it was made clear to students that participation was voluntary, their names were not to be placed anywhere on the survey, and that their responses would remain anonymous.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data was collected and coded such that analyses could be carried out primarily using frequency distributions, and in some cases chi-square analyses were conducted to determine if any significant differences were observed between the variables explored. Level of significance was preset at $p<0.05$.

Limitations of the Current Study

There are some limitations with respect to the sample and research design. The sample comprised those students who were in their second year of studies. Since the sample consisted of only those programs that lasted longer than one year, the intern may have excluded many students who have used Counselling Services and might have been able to

offer feedback. In this regard then, the sample may not be representative of the entire student population within District 7. As well, only 3 campuses of District 7 were solicited (Prince Phillip Drive, Engineering Technology Centre, and Topsail Road Campus). Further, it may not be representative of the entire College population across Newfoundland & Labrador, since only District 7 was surveyed. To be more comprehensive, the SSS would have to be distributed on a provincial level to all students presently enrolled at the College of the North Atlantic. Perhaps this could be pursued in a future study involving the SSS.

Results and Discussion

Sample Demographics: A Student Profile

The surveyed sample was composed of 272 students from PPD campus (54.5%), 169 students from the ETC campus (33.9%), and 58 students from the Topsail Road campus (11.6%) (See Table B1, Appendix B). Fifty-five percent were male and 45% female (See Table B2, Appendix B). More than 70% of respondents were 24 years of age or younger (See Table B3, Appendix B). Nearly all respondents (99.8%) were enrolled as full-time students (See Table B4, Appendix B) in a variety of programs (See Table B5, Appendix B).

The majority (70.5%) of respondents had spent 13 to 18 months at the College, while 18.2% (N=91) reported having spent less than 12 months at the College (See Table B6, Appendix B). The latter group may be explained partially by students who were given advanced standing in a program either by transferring credits from another institution or by challenging for credit through Prior Learning Assessment for specific courses.

The survey asked that the students identify which broad classification best described

their program. Approximately 40% were enrolled in an Engineering Technology program, 34% were enrolled in a Business program, 15% reported that their program fell under the category of Community and Applied Arts, and over 8% were enrolled in Medical Sciences (See Table B7, Appendix B).

When asked for specific reasons for taking courses at the College of the North Atlantic, 55% indicated that they were there to earn a vocational certificate, diploma, or complete an apprenticeship. Twenty-six percent reported that they were there to improve present job skills or to get skills for a new job (See Table B8, Appendix B).

The vast majority of respondents (97.2%) did not identify a special need on their application (See Table B9, Appendix B). More than 80% of the sample reported their marital status as single, while common law/married students composed 18.2% of the sample (See Table B10, Appendix B). Eighty-one percent reported having no dependents (See Table B11, Appendix B). Most students (73.9%) reported being currently unemployed (See Table B12, Appendix B). Similarly, more than 60% of students reported an annual income of less than $9000 (See Table B12, Appendix B). The survey also asked that students report their current GPA (which ranged from 0-4). Fifty-eight percent reported a GPA greater than 2.99 (See Table B14, Appendix B). In summary, a typical second year student at the College of the North Atlantic is enrolled full time, under the age of 24, single with no dependents, unemployed with low income, and more likely to be male.

Research Question 1:

What are some reasons for use and non-use of Counselling Services ?

Of the 499 students surveyed, 22.8% reported having used Counselling Services, while 77.2% reported they had not used Counselling Services (See Table 1).

Table 1: Students' reported use of Counselling Services.

Used Counselling Services?	f	%
Yes	114	22.8
No	385	77.2

Users of Counselling Services identified using tutoring services and student affairs issues (including student aid) primarily. A combined 30% indicated utilizing Counselling Services for career and/or personal counselling as shown in Table 2. Those responding "use of resource room" may have been referring to either using study rooms, tutoring rooms, or career counselling resource rooms.

Table 2: General nature of student visits to Counselling Services (N=114)

General Nature	f	%
Tutoring	53	46.5
Student Affairs issues (including Student Aid)	48	42.1
Personal Counselling	18	15.8
Use of Resource room	18	15.8
Career Counselling	17	14.9
Use of CHOICES, NGR, or other computer based vocational programs	7	6.1
Other	2	1.8

Most of the students reported having not used Counselling Services, with almost 60% suggesting that "everything was going fine in their lives and at college." More than 30% of this non-user group reported that they were unaware of available services; and 26% indicated that they did not have time to use Counselling Services (see Table 3).

Table 3: Reasons identified for not using Counselling Services in the past (N=385).

Reasons	f	%
Everything is going fine in my life and at college	223	57.9
Lack of information / unaware	124	32.2
I didn't have time	100	26.0
Misunderstandings about quality of assistance offered	27	7.0
I didn't want people to know that I needed help for something (Confidentiality)	23	6.0
Only people with "serious" problems use counselling services	14	3.6
Perceived cost	13	3.4
Counsellors were too busy to fit me in	5	1.3
Other	30	7.8

It was encouraging to see that many students were not experiencing any major difficulties. However, it was disconcerting to observe that 124 students were unaware of the services provided by Counselling Services. These students may have required assistance but possibly did not know how and where to access help. Also of concern were the 26% who felt they "didn't have time" to deal with issues which may have caused undue difficulties as they went through their program. Quite a number of these students could have benefited from

time management training in order to benefit from all aspects of the college experience, including elements provided by Counselling Services, and Student Services.

Other reasons for not using Counselling Services included comments such as "I would prefer to talk to family or friends," and "I like to deal with the problem myself rather than talk to counsellors." Others simply did not want to go, or were not sure of what Counselling Services offered. Agreement with response statements such as "I did not want people to know that I needed help for something (confidentiality)", or "only people with "serious" problems use counselling services" tend to support the persistent stigma that unfortunately still exists about perceptions of counselling in general.

Research Question 2:

Are students aware of selected aspects of Counselling Services?

To address this research question, students responded to eight statements to determine awareness. As seen in Table 4, more users indicated an awareness of selected services than did non-users. For example, 64% of users and only 42% of non-users were aware that Counselling Services was offering Student Success Sessions. Similarly, 37.9 % users and 20.4% non-users were aware that counsellors could make referrals to outside agencies if the need arose. It seems that most students were aware that tutoring was available (87.5% users; 75.7% non-users) however they were not as aware of some details involved with the tutoring program such as signing of contracts, group tutoring, and tutor qualifications.

Unfortunately, only 27.2% of users and 18.1 % of non-users were aware that a Learning Specialist was on staff in District 7. Also, about half of the user group and less

than one third of non-users were aware that program accommodations could be requested for students with documented learning disabilities. Knowledge of these services would undoubtedly prove to be invaluable to many students with learning disabilities.

Table 4: Student awareness of selected Counselling Services.

	Users			Non-users		
		%			%	
Did you know that . . .	N	YES	NO	N	YES	NO
Tutors are free and available to all students through Counselling Services?	96	87.5	12.5	378	75.7	24.3
Tutors are usually senior students or program graduates and MUST be recommended by the course instructor?	95	77.9	22.1	379	67.5	32.5
Contracts are signed between the student tutor, the student, and the Student Services division prior to tutoring?	94	70.2	29.8	378	46.3	53.7
Group tutoring is available?	96	66.7	33.3	378	53.4	46.6
Student success sessions on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc., are offered free of charge to College of the North Atlantic Students?	96	64.6	35.4	379	42.0	58.0
Program accommodations can be requested for students with documented learning disabilities?	96	51.6	48.4	377	31.8	68.2
Outside Referrals can be made?	95	37.9	62.1	377	20.4	79.6
St. John's District has a learning specialist on staff?	95	27.2	56.1	376	18.1	81.9

As seen in Question 2 above, many students may not be fully aware of varying aspects of Counselling Services. When asked for suggestions about how to improve Counselling Services, almost 60% of 74 non-users who responded to this item suggested that overall they were unaware of existing Counselling Services (See Table C5 in Appendix C). This finding supports the claim that the issue of enhancing student awareness needs to be addressed. It highlights the need for other creative methods of getting the information to the student body as a whole. Some students requested reminders about what services were available and where they could go to avail of them. Other respondents suggested that year-end Counselling Services seminars or checkups would enhance awareness (see Table C5 in Appendix C).

Research Question 3:

How did users become aware of Counselling Services ?

To investigate this research question, the survey asked the users group to report how they became aware of Counselling Services (see Table 5). Most users indicated becoming aware of Counselling Services primarily through instructors, friends, and Fall semester orientation. This information is important since it demonstrates routes that have been effective in reaching some students.

Table 5: How students found out about Counselling Services (N=114).

	f	%
Found out through instructor	37	32.5
Classmate/friend	28	24.6
During orientation at the beginning of the term	26	22.8
College publications	19	16.7
Counsellor classroom visit	17	14.9
Coincidental	5	4.4

Note. Percentages total greater than 100 since multiple responses were aggregated.

Research Question 4:

To what extent were students satisfied with selected aspects of Counselling Services?

Understanding Counselling Services users' perceptions of, and satisfaction with, the quality of assistance received is very important. Often the counselling process begins when the student enters the Counselling Services office. The manner in which they are treated upon initial contact could influence their subsequent perceptions of counselling, and therefore quite possibly the outcome. The survey asked that students respond to an open-ended question asking how they were treated initially at Counselling Services. These results are presented below in Table 6.

Table 6: Student reports of initial treatment at Counselling Services (N = 78).

Response	f	%
Okay/good/well	30	38.5
Very good/very well	14	17.9
Excellent/quickly & efficiently	11	14.1
Friendly	8	10.3
Respectfully	8	10.3
Comfortably	7	9.0
Counsellors were attentive	7	9.0
Fairly	3	3.8
Important	2	2.6
Great - like one of the family	1	1.3
Poorly - got the 'run-around'	1	1.3
NO RESPONSE	36	46.2

Note. Percentages total greater than 100 since multiple responses were aggregated.

Only one student reported being treated poorly. The remaining 77 respondents reported positive encounters. Unfortunately, many of the user group of students (N=36) did not respond to this question.

Another factor linked with Counselling Services satisfaction was the length of the wait required for an appointment. As seen in Table 7, more than 80% indicated that they could see a counsellor either the same day or the following day. Only one student reported having to wait longer than one week. Overall, these results could be interpreted as indicating a positive level of satisfaction regarding access to counsellors.

Table 7: Length of wait for an appointment with a counsellor.

	f	%
Same day	58	60.4
Next day	19	19.8
Within a week	18	18.8
Longer than a week	1	1.0

Research Question 5:

What aspects of Counselling Services were most and least helpful?

Students who used Counselling Services were given an opportunity to rate how helpful specific aspects of Counselling Services were. Ratings were given as either Not at all helpful; Somewhat helpful; Helpful; or Very helpful (see Table 8).

Over 95% of respondents reported that overall services provided by the counsellors were to some degree helpful. As well, more than 97% of respondents felt that they could get help with their particular issue. Approximately 94% felt that the secretaries/front desk staff were helpful to some degree with almost 40% of respondents citing them as very helpful. Over 80% of respondents reported that the tutoring program was helpful to some extent; and that help with program stress, test anxiety, time management, personal stress, financial advising was helpful.

Despite an overall high perception of helpfulness of most items surveyed, those aspects with the highest percentage endorsed as "not at all helpful" were (a) assistance with

family issues (37.1%), (b) completion of an interest inventory (36.1%), (c) assistance for depression (31.4%), (d) help with program modifications (31.3%), and (e) assistance in deciding the right program (29.2 %).

Table 8: Degree of helpfulness of specific aspects of Counselling Services

		Not at all helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful
Specific Aspect	N	%	%	%	%
Tutoring program	74	12.2	13.5	32.4	41.9
The overall services provided by the counsellors	107	3.7	11.2	43.9	41.1
Help with your issue	107	2.8	16.8	37.4	40.4
The secretaries/front desk staff	107	5.6	20.6	34.6	39.3
Financial advising	59	18.6	11.9	35.6	33.9
Discussing special needs with a counsellor	45	13.3	28.9	28.9	28.9
Help with improving study skills	52	23.1	19.2	30.8	26.9
Help with personal stress	47	19.1	23.4	31.9	25.5
Assistance in deciding which program was right for me	48	29.2	14.6	31.3	25.0
Adjustment to college life	45	24.4	11.1	40.0	24.4

(Continued)

Table 8: Degree of helpfulness of specific aspects of Counselling Services (Continued)

		Not at all helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful
Specific Aspect	N	%	%	%	%
Rethinking present course/career choices	53	20.8	15.1	41.5	22.6
Academic assistance received	83	8.4	22.9	47.0	21.7
Help with time management	48	16.7	25.0	39.6	18.8
Help with Self-esteem issues	38	21.1	26.3	34.2	18.4
Help with program stress	47	14.9	27.7	40.4	17.0
Help with program modifications	48	31.3	20.8	31.3	16.7
Student Success Seminars	49	24.5	24.5	34.7	16.3
Help with social difficulties	40	25.0	22.5	37.5	15.0
Help with Family issues	35	37.1	20.0	28.6	14.3
Help to cope with depression	35	31.4	28.6	28.6	11.4
Completing an interest inventory	36	36.1	19.4	33.3	11.1
Help with Test Anxiety	40	22.5	27.5	40.0	10.0

Research Question 6:

What aspects of Counselling Services do students consider important and necessary?

Tables 9a & 9b present student feedback regarding the relative importance of selected Counselling Services from both user and non-user groups, respectively. Overall, a higher percentage of users tended to rate selected counselling services as important when compared with non-user students. Both groups felt that receiving information about job options/futures upon completion of their program was a very important function of Counselling Services (users = 90%, non-users = 93.5%). Related to this need, many students suggested that Job placement services would also be very important (users = 91%, non-users = 89.4%). A third area of Counselling Services that a strong majority of students rated as important was career guidance (users = 80%, non-users = 77.6%). Student Aid was also seen as important by both groups, although it was endorsed as important by a slightly greater percentage of users.

It was interesting to note that personal counselling for issues such as dealing with stress, anxiety, or assertiveness training were rated much less important than was expected. In fact, approximately half in either group indicated that they were unimportant. Least important as indicated by both groups were marital counselling (users = 74.1%, non-users = 81.7%) and issues of self-esteem (users = 57.4%, non-users = 63.9%).

Also of interest was the finding that only 37.3% of users felt that becoming a tutor was important, whereas 75% felt that receiving tutoring was important. A similar trend was seen among non-users, however the difference was not as marked (34.1% and 57.2%, respectively).

Table 9a: User student feedback as to the importance of selected Counselling Services.

		%	
Receiving information about:	N	Unimportant	Important
Job options/futures	110	10.0	90.0
Career guidance	110	20.0	80.0
Determining my interests	109	29.4	70.7
College regulations	110	45.4	54.5
Personal Counselling:			
Time management	110	40.9	59.1
Crisis resolution	110	44.5	55.5
General stress	111	45.1	54.9
Coping with anxiety	109	45.9	54.2
Assertiveness training	109	54.1	45.8
Self-esteem issues	108	57.4	42.6
Coping with depression	108	38.3	41.7
Dealing with marital conflict	108	74.1	25.9
Academic Assistance:			
Receiving tutoring	108	25.0	75.0
Student success seminars	111	42.3	57.6
Becoming a tutor	107	62.6	37.3
Other			
Job placement services	111	9.0	91.0
Student aid information	111	18.0	82.0

Table 9b: Non-user student feedback as to the importance of selected Counselling Services.

		%	
Receiving information about:	N	Unimportant	Important
Job options/futures	382	6.6	93.4
Career guidance	380	22.4	77.6
Determining my interests	378	39.4	60.6
College regulations	378	49.5	50.5
Personal Counselling:			
Time management	381	43.3	56.7
General stress	381	46.2	53.8
Assertiveness training	380	54.4	45.6
Coping with anxiety	381	54.6	45.4
Crisis resolution	382	55.5	44.5
Coping with depression	379	58.1	40.9
Self-esteem issues	380	63.9	36.1
Dealing with marital conflict	378	81.7	18.3
Academic Assistance:			
Receiving tutoring	381	41.8	57.2
Student success seminars	378	49.2	50.8
Becoming a tutor	378	69.9	34.1
Other			
Job placement services	380	10.6	89.4
Student aid information	381	30.5	69.5

Research Question 7:

Does Gender, Age, Program Type, or GPA have an impact on Counselling Services usage?

This four part research question explores whether there were any significant differences with respect to gender, age, program, or GPA on Counselling Services usage.

Gender

It was hypothesized that gender would produce significant differences associated with Counselling Services usage, such that more females than males would use Counselling Services. As noted in Table B8 (Appendix B), the sample was composed of 55.4% male and 45.6 % female. It was found that 24.0 % of the females indicated that they have used one or more aspects of Counselling Services, whereas 21.8 % of the males indicated having used one or more aspects of Counselling Services. A chi-square analysis (including both user & non-user groups) indicated that there was not a significant difference between females and males ($\chi^2 = 0.32$, $p = 0.57$; See Table 10a). However, from the data, it can be seen that slightly, although not significantly, more females indicated that they have used one or more aspects of Counselling Services than did males.

Table 10a: Comparison of males to females with respect to usage of Counselling Services.

	Males		Females	
	f	%	f	%
Users	60	21.8	53	24.0
Non-users	215	78.2	168	76.0

Note. $\chi^2 = 0.32$, $p = 0.57$

Age

Age was investigated to determine if it was an influencing variable on Counselling Services usage. This knowledge is important for Counselling Services to be aware of since each age group will often present different counselling concerns. If the typical age group of the users is known, then the types of problems associated with various life stages may be better anticipated and accommodated. The majority of all students surveyed were 24 years of age or less. However, it was hypothesized that older students would use Counselling Services more than would younger students.

A chi-square analysis was conducted on the sample comparing the variable of usage across four levels of age categories, yielding a significant difference between the age categories and users and non-users of Counselling Services ($\chi^2 = 13.35$, $p < 0.05$) (See Table 10b). Of the group of students 30 years and older, more were likely to use Counselling Services than students aged 20 years and younger. The general trend observed across all four age categories attributes increasing use, proportionately, with increasing age. Based on these results, the hypothesis is supported: age is a factor in Counselling Services usage with more of those in the older group seeking help.

Table 10b: Frequency and percentage of users and non-users based on age.

	< 20 yrs		21-24 yrs		25-29 yrs		30 + yrs	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Users	21	14.2	52	25.6	18	22.2	23	35.9
Non-users	127	85.8	151	74.4	63	77.8	41	64.1

Note. $\chi^2 = 13.35$, $p = 0.003$

Program Type

It was hypothesized that students from the four program categories surveyed were equally likely to seek assistance from Counselling Services. This was tested by examining separately the percentage of male and female users and non-users for each program area. Consideration of gender was necessary since some program areas may be predominantly male or female, and therefore distinction by program alone may have been possibly confounded by gender.

Program Type x Reported Usage (Males)

An analysis of male use of Counselling Services by program type (see Table 10c) shows that a greater proportion of male Business students (25.5%) reported to have used Counselling Services compared to male Engineering Technology students (21.5%), male Community and Applied Arts students (19.0%); and male Medical Science students (16.7%). However, while this trend may appear to be occurring in the data, a chi-square analysis indicated that there were no significant differences in male usage of Counselling Services by program type ($\chi^2 = 0.717$, p=0.869).

Table 10c: A comparison of male users and non-users of Counselling Services based on program categories (N=265).

	Engineering Technology		Medical Sciences		Business		Community & Applied Arts	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Users	38	21.5	2	16.7	14	25.5	4	19.0
Non-users	139	78.5	10	83.3	41	74.5	17	81.0

Note. $\chi^2 = 0.717$, $p = 0.869$

Program Type x Reported Usage (Females)

An analysis of female use of Counselling Services by program type (see Table 10d) indicates that a greater proportion of female Engineering Technology students (33.3%) reported to have used Counselling Services more than female Business students (27.0%), female Community and Applied Arts students (24.5%), and female Medical Science students (6.5%). A chi-square analysis, however, indicated no statistically significant differences in female usage of Counselling Services by program type ($\chi^2 = 6.90$, p=0.075).

Table 10d: A comparison of female users and non-users of Counselling Services based on program categories (N=219).

	Engineering Technology		Medical Sciences		Business		Community & Applied Arts	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Users	8	33.3	2	6.5	30	27.0	13	24.5
Non-users	16	66.7	29	93.5	81	73.0	40	75.5

Note. $\chi^2 = 6.90$, $p = 0.075$

GPA

It was hypothesized that students with lower GPA's used Counselling Services more than those students with higher GPA's. It was noted that almost 60% of all students surveyed indicated that their average college GPA was 3.00 or higher, while approximately 40% of the sample reported GPA's of 2.99 or lower. An analysis of student GPA's shows that proportionately more students with GPA's of 2.99 or less (25.5%) tended to seek Counselling Services compared to those students whose GPA's were 3.00 or greater (20.6%). However, a chi-square analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between

these two groups ($\chi^2 = 1.59$, p=0.206) with regards to usage of Counselling Services (see Table 10e).

Table 10e: Comparison of GPA's of users and non-users of Counselling Services (N=486)

GPA	3.00 or higher		2.99 or less	
	f	%	f	%
Users	59	20.6	51	25.5
Non-users	227	79.4	149	74.5

Note. $\chi^2 = 1.59$, $p = 0.206$

Research Question 8:

How do students perceive the Counsellor and the Counselling Process?

In examining this research question, students were asked to respond with either "yes" or "no" to questions regarding their perceptions of various aspects of the counselling process.

All those aspects of the counselling process surveyed seem to have met with very positive ratings (see Table 11). The students reported being made to feel comfortable before, during, and after the counselling sessions. Students reported that counsellors were attentive and objective listeners; understanding; well informed regarding college services, policies, and procedures; made every reasonable effort to assist them; and acted in a professional manner. Over 88% of students indicated that adequate time was spent to meet their needs.

With respect to counselling outcomes, almost 94% said that counselling helped them to deal more effectively with their concerns, and over 97% indicated that they would recommend Counselling Services to their friends. More than 94% reported that they would return for further counselling if necessary.

Table 11: Ratings of selected counsellor and counselling process attributes.

		%	
	N	YES	NO
Did the counsellor make you feel comfortable before your session(s)?	96	97.9	2.1
Did the counsellor make you feel comfortable during your session(s)?	96	99.0	1.0
Did the counsellor make you feel comfortable after your session(s)?	96	97.9	2.1
Did the counsellor remain objective during your session(s)?	95	96.8	3.2
Was an adequate amount of time spent to meet your needs?	96	88.5	11.5
Did the counsellor seem to understand your presenting issue?	96	97.9	2.1
Did the counsellor act in a professional manner?	96	100.0	0
Did the counsellor explain issues of confidentiality during sessions with you?	94	79.8	20.2
Was the counsellor well informed about current college services, policies, and procedures?	95	98.9	1.1
I became more confused than I was before I went for counselling.	95	18.9	81.1
Did the counsellor listen attentively to you?	94	100.0	0
Did the counsellor make every reasonable effort to assist you?	95	94.7	5.3
Did counselling help you to deal more effectively with your concerns?	94	93.6	6.4
Would you recommend Counselling Services to your friends?	94	97.9	2.1
Based on your experience, if you needed further counselling would you return to Counselling Services ?	94	94.7	5.3

Research Question 9:

How do students perceive the physical features of Counselling Services?

As demonstrated in Table 12, it is evident that most students were satisfied with the physical environments of Counselling Services at the College of the North Atlantic. The data presented represent the combined results from user groups from 3 different campuses: Prince Phillip Drive, Engineering Technology Centre, and Topsail Road Campus. Counselling Service at these campus locations vary somewhat with regards to physical layout as well as resources. Most students indicated that Counselling Services was not difficult to find (89.9%), and that there were enough resources available on site to meet their needs (81.6%).

Table 12: Student feedback with respect to the physical environment of Counselling Services office(s).

		%	
Physical Environment	N	YES	NO
Was Student Services difficult to find?	99	10.1	89.9
Were there enough resources available on site?	98	81.6	18.4
Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the waiting area?	97	70.1	29.9
Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the counsellor's office?	95	91.6	8.4
Were noise levels outside the office a distraction during sessions?	94	34.0	66.0
Was the quality of lighting suitable within the counsellor's office?	93	90.3	9.7
Was the quality of air ventilation suitable within the counsellor's office?	94	83.0	17.0
Was the temperature in the counsellor's office suitable?	94	84.0	16.0

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Internship Goals

A counselling intern at the College of the North Atlantic is faced with many daily challenges and activities. A review of the activities documented in Chapters I and II of this report readily lend support to this claim. The counsellor's role is that of assessor, consultant, mediator, and provider of personal, career, and academic counselling. Occasionally these roles tend to overlap to the point where it is sometimes difficult to clearly differentiate between them. As a result of these divergent roles, the counsellor should possess a range of core counsellor competencies in order to adequately meet the needs of the student. During formal graduate studies, the intern was exposed to and developed specific counselling techniques which were put into practice during the internship. Goals for the internship were related to counselling, psycho-educational and vocational assessment, consultation, and further development of knowledge. Specific goals met during the internship have been described extensively earlier in Chapter II of this document.

Counsellors should concern themselves with continuous evaluation of the services they provide to ensure that student needs are adequately met. It is for this reason that the intern chose to evaluate selected aspects of Counselling Services at the College of the North Atlantic. This was approached by investigating reported levels of student satisfaction with Counselling Services. To accomplish this goal, the intern developed a questionnaire to explore a number of research questions. A summary and discussion of the findings are presented in the following section.

Research Results

Counselling Services Use and Awareness Issues

Of the 499 students surveyed, 22.8% reported having used Counselling Services, while 77.2% reported they had not used Counselling Services. Users of Counselling Services identified primarily using tutoring services and student affairs issues (including student aid). Tutoring services appear to be well utilized by students. Approximately 30% of users indicated visiting Counselling Services for career and/or personal counselling. Career counselling ranged from providing information on various careers and programs to an in-depth exploration of the student's interests, expectations, and choice of educational and career goals. Students seeking personal counselling generally requested assistance for issues related to low self-esteem, addictions, family difficulties, coping with stress, study skills, time management, intimate relationships, assertiveness training, anxiety, depression, and patterns of communication. Some of these personal issues were similar to those predicted by Silker (1994) who noted that among help-seekers in his study, the most commonly listed personal concerns were those dealing with anxiety, stress, depression, self-esteem, relationship issues, and family problems.

The majority of students reported having not used Counselling Services responding that "everything was going fine in their lives and at college." More than 30% of non-users reported that they were unaware of available services; and 26% indicated that they did not have time to use Counselling Services. If one were to extrapolate these results to the whole population of District 7 of the College of the North Atlantic in the fall of 1997 (approximately 2800 students), there may be as many as 840 students whose needs are not

being met through either a lack of awareness or by the student's sense of time pressures preventing them from dealing with issues inhibiting them from reaching their full potential. These obstacles can and should be modified with systematic changes in the present means of disseminating information about Counselling Services and reducing heavy course loads each term.

McGrath (1995) has stated that counsellors should make every conceivable effort to educate students about the benefits that counselling can provide. The present study reiterates this assertion. Overall, students indicated that they were somewhat aware of Counselling Services with a higher percentage of users indicating more awareness than non-users. A number of non-users reported being unaware of Counselling Services. Neither group were particularly aware that a Learning Specialist was on staff during the time that this survey was being administered. Also, approximately only 50% of users and 30% of non-users were aware that program accommodations could be requested for students with documented learning disabilities. As mentioned previously, student knowledge of these services would undoubtedly prove to be invaluable to students who are struggling with learning disabilities.

Aside from being unaware of services and having very little time to use them, many students commented that they would prefer to talk to family or friends, or deal with problems by themselves rather than talking to counsellors. Others stated they simply did not want to go, or were not sure of what Counselling Services offered. Those who agreed with responses such as "I did not want people to know that I needed help for something (confidentiality)", or "only people with 'serious' problems use Counselling Services" unfortunately lend support to the negative stigma which still exists surrounding perceptions of counselling in

general. Similar findings have been are reported elsewhere in the literature (Bush & Radecki-Bush, 1995; Carney, Peterson, & Moberg,1990; Cimbolic, Thompson, & Wald, 1981; Cook et al., 1984; Henggeler, Harbin, & Sallis, 1982; Kushner & Sher, 1991, cited in Deane & Chamberlain, 1994; McGrath, 1995).

McGrath (1995) recommends training peer counsellors, family members, and promoting workshops designed to aid the student in developing better ways of coping with problems. This latter recommendation has been previously implemented at the College of the North Atlantic in the form of the Student Success Seminar series. It would be beneficial to the college to investigate the utility of peer counsellors in addition to the peer tutoring program which is currently in place. Perhaps students may be more comfortable, or more likely to consult with, peer counsellors rather than professional counsellors.

Some students indicated becoming aware of Counselling Services primarily through instructors, friends, and Fall orientation. This information serves as important feedback to Counselling Services since it demonstrates routes that have been effective in reaching some students. Although, the fact that there are still many students who are not fully unaware of all Counselling Services highlights the need for other creative methods of getting the information 'out there' to the student body as a whole. Some students suggested reminders about available services throughout the term. Other respondents suggested that year end Counselling Services seminars or checkups would serve to enhance awareness. Some respondents noted that surveys such as the Student Satisfaction Survey may also be effective in promoting Counselling Services awareness.

Satisfaction with Counselling Services

The relationship between Counselling Services and a student often begins as soon as the student enters the office. The type of reception that the student receives at the point of entry will undoubtedly shape the student's expectancy of the outcome of counselling/assistance. If this is the case, then acquiring knowledge of the student's perception of the quality of this assistance is important. Only one student reported being treated poorly and that they had gotten the 'run-around'. The vast majority of users described their experiences positively using descriptors such as "okay/good/well, very good/very well, excellent, quick & efficient, friendly, comfortable, respectful, fair, important, and great - like one of the family !" The secretaries/front desk staff were found to be very helpful. Another factor linked with Counselling Services satisfaction was the length of the wait required for an appointment. More than 80% of respondents indicated they could see a counsellor on either the same day or the following day. Only one student reported having to wait longer than one week. These findings suggest an overall positive level of satisfaction.

This overall positive report of satisfaction is additionally strengthened by the findings that over 95% of respondents reported that services provided by the counsellors were helpful to some degree, and that they received help with their particular issue. Other aspects which were considered to be helpful included the tutoring program as well as assistance with program stress, test anxiety, time management, personal stress, and financial advising.

Among those services that were most often endorsed as "not at all helpful" were assistance with family issues (37.1%); completion of an interest inventory (36.1%); assistance for depression (31.4%); help with program modifications (31.3%); and assistance in deciding the right program (29.2 %). These findings suggest that these areas should be

further investigated by Counselling Services to determine why these areas were perceived less favourably. Does this represent an actual deficit in service or are these services seen as not important for this population ? It appears that 74% of students viewed "dealing with marital conflict" as unimportant. This finding is not surprising given that over 80% of the sample were single students.

Students considered job placement services and obtaining information on job options/futures to be an important component of Counselling Services. This student emphasis on employability has been received by the College of the North Atlantic as evident by the college's recent implementation of campus-based Career & Employability Centres. These centers were proposed as a result of the Career and Employability Consultation model which was presented by Dr. Phil Patsula and Mr. Brian Tobin (1997) and was described briefly in Chapter II of this document. The purpose of these centres was to focus efforts on those factors which contribute most to the student's ability to seek out and gain satisfactory and meaningful employment in areas relevant to their area of study. Such factors may include developing interviewing skills, writing effective resumes, increasing knowledge of job options and availability as well as provision of Internet access for employment searches. The effectiveness of the Career & Employability Centres is an area which should receive regular evaluation in future Counselling Services research.

Personal counselling issues such as stress and anxiety management, and assertiveness training were seen as somewhat less important than expected. However, this finding does not imply that personal issues are not important to many students. In fact, 16% of users indicated receiving help for personal issues. Obviously, a number of these students have

benefited from these services. If awareness were increased and the stigma surrounding help-seeking behavior were decreased, many more individuals dealing with personal issues would undoubtedly be helped.

Impact of Gender, Age, Program Type, and GPA on use of Counselling Services

Gender

Based on research findings reported previously in the literature, it was hypothesized that females would report using Counselling Services significantly more than males. The results of the present study do not support these previous findings. It appears from the data (24.0% females: 21.8% males) that slightly, albeit not significantly, more females indicated that they have used one or more aspects of Counselling Services than did males.

Age

It was hypothesized that older students were more likely to seek counselling services than were younger students. This hypothesis was supported in that proportionately, students 30 years of age and older were more likely to use Counselling Services than students aged 20 years of age and younger, although the largest user group were the 21-24 year olds since these made up more than half of all students surveyed. For the most part, a positive trend was observed across all four age categories with increasing use coinciding with increasing age. Age, therefore, is a variable which impacts of Counselling Services usage.

It was interesting to find that more of the older group of students tended to use Counselling Services more proportionately than younger students. In light of this finding, it

is necessary to ensure that the older student's needs are met. This is a task that many college student services have faced. For example, Rice (1991) observed that at the University of South Carolina at Lancaster older students were having more academic difficulties, their needs were not determined, and previous programming for the older student was deemed to be inadequate. In an attempt to remedy this, the Peer Intervention Program was developed. Three peers were trained to maintain structured telephone contact with identified at-risk students throughout the year. During this time they would provide college related information to these students, inquire as to whether or not they were having any additional difficulties, as well as determine their needs as a group. Rice (1991) found that 96% of the targeted students responded favourably. This initiative helped 66% of the older students with a college related difficulty. In addition, Rice reported that retention rates increased by 20%, GPA's increased by 29%, and withdrawal from courses decreased by 12%. Rice reported that the information collected regarding student needs was catalogued and used to make adjustments in counselling service delivery. Among the suggestions provided by the students through the Student Satisfaction Survey were statements such as "provide better services for older students". Perhaps, an initiative similar to that described in Rice's study could be implemented at the College of the North Atlantic to better gauge the needs of the older student as well as to prevent attrition and academic difficulties in this population.

Program Type

It was hypothesized that students from the four categories surveyed were equally likely to use Counselling Services for difficulties arising during studies at the College of the North Atlantic. This hypothesis was tested by examining the percentage of male and female users and non-users for each program area. It was felt that consideration of gender was necessary since some program areas may be predominantly male or female, and therefore distinction by program alone could have been confounded by gender.

An analysis of male use of Counselling Services by program type shows that a greater proportion of male Business students (25.5%) reported to have used Counselling Services compared to male Engineering Technology students (21.5%), male Community and Applied Arts students (19.0%); and male Medical Science students (16.7%). However, no significant differences in male usage of Counselling Services by program type were found.

An analysis of female use of Counselling Services by program type indicates that a greater proportion of female Engineering Technology students (33.3%) reported to have used Counselling Services more than female Business students (27.0%), female Community and Applied Arts students (24.5%), and female Medical Science students (6.5%). However, as seen with male students, no statistically significant differences were found with respect to female usage of Counselling Services as a function of membership in a specified program type.

It should also be noted that these programs were housed in different campuses with different counsellors and Counselling Services centres at each campus. Medical Science students were located at TRC, Engineering Technology students at ETC, Applied Arts and

Business students at PPD campus. At the time of this survey, one of the counsellors at PPD made himself readily available to TRC at least twice a week, however there was generally a counsellor stationed at both ETC and PPD everyday. Furthermore, the majority of resources were maintained at ETC and PPD campuses. If students required access to these resources, they would travel to these campuses and use them.

GPA

It was hypothesized that students with lower GPA's used Counselling Services more than those students with higher GPA's. An analysis of user GPA scores showed that students with GPA's of 2.99 or less tended to use Counselling Services more than those students with GPA's of 3.00 or greater, but again, these differences were not statistically significant.

Perceptions of Counselling Services

Those aspects of the counselling process that were surveyed seem to have been met with very positive ratings. The students reported feeling comfortable before, during, and after the counselling sessions. Students reported that counsellors were attentive and objective listeners, understanding, well informed regarding college services, policies, and procedures, made every reasonable effort to assist them, and acted in a professional manner. Over 88% of students indicated that adequate time was spent to meet their needs.

With respect to counselling outcomes, almost 94% said that counselling helped them to deal more effectively with their concerns, and over 97% indicated that they would

recommend Counselling Services to their friends. More than 94% reported that they would return for further counselling if necessary. With such highly positive student reports, it appears that the counsellors at the College of the North Atlantic are doing a very fine job, and they are to be commended for their efforts.

Students perceived the physical features of the Counselling Services offices as being satisfactory for the most part. They reported that Counselling Services offices were not too difficult to find, and that sufficient resources were available on site to meet their needs. Office lighting, air quality, and temperature were reported to be suitable and seating within the counsellor's office was considered to be satisfactory and comforting. However, almost 30% did not find the seating arrangements satisfactory or comforting in the waiting area. Also of concern is the finding that 34% of respondents indicated that noise levels outside the office were distracting during sessions. Together, this information may provide additional reasons for student non-use. For example, if students feel that their confidentiality is being compromised by either being seen or overheard by other students walking past or dropping into Counselling Services for purposes other than receiving Counselling Services, then students may be less inclined to seek help. This needs to be addressed to ensure that the privacy of all students who use Counselling Services is kept confidential.

It should be noted that since the Student Satisfaction Survey was administered, Counselling Services at the Prince Phillip Drive campus has moved and the office layout has been modified, therefore results pertaining to physical features may not accurately reflect current student opinion of the new location.

Criticisms of the Student Satisfaction Survey

The following section notes some critical revisions to future versions of the Student Satisfaction Survey.

Section I: Q15 Part D: It is unclear what students meant by "use of resource room" since they may have been referring to either using study rooms, tutoring rooms, or career counselling resource rooms. In future versions of the SSS, this response item should be made clearer.

Section I: Q15 Part F: Reference to student aid should not have been made. A point of clarification needs to be made here. Student Aid loans were distributed to students via Counselling Services offices. In hind sight, the inclusion of Student Aid may have yielded a greater number of students who indicated using Counselling Services, when they may have only picked up their student loan at the Counselling Services office. This is not true for all cases, however, since some of these students who indicated they had used Counselling Services for student affairs issues including Student Aid also endorsed other reasons for Counselling Services usage.

In Section II, Q. 23 Parts C: "Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the waiting area ?" and D: "Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the counsellor's office ?" should have used the wording *comfortable* rather than *comforting*.

Section II Q.24 and Section III Q. 28- "Did you know ?" sections of the SSS should be more inclusive and representative of other services offered by Counselling Services. In retrospect, it seems that approximately 50% of the items there dealt with specifics of the tutoring program.

Suggestions for Improvement

Thurman & Malaney (1989, cited in Noldon & Sedlacek, 1995), wrote that "the input of students is an important component in the decision-making process of student affairs faculty and administrators". Therefore, opportunities were provided on the Student Satisfaction Survey for students to make suggestions on how to improve Counselling Services. Refer to Table C5 in Appendix C for a complete description of comments and suggestions.

Not all of the suggestions were directly related to Counselling Services (i.e., computer equipment needed, more microwaves needed, and program complaints), however there were some suggestions that were relevant. The majority of these focussed on ways to relate information to students. For example, a monthly newsletter could contain information on career opportunities, employment rates and statistics, scholarships, prior learning assessments, student loan issues, and other services. One student suggested a Counselling Services webpage on the Internet. At this time there is such a webpage at the following address: http://www.northatlantic.nf.ca. The student services webpage can be found by following the links presented there. Another student suggested using a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) computer. This idea would involve placing information terminals at various locations on campus, each with a database of information relevant to questions commonly posed by students. The student noted that such terminals could reduce waiting in line-ups. This may also be a way to circumvent stigma associated with help-seeking. The FAQ could easily be incorporated into the Student Services webpage, thereby providing further unrestricted access to the information.

Other suggestions called for reorganization of scheduling for the Student Success Sessions so that more students are able to avail of them. Also in line with this is a proposal for extending the hours of operation of Counselling Services for those students who do not sufficient time in their schedules to utilize the services.

Students were asked which services should be offered by Counselling Services. Virtually all respondents (99.1%) indicated that career information should be offered (see Table 13). A high percentage of students indicated that peer tutoring should be provided (97.2%), assistance in determining areas of career interest (90.7%), as well as help with study skills (88.8%). These services are currently being offered through Counselling Services.

The suggestions "full time job placement services" and "more computers on site for electronic job searches" were also made and these suggestions were discussed during the Career and Employability Center Development committee meetings. While it was not possible to provide "full time job placement services" at that time, efforts were directed towards putting in place methods of enhancing the employability of students so that they are in a better position to gain employment. To aid in the student's pursuit of employment, it was proposed by the CEC Development committee that the students would have access to computers for electronic job searches (via Internet) in the Career and Employability Centres.

Table 13: Services that should be provided by Counselling Services.

		%	
Services to be provided	**N**	**YES**	**NO**
Career information	109	99.1	0.9
Peer tutoring	109	97.2	2.8
Full time job placement services	108	95.4	4.6
More computers on site for electronic job searches	107	93.5	6.5
Help determining areas of career interest	108	90.7	9.3
Help with study skills	107	88.8	11.2
Special needs assistance	105	86.7	13.3
Financial counselling	104	86.5	13.5
Help with time management	107	82.2	17.8
Help with test anxiety	105	80.0	20.0
Help with crisis management	104	77.1	22.9
Crisis management hotline	104	69.2	30.8
Accommodating outside referrals	101	70.3	29.7
Family counselling	104	64.4	35.6
Long term individual counselling	105	62.9	37.1
Grief counselling	104	61.5	38.5

Helfgot (1995) reviewed the importance of technology in community college counselling. He found that with the changing student population, nontraditional students are often less prepared for college and will require more assistance both academically and personally. Newer uses for technology include automated student service centers, counselling information and services on the Internet, orientation on television, and automatic telephone information systems to provide increased access to information. Some of Helfgot's recommendations have been voiced by the students who have completed the Student Satisfaction Survey. Counselling Services has begun to implement some of these suggestions and in due course the effectiveness of such initiatives will require future evaluation to ensure that the students are not only being served, but served well.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the results of this internship research component and placement at the College of the North Atlantic, the following possible further research recommendations are made:

1. The use of both formal and informal evaluation instruments must continue to be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of initiatives and services provided by the college such as the Career and Employability Centres. This involves an honest, critical, and thorough review for the betterment of the student as well as the college as an institution.

2. A revised version of the SSS should be administered to a larger population sample including all students at different points in their program from campuses across the province. This would allow opportunities for comparison with some of the results presented here. Revisions to the SSS would address some of the concerns described earlier in this text, as well as any other possible concerns that may arise. If the instrument were to be administered to many campuses, or other institutions, questions on the original SSS which make reference to a particular campus should be made more general.

3. Many of the students reported that they were not aware of specific services. Increased utilization of services will depend upon, among other factors, increased student awareness of such services. Therefore methods of developing new ways of enhancing awareness and reducing stigmatism should be the prime focus of a future study at the college.

4. Research regarding the viability of the implementation of a FAQ web page and/or FAQ on-campus computer terminal should be initiated at the college with input from the Student Services staff and the students as to relevant content. Content should be regularly updated as necessary.

5. Other students indicated that they did not have sufficient time to avail of Counselling Services. Perhaps the college could investigate this issue by taking a closer look at the current scheduling of classes and explore alternative schedules. This may provide some solutions for those students who feel that their present schedule is too hectic to seek help.

6. The majority of Counselling Service's resources including the Career and Employability Centers are maintained at ETC and PPD campuses. If students at TRC require access to these resources, this would necessitate travel to the larger campuses to use them. It was observed that a smaller proportion of Medical Sciences students at TRC used Counselling Services less than the other groups. Is this finding the result of these students not requiring services or is the necessary travel between campuses a significant factor in this sub-population's help-seeking behavior ? Perhaps, a needs assessment could be conducted with students at TRC to determine whether or not additional resources are required there.

7. It was determined in the present study that older students were more likely to use Counselling Services than younger students. Therefore, an initiative similar to that described in Rice's (1991) study could be implemented at the College of the North Atlantic to better gauge the needs of the older student as well as to prevent attrition and academic difficulties in this population.

Overall, many positive comments were made regarding Counselling Services. I would encourage the college to continue providing opportunities for professional development of their Student Services staff in the form of workshops, seminars, and conferences. I was fortunate enough to participate in these events during my internship and observed that they allow for the exchange of new ideas and discussions of proposed initiatives prior to their implementation. Further, it appears that staff morale is enhanced and a better sense of functioning as a team serving the students is created and maintained.

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Appendix A -

The Student Satisfaction Survey

The Student Satisfaction Survey (SSS)



A Survey of Student Satisfaction with Counselling Services at
Prince Phillip Drive Campus (PPD)
Ridge Road Campus (ETC)
&
Topsail Road Campus (TRC)
October 1997

Please Read Before Beginning the Survey

To: All Students participating in the Student Satisfaction Survey.

This survey is designed to gain some insight into your feelings and thoughts about the counselling services that are available at the College of the North Atlantic (formerly Cabot College). This is an important endeavour because the focus of the Division of Student Services is **YOU, the student**. In order to consistently meet your counselling needs, we would like to find out a little bit about you and how we are doing in meeting your needs.

I would like to know your level of satisfaction with Counselling Services and also request some general background information about you. Participation in this survey is voluntary. You do not have to complete this survey, and you may opt out of answering any specific questions. All information is to be kept in strict confidence. It will be used only by the persons engaged in this study and information will be reported anonymously, on a group basis. Please DO NOT write your name anywhere on the survey. This is to further ensure that all data collected in this study will be strictly confidential and that at no time will any person be identified. All raw data collected during the course of this study will be destroyed upon completion of the study.

This information is very relevant to the college because it may aid in better understanding the current relationship between the students, your needs, and the quality of the services provided by Counselling Services. Through such an analysis and consultation with the counselling team, it is hoped that strengths will be commended and limitations will be identified and addressed. Opportunities for feedback such as this will greatly enrich the relationship between Counselling Services and the student, and help us fine-tune our services to provide you with the best services possible.

The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and has received the approval of the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland.

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US HELP YOU BETTER

Please start with Section I ☞

SECTION I

ALL STUDENTS COMPLETE THIS SECTION

Directions: Read each item and its numbered response. Circle the letter which best describes the way YOU feel. Remember that this survey and the information that you provide will be held in strict confidence and shall remain anonymous. Do NOT write your name anywhere on this form. Thank-you.

1. How long have you attended the College of the North Atlantic (formerly Cabot):
   A. Less than 6 months
   B. 6-12 months
   C. 13-18 months
   D. 19-24 months
   E. More than 24 months

2. Up to now what has your College GPA (Grade Point Average) been ?
   A. 4
   B. 3 - 3.99
   C. 2 - 2.99
   D. 1 - 1.99
   E. Less than 1

3. How many credit hours per week are you currently enrolled in ?
   A. Over 18 credit hours (Full time) B. Less than 18 credit hours (Part time)

4. Which of the following best describes the program that you are now enrolled in ?
   A. Engineering Technology
   B. Industrial Trades
   C. Medical Sciences
   D. Business
   E. Community and Applied Arts

5. Year of current program ? A. First Year B. Second Year C. Third Year

6. Which of the following BEST describes your reasons for taking courses at the College of the North Atlantic (Formerly Cabot) ?
   A. Earn a vocational certificate or diploma or complete an apprenticeship
   B. Earn credits for transfer to another program or university
   C. Improve present job skills or acquire skills for a new job
   D. Personal fulfilment or enjoyment other than above
   E. Other _____

7. What is your gender ?
   A. Male B. Female

8. What is your age ?
   A. 18 or under
   B. 19-20
   C. 21- 24
   D. 25-29
   E. 30-34
   F. 35-39
   G. 40-44
   H. 45-49
   I. 50-54
   J. 55 or over

9. On your application to the college, have you identified a special need which you feel may affect your academic performance ?
   A. Yes B. No

10. What is your present marital status ?
   A. Single
   B. Married
   C. Common Law
   D. Divorced
   E. Separated
   F. Widowed

11. Number of dependants ?
   A. 0
   B. 1
   C. 2
   D. 3
   E. 4
   F. More than 4

12. Which of the following BEST describes your highest level of formal education ?
   A. Less than eighth grade diploma
   B. Eighth grade but less than high school diploma
   C. High school diploma or GED equivalent
   D. Vocational diploma or certificate
   E. Completed one year of college
   F. Completed one to two years of college/university but no diploma/degree
   G. Completed two to three years of college/university but no diploma/degree
   H. More than three years of college/university but no diploma/degree
   I. College Diploma
   J. Bachelor's degree
   K. Graduate degree

13. While you are in school how many hours a week are you employed ?
   A. Currently unemployed
   B. Less than 5 hrs
   C. 5 - 9 hrs
   D. 10 - 14 hrs
   E. 15 - 19 hrs
   F. 20-24 hrs
   G. 25-29 hrs
   H. 30-34 hrs
   I. 35-40 hrs
   J. More than 40 hrs

14. Indicate your yearly total income range (Include Student Aid, EI, etc).

A.	Under $3,000	F.	$ 15,000 - $ 19,999
B.	$ 3,000 - $ 5,999	G.	$ 20,000 - $ 24,999
C.	$ 6,000 - $ 8,999	H.	$ 25,000 - $ 29,999
D.	$ 9,000 - $ 11,999	I.	$ 30,000 or above
E.	$ 12,000 - $ 14,999		

15. Have you used Counselling Services since enrolling as a student at the College of the North Atlantic ?

A. Yes B. No

If yes, please specify the GENERAL nature of your visit(s). Check **ALL** that apply:

- ☐ ..... A. Career counselling
- ☐ ..... B. Personal counselling
- ☐ ..... C. Tutoring
- ☐ ..... D. Use resource room
- ☐ ..... E. Use of CHOICES, National Graduate Registry (NGR), or other computer based vocational programs
- ☐ ..... F. Student Affairs issues (including Student Aid)
- ☐ ..... G. Other _____

IF YOU ANSWERED '***YES***' TO QUESTION 15, PLEASE COMPLETE **SECTION II** - STARTING ON P. **4**. QUESTION 16.

IF YOU ANSWERED '***NO***' TO QUESTION 15, PLEASE COMPLETE **SECTION III** - STARTING ON P. **10**. QUESTION 26.

THANK-YOU.



SECTION II

TO BE COMPLETED BY THOSE STUDENTS WHO HAVE USED COUNSELLING SERVICES

16. How did you first find out about Counselling Services ?

- ☐ ..... A. Instructor
- ☐ ..... B. During Orientation at the beginning of the term
- ☐ ..... C. Classmate/Friend
- ☐ ..... D. College Publications (i.e. Student Handbook, Calendar, etc)
- ☐ ..... E. Counsellor Classroom Visit
- ☐ ..... F. Coincidental (please explain_____)

17. How important are each of the following Counselling Services to you ?

	Receiving information about	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important
a.	Job Options/Futures	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Determining My Interests	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	College Regulations	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Career Guidance	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Personal Counselling				
e.	Time Management	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	Crisis Resolution	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	Coping with Anxiety	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	Coping with Depression	☐	☐	☐	☐
I.	Dealing with marital conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐
j.	General Stress	☐	☐	☐	☐
k.	Self-Esteem Issues	☐	☐	☐	☐
l.	Assertiveness Training	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Academic Assistance				
m.	Becoming a Tutor	☐	☐	☐	☐

		Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important
n.	Receiving tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐
o.	Student Success Sessions (on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Other				
p.	Student Aid Information	☐	☐	☐	☐
q.	Job Placement Services	☐	☐	☐	☐

18. Thinking about your past experiences with Counselling Services, please rate the following aspects of Counselling Services by choosing either Not at all Helpful; Somewhat Helpful; Helpful; Very Helpful; or N/A (not applicable).

		Not at all Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful	N/A
a.	The overall services provided by the Counsellors	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Help with your particular issue	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	The secretaries/front desk staff	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Academic assistance received	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
e.	Tutoring program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	Help with program stress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	Help with test anxiety	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	Help with time management	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I.	Help with personal stress	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
j.	Financial advising / concerns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
k.	Help with social difficulties	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
l.	Adjustment to college life	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

		Not at all Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful	N/A
m.	Help with family issues that may be interfering with my studies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
n.	Help with improving study skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
o.	Re-thinking present course/career choices	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
p.	Student Success Sessions (on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
q.	Discussing special needs with a counsellor	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
r.	Help with self-esteem issues	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
s.	Help to cope with Depression	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
t.	Assistance in deciding which program was right for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
u.	Completing an Interest inventory	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
v.	Help with Program Modifications (i.e., reduced course load, change of program, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. **Which of the following services should be offered .... ?**
(Please respond to each)

		YES	NO
a.	Career Information	☐	☐
b.	Help with Crisis Management	☐	☐
c.	Crisis Management Hotline	☐	☐
d.	Peer Tutoring	☐	☐
e.	Family Counselling	☐	☐
f.	Long-Term Individual Counselling	☐	☐

		YES	NO
g.	Help with Study Skills	☐	☐
h.	Help with Test Anxiety	☐	☐
I.	Time Management	☐	☐
j.	Full Time Job Placement Services	☐	☐
k.	More Computers on Site for Electronic Job Searches	☐	☐
l.	Help Determining Areas of Career Interest	☐	☐
m.	Special Needs Assistance (Physical and/or Learning Disabilities)	☐	☐
n.	Grief Counselling	☐	☐
o.	Financial Counselling	☐	☐
p.	Accommodating outside referrals	☐	☐

20. How long did you have to wait to see a counsellor ?

- ☐ ..... A same day
- ☐ ..... B next day
- ☐ ..... C. within a week
- ☐ ..... D longer than a week

Counselling Staff

21. How do you feel you were treated when you first came into Counselling Services ?

22. With respect to your visit:

		YES	NO
a.	Did the Counsellor make you feel comfortable before your session(s) ?	☐	☐
b.	Did the Counsellor make you feel comfortable during your session(s) ?	☐	☐
c.	Did the Counsellor make you feel comfortable after your session(s) ?	☐	☐
d.	Did the counsellor remain objective during your session(s) ?	☐	☐

		YES	NO
e.	Was the amount of time that you could spend with the counsellor adequate to meet your needs ?	☐	☐
f.	Did the counsellor seem to understand your presenting problem/inquiry ?	☐	☐
g.	Did the counsellor act in a professional manner ?	☐	☐
h.	Did the counsellor explain issues of confidentiality during sessions with you ?	☐	☐
I.	Was the counsellor well informed about current college services, policies, and procedures ?	☐	☐
j.	I became more confused than I was before I went for counselling.	☐	☐
k.	Did the counsellor listen attentively to you ?	☐	☐
l.	Did the counsellor make every reasonable effort to assist you ?	☐	☐
m.	Did counselling help you to deal more effectively with your concerns ?	☐	☐
n.	Would you recommend Counselling Services to your friends ?	☐	☐
o.	Based on your experience, if you needed further counselling would you return to Counselling Services ?	☐	☐

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

23. With respect to the physical environment of the Student Service office(s):

		YES	NO
a.	Was the Student Services office difficult to find ?	☐	☐
b.	Were there enough resources available on site ?	☐	☐
c.	Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the waiting area ?	☐	☐
d.	Were seating arrangements satisfactory and comforting in the counsellor's office ?	☐	☐
e.	Were noise levels outside the office a distraction during sessions ?	☐	☐
f.	Was the quality of lighting suitable within the counsellor's office ?	☐	☐
g.	Was the quality of air ventilation suitable within the counsellor's office ?	☐	☐
h.	Was the temperature in the counsellor's office suitable ?	☐	☐

24. Did you know that .... ?

		YES	NO
a.	Throughout the semester Student Success Sessions on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc., are offered **FREE** of charge to College of the North Atlantic students ?	☐	☐
b.	Tutors are usually senior students or program graduates and MUST be recommended by the course instructor ?	☐	☐
c.	Contracts are signed between the student tutor, the student, and the Student Services Division prior to tutoring ?	☐	☐
d.	Tutors are free and available to ALL students through Counselling Services ? (up to a maximum of 8 hours per semester)	☐	☐
e.	Group tutoring is available ?	☐	☐
f.	Program accommodations can be requested for students with documented learning disabilities ?	☐	☐
g.	Outside referrals can be made ?	☐	☐
h.	St. John's District has a Learning Disabilities Specialist on staff ?	☐	☐

COMMENTS - VOICE YOUR IDEAS !!

25. Do you have any suggestions on how we can improve our present services to you during your studies here at The College of the North Atlantic ??



THIS COMPLETES THE SURVEY. THANK-YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.

Please return this questionnaire to your Instructor when you have completed it.

SECTION III

TO BE COMPLETED BY THOSE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT USED COUNSELLING SERVICES

26. I have not used counselling services in the past because: (Please check **ALL** that apply)

- ☐ A. Lack of information / unaware
- ☐ B. I didn't have the time
- ☐ C. I didn't want people to know that I needed help for something (confidentiality)
- ☐ D. Everything is going fine in my life and at college
- ☐ E. Perceived cost
- ☐ F. Misunderstandings about quality of assistance offered
- ☐ G. Only people with "serious" problems use counselling services
- ☐ H. Counsellors were too busy to fit me in
- ☐ I. Other (please explain) _____

_____

_____

27. How important would the following Counselling Services be to you ?

	Receiving information about	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important
a.	Job Options/Futures	☐	☐	☐	☐
b.	Determining My Interests	☐	☐	☐	☐
c.	College Regulations	☐	☐	☐	☐
d.	Career Guidance	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Personal Counselling				
e.	Time Management	☐	☐	☐	☐
f.	Crisis Resolution	☐	☐	☐	☐
g.	Coping with Anxiety	☐	☐	☐	☐
h.	Coping with Depression	☐	☐	☐	☐
I.	Dealing with marital conflict	☐	☐	☐	☐
j.	General Stress	☐	☐	☐	☐
k.	Self-Esteem Issues	☐	☐	☐	☐
l.	Assertiveness Training	☐	☐	☐	☐

	Academic Assistance	Unimportant	Somewhat Unimportant	Somewhat Important	Important
m.	Becoming a Tutor	☐	☐	☐	☐
n.	Receiving tutoring	☐	☐	☐	☐
o.	Student Success Sessions (on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
	Other				
p.	Student Aid Information	☐	☐	☐	☐
q.	Job Placement Services	☐	☐	☐	☐

28. Did you know that ....

		YES	NO
a.	Throughout the semester Student Success Sessions on topics including Stress Management, Test Anxiety, Budgeting, Study Skills, etc., are offered **FREE** of charge to College of the North Atlantic students ?	☐	☐
b.	Tutors are usually senior students or program graduates and MUST be recommended by the course instructor ?	☐	☐
c.	Contracts are signed between the student tutor, the student, and the Student Services Division prior to tutoring ?	☐	☐
d.	Tutors are free and available to ALL students through Counselling Services ? (up to a maximum of 8 hours per semester)	☐	☐
e.	Group tutoring is available ?	☐	☐
f.	Program accommodations can be requested for students with documented learning disabilities ?	☐	☐
g.	Outside referrals can be made ?	☐	☐
h.	St. John's District has a Learning Disabilities Specialist on staff ?	☐	☐

COMMENTS - VOICE YOUR IDEAS !!

29. Any suggestions for improving counselling services ?



THIS COMPLETES THE SURVEY.
THANK-YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND COOPERATION.

Please return this questionnaire to your Instructor when you have completed it.

APPENDIX B
Demographic Information

Table B1: Sample composition based on campus.

Campus	f	%
Prince Phillip Drive	272	54.5
Engineering Technology Centre	169	33.9
Topsail Road	58	11.6
Totals	499	100.0

Table B2: Gender distribution.

Gender	f	%
Male	275	55.4
Female	221	44.6

Note. 3 students did not respond.

Table B3: Age distribution.

Age	f	%
20 or under	148	29.8
21-24	203	40.9
25-29	81	16.3
Over 29	64	12.9

Note. 3 students did not respond.

Table B4: Registration status.

Registration Status	f	%
Full Time (18+ hrs)	493	99.8
Part Time (18- hrs)	1	0.2

Note. 5 students did not respond.

Table B5: Composition of sample by specific program.

Table B5 (continued)		f	%
101	Business Management Accounting	24	4.8
102	Business Management HRD	16	3.2
103	Business Management Marketing	18	3.6
201	Graphic Arts Printing	8	1.6
202	Graphic Arts Design	8	1.6
301	Office Administration Information Processing	7	1.4
302	Office Administration Executive Option	13	2.6
303	Office Administration Legal Option	16	3.2
304	Office Administration Medical Option	21	4.2
401	Computer Studies	34	6.8
501	Community Recreation Leadership	17	3.4
601	Computer Support Specialist 3	16	3.2
602	Computer Support Specialist 4	20	4.0
603	Computer Support Specialist 5	8	1.6
605	Micro Computer Specialist	6	1.2
701	Early Childhood Education	19	3.8
802	Instrumentation	18	3.6

Continued ...

Table B5 (continued)		f	%
804	Communications	15	3.0
805	Integrated Information Systems	12	2.4
901	Architectural Engineering	10	2.0
1001	Civil Engineering	23	4.6
1101	Geomatics Engineering	17	3.4
1201	Mechanical Engineering - Power	12	2.4
1202	Mechanical Engineering - Manufacturing	9	1.8
1301	Electrical Engineering Technology	34	6.8
1401	Auto Technology	21	4.2
1501	Petroleum Engineering	19	3.8
16001	Respiratory	10	2.0
17001	Medical Radiography	12	2.4
18001	Medical Laboratory Sciences	21	4.2
19001	Food Service & Nutrition Management	15	3.0
Totals		499	100.0

Table B6: Number of months enrolled at the College of the North Atlantic.

Length of time	f	%
Less than 12 months	91	18.2
13-18 months	352	70.5
More than 18 months	56	11.3

Table B7: Program areas surveyed.

Program	f	%
Engineering Technology	202	41.6
Business	167	34.4
Community and Applied Arts	74	15.2
Medical Sciences	43	8.8

Note. 13 students did not respond.

Table B8: Reasons for attending the College of the North Atlantic.

Reasons	f	%
Vocational certificate / diploma / apprenticeship	276	55.6
Improve present job skills or acquire skills for a new job	133	26.7
Earn transfer credits for another program or university	48	9.7
Personal fulfilment / enjoyment	26	5.2
Other *see Appendix C - Table C1	13	2.6

Note. 3 students did not respond.

Table B9: Identification of special need.

Special need identified	f	%
No	479	97.2
Yes	14	2.8

Note. 6 students did not respond.

Table B10: Marital status.

Marital status	f	%
Single	395	80.1
Married	51	10.3
Common Law	39	7.9
Divorced	6	1.2
Separated	2	0.5

Note. 6 students did not respond.

Table B11: Number of dependents.

Number of Dependants	f	%
None	401	81.5
1 or More	91	18.5

Note. 7 students did not respond.

Table B12: Reported frequency of student employment in hours per week.

Hours / week employed	f	%
Currently unemployed	366	73.9
Less than 5 hours	22	4.5
5- 14 hours	53	10.7
15-24 hours	36	7.3
Over 25 hours	18	3.6

Note. 4 students did not respond.

Table B13: Reported annual income range.

Income	f	%
Under $6000	169	34.9
$6,000 - $8,999	124	25.6
$9,000 - $14,999	137	28.3
$15,000 - $24,999	29	6.0
$25,000 or above	25	5.2

Note. 15 students did not respond.

Table B14: Reported Grade Point Average.

GPA	f	%
3.00 or higher	286	58.8
2.99 or lower	200	41.2

Note. 13 students did not respond.

APPENDIX C
Student Comments

Table C1: Other reasons offered for attending the College of the North Atlantic

- To get EI extended	- Fast
- Educational Leave	- receive diploma and have an option to complete a degree (out of province)
- To get papers saying I can do what I already know how to do	- work chances better
- laid off from a job	- parents made me
- to find work in an interesting area	- to be the best
- to help me get into another course	- needed to do something - not sure what so I chose Cabot
- Co-op education	

Table C2: General nature of visit to Counselling Services - Other

- to see if I should enroll	- HRDC
- to get help determining GPA	

Table C3: Explanation for coincidental awareness of Counselling Services

- seen the room in the Hall	- I know one of the counsellors

Table C4: Student responses to the question "How did you feel you were treated when you first came into Counselling Services?"

Okay/good/ well

- ok, but session of no benefit
- good
- I was treated well. The counsellor listened to my problem and then helped me decide the best way to solve or deal with the problem.
- Fine - They were helpful with what I needed
- adequately
- fine

Very Well/ Very Good/Very Helpful

- very well
- "like gold by Diane Whelan - she's a sweetheart - give her a raise !"
- very good.
- pretty good
- very helpful

Quickly & efficiently / Excellent

- quickly & efficiently with respect to my needs
- Excellent
- problem addressed and dealt with immediately
- great

Friendly / Knowledgeable

- Friendly staff who try to do their best to accommodate students to the best of their ability. But understaffed
- Friendly & Knowledgeable
- informative
- politely

Respectfully

- respectfully with concern
- counsellor was considerate and kind
- with respect
- Fairly

Comfortable

- I felt comfortable & at ease
- I was put at ease
- welcomed
- comfortable environment

(Cont'd)

Student Loans (Positive)

- appropriate help given immediately before the issue became a problem.
- very helpful, NEIL showed me around the campus personally which was nice
- I attended MUN in the past and Cabot out does it. The staff is much more helpful and easier to confront and are excellent at explaining the loan process.

Like a Person

- like a person and not a number like some student services
- the way a person should be

Counsellors were attentive/ Interested

- pleased with their attention to issues
- caring & understanding
- interested in what I had to say
- took time to listen and give feedback
- given a great deal of attention

Important

- Important
- like my situation was important

Great - like one of the family

Getting the Run-around

- I just felt that I kept getting referred to someone else or told that they never had the right answers

Table C5: Students comments and suggestions for improvement.

Awareness:

- **Publish a newsletter** highlighting all functions responsibilities of student services.

- **Scholarship information needed**:- many times they are there but we aren't aware of them.

- **PLA** - more information re: previous learning for exemptions in courses. Experience and courses should amount for something

- **Info On Career Opportunities** - pay scales, job futures etc.

- **More awareness of Services**

- **Unaware of existing services**
  - make students more aware
  - let students know about CS through one on one basis or seminar in first year.
  - don't really know about the service to comment
  - classroom visits would be good
  - classroom visits to talk about work terms
  - advertize more
  - more information on enrollment
  - never heard of this the whole time I was here
  - make more visible
  - questionnaires like this (furthers awareness)
  - I am a tutor. I have not signed any contracts. Didn't know I had to.
  - make the info in this questionnaire known to students - REALLY known
  - more pronounced way of promoting counselling services
  - PA announcements

Reminder of Counselling Services

- Verbal Reminder of Counselling Services in classes beginning of second year

How to make students more aware:

- I believe conducting this survey gives out all needed information concerning services
- do you expect student's to read all the handouts given in 1st year ? Put up some signs !

Resources Needed:

- **More job placements for Co-op programs**

- **More Information On Programs Employability Rates**

- **More Rooms Available For Tutors**

- **Computer Equipment needed** (for programs)- the computer equipment and lab equipment is terrible.

- **Have More Counsellors**

- **Air Quality** - air quality in labs poor - very warm

- **Recreational Activities** - needed at TRC

- **Hire more staff** - like Neil & Ida

- **Better services** for Older students needed

- **Crisis management hotline** would be very important

- **Career Exploration** - more to help students find out what they want to do with their life.

- **Liaison type work** - For issues between the students and the college

- **For the Graphic Design Program**: - "the number of available computers does not match the number of students. More computers are needed to allow us to do our work and limit our frustrations"

- **Job Search Centre**
  - For summer jobs / work terms
  - job search board / employment services

- **Extra time needed with Instructors** - extra time needed for students to work with instructors i.e., math & electronics

- **Create Help Centre** - create with computers accessible all day long & working printers
  - time sheet for students to sign up on a specific machine
  - This is important because it is very difficult to get time during school for doing assignments on computer

- **More Active Role In Job Finding For Graduates**

- **Provide more help with Student Loan Issues**
  - student loans are needed as soon as possible in order to pay rent, food etc.,
  - put more emphasis on Student Loans

Efficient improvements

- **FAQ Computer** - have a computer there with FAQ on it to save student services time for 'real problems' - cut down on wait time

- **Year End Seminar Wanted**: at the end of Yr. I, a very detailed seminar should have been given to help students choose which option in the specific field would be best for them

- **Hours Of Operation** - extend hours of operation

- **Contact Names**: - a list of contact names and phone numbers might also help someone who people assume have no problems at all but is too proud to talk about them.
  - have an agenda of who is available and how to find them

- **Web page:** - a counselling page on the College's website for general questions and information

- **More counselling help from Teachers**: - teachers should notice when students are beginning to burn out and offer some sort of help.

Other Comments:

Positive Comments

- **Satisfactory**
- **Doing well +** - Service is fine - it is there when needed and NOT forced upon a person.
  - doing a fine job !

Negative Comments

- **Front Desk Staff not very pleasant**
- **Waste of time** - not needed at any point in my life

Student Success Sessions

- have a different time slot on Mondays and Wednesdays for these
- the stress management session should be moved to another time slot. I would really like to go but I don't want to miss class.
- Have Student Success Sessions available after class. The last stress management session our class couldn't attend because (it) conflicted with our class schedule
- I would love to go but they are during class time So I miss out
- provide sessions outside of class time (I wanted to attend but couldn't)
- schedule more than one

- **More Tutoring Hours Needed** - Eight is insufficient

- **More Tutors Needed** - Particularly for Accounting II

- **Tutor assistance** - get counsellors to get tutors for us ... not just give names to call (give us that option).

Table C6: Other reasons "I have not used Counselling Services in the past because ..."

- Work load too great to take time to see a counsellor
- Didn't get around to it
- Never Bother
- Haven't been here very long at this campus, may get a chem tutor.

- Went to family & friends whenever help was needed
- Rather talk to friends than strangers
- I like to deal with things on my own
- I can certainly handle all my personal problems by myself. If not, I do anyway.

- Didn't know exactly who to go to with my problems
- Did not know about different types of counselling offered

- Didn't have any reason to but I wouldn't say everything is going fine
- Do not need counselling
- Not really interested
- I just don't want to go
- Useless

- I assume a run-around and B.S. like the registrar's office, so I don't bother with any of the services that COLLEGE OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC has to offer !
- Everything was going fine before teachers didn't have a clue how to teach related subjects.
- Why bother complain about something if all the hot shots at outer ridge road are afraid to make a change in fear of losing their jobs ?

APPENDIX D:
College Consent Form

COLLEGE CONSENT FORM

Dear _____:

My name is Andrew Smith and I am a graduate student in the Faculty of Education, Memorial University of Newfoundland. In September of 1997 I am beginning an internship at the College of the North Atlantic - District 7, as a partial fulfilment of the Masters of Education Degree. Mr. John Harnett, Ms. Brenda Newhook, & Mr. David Touchings have agreed to act as my field supervisors and Dr's Denis Sharpe & Norman Garlie have agreed to co-supervise on behalf of the Faculty of Education.

During the internship I will be conducting research directly related to my program. The objective of the research is to gather and analyse data specifically related to student satisfaction and use of Counselling Services at the College of the North Atlantic. The survey shall address the following questions:

1. To what extent are students aware of all services provided by Counselling Services ?
2. How satisfied are the second year students with selective aspects of their counselling experiences ?
3. What are the anticipated needs of those students who have not used Counselling Services at the college?
4. Is the perception and utilization of Counselling Services influenced by selected demographic factors?

I am interested only in obtaining some of the students' general background demographic information, and their opinion of their level of satisfaction with Counselling Services. I am requesting of the participants that they do not reveal their identity anywhere on the survey instrument. This is to further ensure that all data collected in this study will be strictly confidential and that at no time will any individual be identified. All raw data collected during the course of this study will be destroyed upon completion of the study. This study may involve instructor cooperation and will take approximately 15 minutes of classroom instructional time to complete.

I am requesting your permission to conduct a survey of selected second year students during the month of September. This information is very relevant to the college because it may aid in better understanding the current relationship between the students, their needs, and the quality of the services provided by Counselling Services. Through such an analysis and consultation with the counselling team, it is hoped that strengths will be commended and limitations will be identified and addressed.

This study has received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Review Committee. The results of this research will be made available to you upon request.

If you are in agreement with this request, please sign below. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 722-7890. If, at any time you wish to speak to a resource person not associated with the study, please contact Dr. Philips, Associate Dean, Research & Development. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,
Andrew Smith

****

I _____ hereby allow _____ to conduct a survey investigating student satisfaction with Counselling Services at the College of the North Atlantic - District 7. I understand that all information is strictly confidential and no individual will be identified.

Signature: _____

Date: _____