A Research study to determine the student's views on the Paul Smith's college experience

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A Research Study to Determine the Student’s Views on

The Paul Smith’s College Experience

By

Lea-Ann Seymour

A project

submitted to the faculty of

Rochester Institute of Technology

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science in Service Management

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Abstract

Over the past years, Paul Smith’s College has been struggling to reinvent themselves and secure their place in higher education. Discovering the critical incidents which make up the students experience is crucial to the institutions survival. Paul Smith’s College must continually listen to the students in order to increase student satisfaction.

The critical incidents discovered were, the classes and labs, college food service, student activities, roommates and friends, faculty, staff, location, the resident assistant experience, orientation, and the residence halls. These areas must be continually monitored and restructured to assure student satisfaction. In order for Paul Smith’s to move in a forward direction, student view must continually be heard and constant change must become the norm.
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Chapter One
Paul Smith’s College Student Views

Introduction

Today, education can be one of the largest expenses a family or individual can face. When an individual or families purchase a house, car, an appliance or any item for that matter, customer satisfaction is the top priority. Almost every company strives to have excellent customer service to yield customer loyalty. LLBean, for example, stands behind their products 100%. This is not a guarantee you’d receive in higher education. If a student is not satisfied with the knowledge they have received or the accommodations, their money is not returned; they do not get a free semester. The student’s views must be heard and should be used to evaluate the staff, faculty, educational process and living environment.

Paul Smith’s College is an institution that teaches customer satisfaction to more than half of the student body in lectures, labs, and other events. Why do these same principles not apply in higher education? Paul Smith’s College must listen and act on the students needs and expectations. It is critical for every Paul Smith’s employee to become the student, only then will the student true needs be understood and met.

Background

In 1946 Paul Smith’s College opened its doors. It is located on the beautiful shores of Lower St. Regis Lake in the Adirondack Mountains of New York State. Paul Smith’s College was named after one of the pioneer hoteliers’ of the Adirondack Mountains, a man who hospitality and customer service were never a question. Apallos Austin Smith, better known as
Paul Smith, began his hospitality career as a guide in the Adirondack Mountains during the winter months. Paul soon opened his first Inn near Loon Lake, named the Hunter’s Home. This Inn catered specifically to male guests. These men came to the Adirondack Mountains to get away from the city and go hunting, trapping, and fishing. The Hunter’s House was far from a five star establishment but with Paul’s mother Marilla cooking, and Paul entertaining and guiding the guests into the wilderness, everyone left satisfied. Paul built an outstanding rapport with his guests through personal interaction and entertaining them with Adirondack tall tails. It was the satisfaction of his guest’s that lead Paul to build the famous Paul Smith’s Hotel in 1859.

Paul Smith listened to his customer, and later built the resort in the mountains where wives and children could also vacation. Paul Smith listened to these guests and met their needs. Similarly, Paul Smith’s College needs to focus on the problems effecting student satisfaction.

The first 52 years of Paul Smith’s College’s existence was strictly as a two-year institution. In the past few years Paul Smith’s has undergone many changes, now offering bachelorette programs, with all of its programs moving toward a bachelorette focus. There are many technological advances being made, or are in the plans for the near future. The appearance of Paul Smith’s has also been changing. Buildings are being refaced and transformed into the “Adirondack” style. New buildings are being build with the main focus being on an eleven million dollar Library and Adirondack Resource Building; The Joan Weill Adirondack Library. For the first time in a long time the Alumni, Trusties, and Friends of Paul Smith’s College are donating money into the College for improvements. Paul Smith’s has the new Spork Admissions Center, Saratoga Hall and Phelps Administration Building have been renovated, and the Culinary Labs in Cantwell Hall have been updated soon to include a new restaurant. The overall appearance of
Paul Smith's is also evolving, the campus is now much greener, with less road and more cobblestone lit pathway wondering through campus. The overall presentation and atmosphere of Paul Smith’s is much more appealing.

The student body at Paul Smith’s has also been making adjustments for example, the culture at Paul Smith’s is gradually becoming older. The more bachelorette programs that are added, increase the overall age on campus. Students are currently living in the midst of all of the construction. The quiet mountain campus has been turned upside down with several construction vehicles, constant changes in the pathways and just with general construction. To insure the changes are not affecting the students negatively they need to be well informed, listened to and treated with respect. The activities on campus should be chosen considering the wide age range. Ascetically pleasing structures and a pleasurable atmosphere are not the only things needed to make students happy. Through all of the changes at Paul Smith’s the primary focus must remain on the customer.

Problem Statement

If Paul Smith’s College is to survive, student perceptions about the College are extremely important to insure survival. Just walking around campus or listening to the students in casual conversation, one hears many issues. Students are constantly discussing the snow and ice removal, dimly lit areas and the lack of entertainment on campus. These concerns can be resolved, but require major attention and effort. Some of the larger problems deal with offices on campus, Financial Aid, Fiscal, and the tragic struggle with the College Dining Service. Overall students from Paul Smith’s speak highly of academics, but their experiences while attending must be
evaluated. Changes need to be addressed and implemented depending on student evaluations.

Based on comments and interactions with students, findings should be validated and acted on by the campus community. With the validation, acknowledgment, and implementation, fixing a problem or concern can change customer beliefs. Every department on campus needs to be made aware of the need for good customer service.

Purpose

There are many ways to assess the quality of education. Traditional ways may include a student’s grade point average or GPA, the school's name and reputation, and the caliber of job received after graduation. These, however, are not the only assessments of a quality education. The world today consists of an extremely well-informed consumer market. There are several choices and considerations to make when choosing an institution of higher education. A reputation, nor exceptional faculty do not insure student satisfaction. Colleges and universities could set themselves apart from their competition by also guaranteeing student satisfaction. Colleges and universities can insure a positive educational experience by listening to their student body. Paul Smith's College must set themselves apart and provide excellent student satisfaction.

This study at Paul Smith's College starts to understand student experiences and perceptions to ascertain how the institution can improve and begin to insure student satisfaction. As in other businesses when satisfaction increases at Paul Smith's College, the ability to attract and retain students will increase. Satisfaction could be the key to increasing the enrollment and retention rate at Paul Smith's College.
Methods

The population for this study will be the student body at Paul Smith’s College in the beginning of the fall semester 2000. The interview sample will consist of 15 students selected from the alphabetical student list, using every tenth student. Invitations to participate will be accomplished through an intra-campus mailing. Once the student agrees to the interview, a time will be set up that is convenient for them to meet and be interviewed. If the chosen students are not interested, not on campus during the semester or no longer attend Paul Smith’s, their name will be discarded and the next name on the list will be chosen.

The students will be informed that their names will not appear in the study nor will anyone else know their identity. Reference to a student will be made using their major and entrance date into Paul Smith’s College. Conversations will be taped and then transcribed for analysis. The students will be asked one question, “Tell me about your Paul Smith’s College Experience?” (the interviews can be viewed in appendix A). This question should prompt a plethora of responses, that can later be analyzed for themes and similar experiences so change can be prompted at Paul Smith’s.

After the student interviews are concluded and the critical incidents have been discovered, a student group will be used to further discuss the students critical incidents identified. The information received from the student interviews will be used to confirm the critical incidents.

Students are vital to the survival of Paul Smith’s. Areas of excellence found in the study were the extremely positive comments regarding the school’s location. Other areas where Paul Smith’s excelled were with the faculty, labs and classes. Students also have made positive remarks about the roommates and friends they have met while at Paul Smith’s.
Current Student Satisfaction Inventory, Noel-Levitz

In researching the effects of a positive college experience the correlation with retention cannot be ignored. If a student is having a positive experience then they are more likely to remain at that institution, and become a loyal alumni; negative experiences produce a negative student or the student simply will leave the institution. “Noel-Levitz is recognized nationally for helping colleges and universities affect change not only in enrollment numbers, but also in academic profiles, student body diversity, net revenue, retention and distribution of students by gender, academic major, and geography.” (Web page http://www.noellevitz.com/consul/enrollmt.html)

One of the Noel-Levitz’s surveys (appendix B) that Paul Smith’s has used is the Student Satisfaction Inventory. This survey prioritizes different student issues. First, the survey ranks particular topics, such as academic advising and campus climate. Then the students are asked to rank how well the school is currently serving them in that area. This survey is an excellent tool because the institution can determine what they are doing correctly and what areas need improvement. The information is also prioritized for the institution based on importance to the student. For example, if the student comments that their experience with the library is poor yet the library itself is not something they really care about then it my not be an area on extreme focus. Conversely, if the students find scheduling difficulties and that area is extremely important to them then it should receive immediate attention.

Noel-Levitz also compares the results to institutions similar to yours. Paul Smith’s College’s results are compared to other small four year private institutions.
Introduction

This chapter supports the need for Paul Smith's to initiate change in the areas that are most important to the students. During a students freshman year, the importance of their first impressions of the institution should be stressed. A successful freshman year is crucial to a student identity while in college.

The Freshman Year

When does a student’s college or university experience begin? What are the critical areas to pay attention to? These questions must be addressed when looking at a student’s total college experience. At Paul Smith’s the feeling is the experience truly beings when the student enters campus for the first time. First impressions are critical, therefore the experiences that a student has as a freshman can shape the rest of their college or university career. The book “The Freshman Year Experience” (Upcraft, Gardner and Associates 1989) has looked at several aspects that make up a students first year. Freshman success is crucial to a students experience. They state, “We believe freshman succeed when they make progress toward fulfilling their educational and personal goals:

1) developing academic and intellectual competence

2) establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships
3) developing an identity
4) deciding on a career and life-style
5) maintaining personal health and wellness
6) developing an integrated philosophy of life” (p.2)

The previous list is the responsibility of the student to assure their own success. There are also commitments the institution must make to insure student satisfaction and success. According to Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) “Institutions have an obligation to support and enhance the freshman year, not only because retention may be increased, but because it is our moral and educational obligation to create a collegiate environment with the maximum opportunity for student success” (p. 4). Ways that are suggested this can be done are through,

1) Supportive and challenging classroom experiences
2) Involvement in intellectual and extracurricular life
3) Faculty involvement
4) Treat with dignity and respect
5) Freshman seminar (p. 5)

At Paul Smith’s College the findings show that students feel positive regarding the supportive and challenging classroom experiences and the faculty. The expressions regarding the involvement in extracurricular life on campus were varied. Some students really did not care what was going on around campus. Other student felt the activities on campus are great where others
feel there was not much to do. Students did not comment on whether they feel they are treated with respect. In regards to freshman seminar, currently Paul Smith’s College does not have a course. If Paul Smith’s College wants to increases their students success then they must make a commitment to the campus climate. Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) state “in general freshman success is enhanced by a campus climate that”;

1) promotes student-to-student interaction
2) promotes faculty-student contact
3) offers on-campus, residential living
4) offers extracurricular opportunities (p.9)

Unfortunately, the above four improvements to campus climate are typically left in the hands of the student. Paul Smith’s does not take responsibility for student to student interactions past orientation. Also any outside of the classroom faculty to student interactions is not stressed enough to the faculty members, therefore, there are no consistencies. Paul Smith’s is a residential campus, and does offer an array of extracurricular activities that are typically the same from semester to semester. The activities have become standard, with little variation. It was noticed through the interviews that students in their first semester found the activities fun, wherein later semesters they typically do not attend the events.

The experiences that a student has in the residence halls and campus activities have a huge impact on the students total college success. Student must feel a sense of belonging and it is the institutions responsibility to make the tools available for the students to create a positive
environment for themselves. For example, if a student lives in an environment that is not conducive to their needs the student can suffer academically and socially. Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) make the suggestions that, "if residence halls are to have a positive impact on freshman retention and personal development, they must";

1) Be structured by professional residence-hall staff in ways that enhance freshman success, including the careful assigning of freshman.

2) Select, train, and supervise resident assistants who are interpersonally skilled and committed to developing a residential environment conducive to freshman success.

3) Develop educational programs based on principles of freshman developmental needs (p. 153 - 154).

Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) also state that "If campus activities are to have a positive impact on freshman retention and personal development, they must":

1) Provide the relationship between participation in campus activities and freshman success.

2) Involve students, student organizations, the community, faculty, and staff.

3) Be planned and coordinated by campus activities professional.

4) Be based on principles of freshman developmental needs (p. 154).

The comments made by Paul Smith's College students (Appendix A) all similar to the
critical areas that Upcraft, Gardner and Associates (1989) discovered. This supports the need for Paul Smith's to pay close attention to the freshman and entire student body, to ensure satisfaction.

**Out of the Classroom Experiences**

When a student attends college or university the actually class room time it a small portion of their total experience. Light (2001) makes the connection that a week has 168 hours, and of this time, most students are in the classroom for 12 to 18 hours. This paints a very strong picture for the need to have out of the classroom activities, where the students can spend time productively. An institution must provide extracurricular activities for students to help them pass time. These activities may be more powerful to the students if they can support, reaffirm or correlate with their in class experiences. At Paul Smith's there are examples of such activities as the forestry club, and the Junior American Culinary Federation. When discovering what makes up a students college or university experience the first idea that comes to mind are the academics, what goes on inside the classroom. The findings at Paul Smith's did show that comments about classes, labs and faculty made up only part of the percentage of comments (27.5%), so out of the classroom experiences make up the difference (72.5%). Other research that has been done on student opinions and experiences have also discovered parallel finding. Light (2001) stated, "I assumed that most important and memorable academic learning goes on inside the classroom, while outside activities provide a useful but modest supplement. The evidence shows that the opposite is true: learning outside of classes, especially in residential settings and extracurricular activities such as the arts, is vital. When we asked students to think of a specific, critical incident or moment that had changed them profoundly, four-fifths of them chose a situation or event
outside the classroom” (p. 8). At Paul Smith’s the critical incidents discovered outside of the classroom were, the college food service, activities, roommates and friends, staff, location, being a R.A., orientation, and living in the residence halls.

Extracurricular activities and student interests must be considered to make a well-rounded experience for the students. Light (2001) conducted numerous interview with students and reports; “A simple but enormously powerful finding that shines through interview after interview with graduating seniors. Those students who make connections between what goes on inside and outside the classroom report a more satisfying college experience. The students who find some way to connect their interest in music, for example, either with course work or with an extracurricular volunteer activity or both, report a qualitatively different overall experience” (p.14). Paul Smith’s must support all of the extracurricular activities student participate in, especially those clubs and groups that relate to specific interests and hobbies.

At Paul Smith’s the largest critical incident were the classes and labs, and the majority of the comments were positive. This finding is supported by Light (2001) who made a strong to connection with student satisfaction and success when the class sizes are “small” (fifteen students or less). Nearly every core class that a student takes at Paul Smith’s with the exception on “intro” classes are typically 25 students or less.

Conclusion

Paul Smith’s College must claim more responsibility for what goes on around campus. The literature points to the value of interactions and the positive involvement of faculty and staff in the students life. Faculty and staff need to become more of a positive influence on the students.
Currently there is one member of the faculty that truly takes a leadership role with his advisee and students. He always makes time for his students and is accessible when they have time. This faculty member is continually being recognized by his students as a true role model, inspirational teacher and a friend. Every faculty member at Paul Smith's should be receiving the same type of recognition. It is the authors belief that every faculty member should be competing for the students time and attention, in and out of the classroom. When the faculty and staff are totally committed to the students, then the students will strive for success.
Chapter Three
Paul Smith’s College Student Views
The Findings

Introduction

This chapter contains the graphs and results of the critical incidents uncovered during the student interviews. These graphs were done so that there is a simple view of the results of the Paul Smith’s College student views. The methodology is explained, how the interviews were conducted and students were chosen. Next, the critical incidents are clarified. Finally, the author’s discoveries are addressed.
Graphs of the Critical Incidents

Occurrences of the Critical Incidents

- Orientation 1.8%
- Roommates/Friends 7.6%
- Class/Lab 21.1%
- Dorms 1.5%
- Location 4.6%
- Food Service 16.7%
- Faculty 6.4%
- Activities 10.3%
- Staff 5.4%
- R.A. Experience 2.5%
Student Ratings of the Critical Incidents

Positive
Negative
Indifferent
Methodology

The students interviewed from Paul Smith’s College answered a very simple question; “Tell me about your Paul Smith’s College experience?” Most students found this question easy to answer. Some students went on to describe their years at Paul Smith’s, others spoke of their initial thoughts and reactions (the interviews are in appendix A). The findings were brought together in the following manner, using four steps.

Step One: When a topic was mentioned by more than one student, a critical incident was established. The critical incidents found, in no particular order, were orientation, college food service, roommates and friends, faculty, classes and labs, student activities, dorms or residence halls, staff, college location, and the R.A. experience.

Step Two: When the interviews were complete and the critical incidents established, each incident was broken down into the number of occurrences where it was mentioned. This number was divided by the total number of lines of student comments. This produced a percentage that could be used to establish how often the incident occurred. The result of this analysis can be seen in the graph marked “Occurrences of the Critical Incidents”. (see page 16)

Step Three: In the graph marked “Ratings of the Critical Incidents” (see page 17) the students critical incidents are dismantled into either a positive, negative or indifferent experience.

Step Four: This analysis was then presented to all of the Resident Assistants. They agreed the findings were accurate.
Critical Incidents and Discoveries

Following are the critical incidents students felt made up their experiences at Paul Smith's College. Paul Smith's College must focus on these critical incidents and strive for constant improvement and restructuring. The critical incidents that follow are in descending order based on the frequency they were mentioned. The discoveries of each critical incident are areas where Paul Smith's College can stress the value to the student. The discoveries may also locate an area that must be confronted.

Classes and Labs

The largest percentage of the comments were on the classes and labs, most comments being positive. This area should be monitored closely so that the percentage of positive comments continues to increase. The majority of positive comments were about the knowledge of the lab professors and chefs and how much the students value the hands on learning in the labs.

The student to faculty ratio is 14 to 1. Paul Smith's is also an enormous believer in hands on learning, so most of the students education takes place in the form of labs. The labs at Paul Smith's take place in the typical "lab" setting and others are in the woods, special culinary labs, a full functioning sawmill, and the many lakes and streams of the Adirondacks.

Many of the negative comments regarding the classes dealt with courses the student does not find the relevant, and with the repetitiveness of some information within different classes. Some of these areas can be resolved with
communication between the faculty members and with proper scheduling.

**Discoveries**

This was the largest critical incident where the majority of comments were positive yet there were still a large number of negative remarks. The negative comments are what should be focused on for improvement.

The atmosphere in the classroom is extremely important to the students. The current atmosphere students remarked about, dealt with the outdoor and culinary labs settings. These are the surroundings students can associate with, and thus feel more comfortable in. The typical classroom setting appeared to be much less appealing to the students. The feeling portrayed in the classroom setting was boring and repetitive. The students want to be challenged with a concentration on practical situations.

One comment stood apart from the rest because it dealt with repetition within particular courses and even within the same course. The student went on to state that because of the repetition the class was just boring to them, because he/she is not learning anything new. Here is an area where improvement is a must. At Paul Smith's the need to make the most out of every class is stressed. If there is an area where instructors are repeating information then that is a perfect opportunity to enter a new topic
of interest for the students. Most classes have only 45 hours to accomplish the objective of the class, this time must be used efficiently and effectively.

**College Food Service**

The college dining service on any college campus is typically a hot topic. The food service was the second most frequent critical incident. The majority of the comments were negative with few indifferent and the least comments being positive. Food service is an extremely important area to the students. For most students this is the first time they continually ate away from home. There is no one monitoring there intake for calories and nutritional content, typically resulting in the "freshman fifteen" or a noticeable weight gain. Many students were concerned with the fat and calorie content in the food they are served, others were frustrated with the lack of selection. The other issue addressed was a concern for sanitation in the buffet style sections. For the students the most important area to address was their concern about the lack of consideration for their opinion, regarding the food they ate.

There is a committee of students that meet once a week with the food service managers to discuss different food service issues because Paul Smith's College is more isolated than other schools making food service a unique challenge. There is one main cafeteria with different stations, such as, soup and salad bar, pizza and pasta, subs and sandwiches, hot entrees, grill station with
hotdogs and hamburgers, vegetation station, and the dessert and ice cream bar. The areas with a different daily variety are the hot entree, pasta station, while the soups and meat in the deli section go through a standard rotation. All other stations remain relatively the same, lunch to dinner and day to day.

The other dining option is “The Den” or snack bar. The variety in this area changes only with the daily specials. Other than the specials, the choices include a small salad and soup station only available at lunch, grill and fry items, sub and sandwiches, and pizza. The Den is also a cash or munch money (extra money put on your meal plan) only dining option, meaning that the student’s regular meal plan is not accepted.

Students are able to voice their opinions regarding the food service at the weekly student government meetings. From there the complaints and suggestions are brought to the food service managers through the food service committee. Here lies a concern with the chain of command. Are the student’s complaints being properly represented and resolved?

Discoveries

The discoveries in the food service were not all a surprise. If a person goes to a restaurant for fifteen weeks straight, breakfast, lunch and dinner, there are bound to be complaints. The area which demands attention is the treatment some of the student reported receiving from the food service employees. Food service is a large issue to many students, this is where they eat all of their meals
daily. The accessibility to different food are important to the students, there must be a variety of foods, so it does not become stagnant. The lack of focus on variety gives the students a negative experience which leaves them frustrated.

One student commented that when he spoke to an employee about a problem he was having in the cafeteria the reaction was as he stated, "just rude, just eat it. Your paying for it just eat it, it is not a big problem this what we do and can't help it if you do not like it. So starve if you do not eat." (appendix p.34) Other concerns the students had, dealt with the sanitation during production, storage and in the serving stations.

Students should also be able to feel free to communicate to the food service providers the type of customer service they would like to receive. All customers are different and individual needs must be addressed. These discoveries should be dealt with immediately. The students are paying customers and their concerns need to be handled as it would be in any food service operation.

**Student Activities**

The students that commented on the student activities, expressed mostly negative and indifferent feelings. Comments were that there is not a lot to do on campus, with little to no culture and music scene. In appendix C, the lists of
activities for the 2000 fall semesters and the 2001 spring semester are shown. When looking at the activities there is a large amount of repetition, with little to no new events. Many of the events that take place each semester are the same as the previous semester so students have several new activities their freshman year and few to no new activities thereafter. Most of the activities take place at night and on the weekends, to try and encourage student participation.

At Paul Smith's students are able to receive support for an activity that is not currently on the schedule for the year if at least 4 - 5 students are interested and the event is within a reasonable price range. If the event takes place off campus transportation and a driver are provided. There is currently not a student committee to plan and implement with new events. In the past there has been a student activities coordinator that has been responsible for planning, booking and managing all campus events.

The student comments were positive for all of the off campus weekend events, to concerts, city day trips, and seasonal events such as apple picking and ice skating. The events which took place on campus elicited conflicting feelings. Some students felt they were fun, others found them boring. One interesting impression a few students shared was about all of the students that complain about Paul Smith's being boring. They felt that you need to get up and get out, try new things, get involved in something. These students thought others complained when it was their own fault for not having anything to do.
Discoveries

What was noticed in the area of student activities is the need for new events each semester. It was discovered that freshman found the events fun and enjoyed attending, but older students had more negative comments regarding the activities on campus. One student had the suggestion that the students should have the opportunity to plan their own events. Perhaps not all of them, but every so often there should be an all student planned event.

The atmosphere on campus must change. Students need to understand the importance of getting involved. There are many activities that go on around campus, with new activities waiting to be discovered. The lack of participation from the students is what needs to be assessed. The students that attended the activities had a good experience, there just needs to be more participation.

The literature in chapter two stressed that extracurricular activities have been shown to enhance a student college experience. This becomes the perfect opportunity for faculty and staff to motivate students to there own success. If student are given the incentive with faculty guidance for special speakers, career based events and stress release activities then the participation in each event will increase.

Currently, the activities around campus are strictly for
amusement purposes only, and the participation is low. One answer could be to begin learning based events with faculty and staff participation. An example of this could be a cooking show such as the Iron Chefs, but with a Paul Smith's twist. Students competing against each other and one of the chef instructors.

When students create and plan events around campus they encourage the other students to attend. Perhaps the answer may also be to not have a student activities coordinator but a activities creation center. The center will have a staff member that assists students in creating and planning events. If the campus community is committed to the students' success then assisting in the areas student also need them should be a top priority.

**Roommates and Friends**

This category includes both friends and roommates because in most cases they were mentioned together. At Paul Smith's, roommates are chosen using the Meyer-Briggs survey (appendix D), a standard survey used by many colleges and universities. This survey is used to aid in matching students together based on inherent traits.

The majority of student had positive things to say about their roommates and friends. Few responses were negative, as some issues with roommates may be due to the need to triple (three students to a room) students in the beginning of
their freshman year. Unfortunately, due to larger freshman classes there are not enough rooms on campus to house everyone without placing them in triples. Typically, as students drop out the remaining students are placed in doubles. Also, the student life department, staff and resident assistance are efficient in assuring that roommates are compatible. When students do not get along with their roommates they are switched into another room.

**Discoveries**

In the area of friends and roommates the issues discovered were strong. This area is an excellent example were Paul Smith's should claim more responsibility. The careful selection of roommates can create an extremely positive atmosphere for the student.

There were incidents where students did not have a positive experience with their roommates, thus the students felt they were unable to establish friendships. When students are not placed in an appropriate environment, there is less chance for happiness and success. There are many new issues that a student must deal with when living in a residence hall. These factors come into play when dealing with new people as friends and roommates for the first time. One student reflected, the first residence hall she was assigned to made her miserable. She did not have the same morals as her roommate. Also the people living in her residence hall did things
that she would not do. Therefore, this student did not associate
with most of her hall mates. This student also stated that she was
much happier once she move to a residence hall that better suited
her personality and needs.

Paul Smith's must be extremely careful where students are
placed and not just throw them into a situation where they do not
fit. Some students are happier is the crazy loud environment of a
large residence hall and other students need to have the small quiet
atmosphere.

Faculty

The students that commented on the faculty typically had strong views,
either positive or negative, the majority of comments were positive. This is an
extremely important area at all institutions of higher education. Students need to
have a mentor, a person that they can connect with and can guide them throughout
their career.

Many students commented about how close they feel to the faculty. One
student summed it up by stating, “Overall, all of my instructors have been pretty
cool. I like that, you know you can talk to them, if you miss class especially if you
are sick, they are understanding as long as you go see them. They are always there
for you after class and things like that. They get to know you on a first name
basis, that’s cool. ” (appendix p. 26)
There were also negative comments about the competency of some of the instructors, as some students had a different opinion. These negatives will happen every now and again, but there must be a monitoring system set in place where the student's evaluation is assessed. When a student simply does not see eye to eye with a particular instructor the student has the ability to transfer into another class if another section is offered.

Currently at Paul Smith's, every teacher is evaluated at the end of the semester with a standard scantron evaluation. (Appendix E) The information is calculated and a copy of the total evaluation is given to the Vice-president of Academic Affairs, the instructor's Associate Dean, to the instructor and one copy is placed into the instructor's file. Currently, there are no in classroom audits done by the Deans and Administration on any faculty member.

**Discoveries**

The faculty was one area where a harsh reality was discovered. One student commented on the competency of some of their instructors. Overall they felt the instructors were knowledgeable and devoted but not always. This student felt that one instructor did not know what they were doing. He/she felt that their work performance did not suffer because one of their fellow students knew more than the instructor. Another student was personally offended by some of the comments that an instructor made in class. These examples create an uncomfortable atmosphere
for the students. This is something that should never occur, and
Paul Smith’s must investigate such allegations to assure the student
are getting the education that they are paying for, and the
knowledge they require.

The areas discovered where Paul Smith’s must improve are
with the consistency of education students receive. If students are
concerned with the competency of their instructors then the school
must take action immediately. When a faculty member is rude,
insulting and incompetent in the students’ eyes, it is Paul Smith’s
responsibility to create an environment students feel comfortable
informing other members of the faculty and staff. When a strong
connection is created between the students and employees of Paul
Smith’s students may feel more comfortable in informing others of
there concerns.

It is also important to mention that other students enjoyed
the relaxed atmosphere that is created by many of the faculty
members. The student felt this atmosphere and personal touch gave
them the opportunity to learn in a way that is productive to them.

Staff

The staff at Paul Smith’s College is categorized as all employees of the
college that are not faculty, including administration, the president and vice
presidents. On campus there are approximately 98 staff employees. The majority of students that commented on the staff at Paul Smith’s, had negative feelings.

The bulk of the negative experiences has to do with the administration of the college. The students felt that they were not listened to by most of the vice-presidents and staff. One student felt that the only vice-president that knew what was going on was the individual in charge of student life. The rest of the vice-presidents were out of touch with what was really going on around campus. Other comments were made about the inability of administration to change with the students.

These student can see an extremely simple remedy to his disconnect with administration, it just needs time and attention. Every business has difficulty changing their culture and restructuring the organization. New students enter the Paul Smith’s community every semester, thus changing the culture. Every employee of Paul Smith’s must be willing to adjust with the changing culture.

**Discoveries**

Student reports regarding the staff at Paul Smith’s were not positive. This discovery is critical to student satisfaction. As stated in the critical incidents the students feel they should have more contact with the administrators of the college. This is not a difficult request. Students enjoy telling their stories and issues to those that have the authority to initiate change. The students should be able to speak with the administrators when they have a problem and their
needs resolved.

The structure of Paul Smith’s is an excellent environment to get to know the customer. Most students live on campus and are accessible to the staff. The staff must seek out the students for feedback in their areas, so improvements can be made based on current student needs. Students enrolled at Paul Smith’s for the small friendly atmosphere, it is crucial to maintain that environment.

**Location**

The location of Paul Smith’s is in the Adirondack Mountains of New York State. In the students decision to come to Paul Smith’s, location must be a factor, because the school is 12 miles from the nearest town, 49 miles from the closest mall, and 100 miles to the nearest large city. If a student does not like a rural setting, then Paul Smith’s may not be the right school for them.

The majority of students interviewed felt positive about the location. A notable trend on campus is that the Culinary and Hospitality students typically have negative thoughts about the location and the Forestry and Environmental students are very positive about the location. It all depends on the student’s interests and hobbies. It was discovered that students do not associate the location of the campus with the activities. This discovery means, even if a student felt there was nothing to do on campus they still find the surrounds beautiful. One student stated “I also love the outdoors so when I stepped foot on campus I knew it was the
Discoveries

The biggest surprise found while conducting interviews were the positive comments regarding the location of Paul Smith’s College. Paul Smith’s is truly in the middle of the mountains therefore, not the location some college students are looking for. The interviews showed an overwhelming positive response to the location. Faculty and staff think that location is to blame when students complain there is nothing to do. Location is not the problem. It is time to dig deeper and uncover the true culprit to the unsatisfied students.

Students found the accessibility to the outdoors and the opportunities that come with that positive. Many students also commented about the experience of getting away from everything, thus they can focus on what they need to for school. Paul Smith’s has such a unique environment and faculty and staff need to stress and create an avenue for students to experience it. A emphasis placed on the location and the opportunities for those discoveries need to be an integral part of Paul Smith’s, for every student.

R.A. Experience

The resident assistant (R.A.) experience was reported from actual R.A.’s
or resident assistants. The R.A.’s are chosen based on recommendation letters, interviews, reaction to different situations, leadership abilities, and their ability to remain calm in high stress situations. The RA’s at Paul Smith’s receive a stipend of $100 and get a single room free of charge. There are also positions one step above an R.A., called a head resident. Head residents are students who have typically been a RA for at least a semester or an older student. Head residents have all of the same duties as an R.A., plus student management responsibilities. At Paul Smith’s College for the 13 residence halls there are 33 R.A.’s and 7 head residences.

The R.A. experience at Paul Smith’s is positive or indifferent. Most R.A.’s enjoyed having the challenge of being a mentor to other students, to work on their skills managing large crowds and to deal with emergency situations. The students that are given the opportunity to be a R.A. typically become more self-confident, have better time management skills, and have an excellent support system to assist them through school.

**Discoveries**

The fact this category became a critical incident was surprising due to the small percentage of students on campus that are RA’s. The students enjoyed being a R.A. because it gave them the ability to create their own atmosphere in their living environments. R.A.’s are typically more involved in the campus community and campus events. The R.A.’s are in the perfect
position to motivate and educate fellow students about events and activities. R.A.'s need to use their authority to help get everyone involved.

**Orientation**

Students did not have any negative comments regarding orientation. Research shows that a good orientation can successfully guide a student into a long and prosperous college career. Orientation should help students get acquainted with their new environment, community and way of life.

Orientation at Paul Smith’s College occurs during either in the summer or the weekend before the student begins their freshman year. Orientation is designed to have multiple purposes.

- To ease the new student’s mind when entering college
- Administer placement exams for math and English
- Immerse students into their new environment
- Educate the students about the services on campus
- Meet faculty, staff and other students

As in most colleges orientation is the first taste a student receives from an institution. Orientation may not rank the highest in the findings, but it should always be improved and changed based on the incoming student needs.

**Discoveries**

The students that commented on orientation did not have to
much to say other than they attended. This is a perfect area for improvement. Paul Smith’s must take the opportunity to create the atmosphere for the students entire college career. Educate them on the importance on involvement as first impressions are everything. Paul Smith’s must make a lasting first impression for the entering students.

Residence Halls or Dorms

The incident talked about the least were the dorms. Paul Smith’s College has a total of twelve residence halls on campas and one in Saranac Lake (appendix D). When a student is enters Paul Smith’s the are able to view the differences between the residence halls, and then are asked to give the Department of Student Life their top three choices. The students are not guaranteed a specific dorm, as assignment of rooms is a first come first serve basis. Therefore, as a freshmen the previous exercise can be meaningless. Returning students are able to choose different dorms and roommates for the next academic year via a lottery system. In the lottery system, all returning students are counted, based on that tally, each student is issued a number. The number issued is from one to the total number of students, for example, one to three hundred. The students then are able to select a residence hall based on the order of their number, so the student with the number one selects first and it continues on down the line.

There are many factors that can effect a students dorm experience at Paul
Smith's. As can be seen in the chart in appendix E, all of the dorms are very different and can offer different experiences. A student must assess what is important to them and make the appropriate decision based on personal and study habits.

**Discoveries**

Residence halls and the atmosphere within them create the tone of the student life while they are in school. The surprise here was that only a few students commented on their living arrangements. Perhaps students are able to adapt better into their living environment when they establish relationships with others in that same setting. This can be seen when students first in the lottery choose to live with their friend in the oldest most rundown housing on campus. Students create their new home with friends and roommates not necessarily with the physical building.
Chapter Four
Paul Smith’s College Student Views
Recommendations and Conclusions

Introduction

This chapter suggests short and long term recommendations. Short term meaning to be implemented in the immediate academic year. The long term recommendations should be the beginning or blue print for further research and studies of the student view of Paul Smith’s College.

Short Term Recommendations

Administration

In the short term, the areas that were negative must be addressed. These areas deal with the staff and the college food service. Recommendations for the staff would be to encourage a strong focus on customer service. The students are the voice of the school. They are Paul Smith’s College’s strongest promoters and supporters. The students are also our direct link to what is truly going on around campus. During the interview’s students stated that the administration was not in touch with them. This can be immediately addressed, by following a simple scenario.

1) Create a separate area in the dining hall for lunchtime chats with the key members in administration. The administrators are currently eating lunch in the main cafeteria but not all students know who they are and they are
typically in lunch meetings. If there is a separate section, then students can be introduced and the administrators and they can give the students their full attention. The administrators can also have the opportunity to display a topic for the day, where they are able to learn the student views for the areas they are responsible for. For example:

- Monday

  Vice-president of Facilities and Lands

  Topic: Campus construction

  Residence hall improvements

- Tuesday

  Vice-president of Enrollment and Campus Life

  Topic: Possible winter activities

  How to recruit in your hometown

- Wednesday

  Vice-president of Finance

  Topic: You and student loans

  Where your tuition goes

- Thursday

  Vice-president of Academic Affairs

  Topic: Academic advising issues

  Possible new course selections
- Friday

The President

Topic: How do you like Paul Smith’s
Ideas of the Paul Smith’s future

2) With the implementation of the schedule if someone is unable to attend on their day then they must have a replacement. The replacement can be other key staff positions such as the registrar or director of financial aid, an area where student feedback is crucial.

These lunchtime chats can give the student an opportunity to meet and get to know different administrators. Different clubs, groups and individuals on campus can have an opportunity to speak candidly with the Vice-presidents and President. Student will also be able to suggest future topics with each administrator. There must be an outlet on campus for students to voice their opinions and concerns about campus issues.

College Dining Service

Many student are not satisfied with the food and service that is provided on campus. The concerns that should be addressed immediately are with the lack of variety offered. The absence of choice is blamed on funding. This is a poor excuse for what may be a lack of creativity. A suggestion to break up the standard rotation in the food served is to create a theme night. For example, every Wednesday night there is a theme meal. The cuisine and music can be created and
executed in a fun manner so the student have an evening meal to look forward to.

A few theme ideas could be:

- Carribean
- Mexican
- Down South
- Italian
- Texas Barbeque
- The Wild West
- American Pub
- The Orient

The meals that evening can be planned around the themes. The staples at each meal should still be provided for those that may not like the theme food of the evening. The purpose of theme evenings is to create a fun new atmosphere for the student to dine in. The only difference is the music, food and perhaps even a non-alcoholic smoothie or punch will be something to look forward to every Wednesday night.

**Long Term Recommendations**

Currently, Paul Smith’s is in the process of renovating campus to what the board members, faculty and staff feel the students want. The question is what does the student truly want and need. The decision makers at the College need to become the customer, or in this case a student. Separately, different key members of the faculty, staff, board of directors and potential donors to Paul Smith’s need to “go back to school”. For a minimum of three to four days they should live, eat and play at Paul Smith’s College. They should not be allowed into their offices, or to do any office work. Many of our students do not have cars, so they should not be allowed a car. They can only have the resources that are available to the students. This time can also be the
perfect time to “go to class” and audit different instructors and faculty members. On campus no
preferential treatment will be given in any areas where the students similarly do not have control
such as, the college food service, gym and pool hours, and outdoor recreational activities. At the
very least the administration should live in the students’ shoes for a few days. The best scenario
would be if all faculty and staff members become the customer. This will allow them to see what
student experiences are and then make recommendations on what campus needs.

Another possible long term goal is creating an ongoing student issues board. Paul Smith’s
College is mostly a residential student base, meaning the majority of our students live on campus.
Student are fully immersed in the product of Paul Smith’s College. Therefore, students are the
best resource to find out what campus needs and what issues are of top priority to them. There
must be a continual rotating committee that meets with selected members of the faculty and staff,
to discuss the day to day student issues. Currently, there are student government meetings every
Wednesday night, unfortunately students are usually there alone. The student issues board should
be time set aside to brainstorm about how to make life better for the students.

Conclusions

Paul Smith’s College has many positives driving the institution forward, but the negatives
must be addressed and adjusted so the there is nothing in its path to the future. Paul Smith’s is in
the process of making some very big changes to the structure of the campus and in the way the
institution is run. Paul Smith’s must always remember their focus, the students. In conclusion
assessment in other areas should be a continual ongoing process. Student views should always be
the top priority to the faculty and staff at Paul Smith’s College.
Bibliography


www.noellevitz.com/consul/enrollmt.html

Appendix A
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

It has been ok, so far.

Meaning?

What do you mean by experience? Like extracurricular activities?

If someone asks you about PSC your likes or dislikes, what is your PSC experience, when you think about PSC what is it you think about?

Um, it would be with my major, forestry you are always outdoors that is a positive. What I don't like about it is being indoors in lecture, I am more of a hands on kind of person. Um, well the opportunities, to do activities and things to do, you just have to go out and find it. Um, you have to hang out with the right people basically.

For the PSC experience if you look back in ten years what do you think, or what parts of the experience are you going to remember? Anything from the first time you came onto campus up until now.

It is kind of hard to say because, it is only my second semester here, so it is kind of like you know
trying to predict the future. But um, what I can say is that, there is always something to do either with classes, with work and all, or trying to do certain activities. Like different sports, um, I think it has been pretty good so far, besides working with the students inside the dorms, with certain individuals (student is an RA). I think of it as being very active and busy. Um, some people stay very close to themselves and don’t want to interact with people. But in this college you have to actually go out and find something to do. There are a lot of things offered but they are all outdoor activities. It is not like living in a city that you can go to I don’t know movies and videos and stuff, game shows. Basically you do what you want to do and do it out here. What I mean by what you want to do I mean by actually going out and saying I am going to try this. And actually going out and doing it, and not saying, I will just go along, it is not a spectator school, you go to go out and do it. It is more active.

You mentioned something about not liking to be cooped up in lectures, do you think in your major you are in lectures to much for what the major is?

Yes, some of the lectures I have they are just telling you how talk, and do common sense that I believe you can learn by just being outdoors and doing it. Instead of talking about it, I think there are a lot of classes that are a waste of time.

Are those within your major or are they the extra classes?

Well, I think some are very important to do, you know read and write. Especially for our course,
math you need to know what to do because you need to know what you are looking at, how to convert numbers, how to look at it and what you can get from it. But what I am saying with some of the other classes, dendrology and soil management are very helpful you need to know the backgrounds on that and what you are looking at so those classes are ok, Um silviculture and intro to rec are ok you actually have to learn a whole lot of stuff before you get into it. Um, there are some classes that you take that are a waste of time, you just sit there and listen to the same thing over and over and it seems like each teacher is telling the same thing over, which is not bad but it is boring because you have to be at class. It is not like any other college that you just don’t have to show up and the professor just doesn’t care the are like you have to be there and make a big problem out of it. But like I said a lot of the stuff is just boring, like how to write up reports, what to do, I mean a couple classes that the teacher doesn’t even teach, you just pair up with somebody and pick a topic, and then each group will teach the class. Which I don’t like because you do not know if you are teaching the right stuff or not, you know? So, some teachers they you try to get a hold of that are not there, there are like oh, yah I will be there. Then they just don’t show up.

*Any other experiences that you would like to comment on?*

Not really, you know school is school.
Tell me about your PSC Experience?

My experience has actually not been really good or bad, I have kind of been flowing through. It would have been better if I wouldn’t have kept up the ties from my home town, if I wouldn’t have talked to those people. Like I came up here to get away, I am from central Pennsylvania it is a seven hour drive, so no one comes here. I got away except for that darn telephone, I can’t get away from. So I kept my contacts even though it eventually ended up bringing me down. Like especially at the end of last semester.

Bring you down how?

Well, grades and all.

The College experience is actually not that bad, like I have fun doing things but I had to much fun doing things. It was more like we were doing a lot of sledding, and skiing and stuff like that. I haven’t really been to a party since I have been up here. It is not really what I do. But, it might have been or would have been anywhere else if well it would have been a lot different. I don’t think that I would have had like the two friend I have. I was thinking of going to Penn State, main campus 36,000 undergrad, I think well I know I would have been lost there. Well, my best friend goes there and I went to visit him, his dorm holds as many people as that go to this school. He has a cafeteria in his dorm, he never has to actually leave his dorm except to go to class. That is crazy, it is the whole small school thing. But it is kind off bad too.
Appendix 5

_How is that?_

Every knows everybody. There is no outside there is no, everyone always knows when you are not around when you just want to get away you can’t. There is always someone You can’t get away.

_When you say you want to get away is that school related or just I need a little free time?_

Well a little bit of both, for me I do not think being alone is that odd of a request. But it is very, well I guess that is the way it is with all colleges. It is a new experience they don’t do anything to objective, because well people pick and choose what they want you to know, and then you get to know them and they are totally different.

_Now, you said that you have two friend, are they friend that you have here on campus?_

_Yah_

_Did you meet them in the residence hall?_

_Yah, actually they live next door to me. One lives on one side and one lives on the other side. That whole wing we kind of, we only got like a few outdoor, forestry, well not forestry but forestry type, people that would go outside. Everyone else is Culinary or Hotel Management and_
they do not like the outdoors, and they just won't go outside. They have never well, there is was one time they well, one person went on one hike, and is wasn't even that long of a hike.

Do you find it hard to make friends with other majors like Culinary?

It is not so much the other majors, well it is kind of the other majors, because I mean this school is the hard core forestry or hard core culinary. They are completely different, things there is no intermingling even the way they look they view the world, and their ideology, they are different types of people that go through different types of things. Like both my roommates were culinary. I started off liking the one I mean we can still talk, but no buddy associations. The other I cannot stand, they live in such a superficial world. I am not saying all culinary are like that by any means, or well maybe I am saying that actually. But that is just one thing that I have noticed, culinary and forestry stick together.

Why do you think that they all stick together?

I think that it takes a certain breed of person to go into the hospitality business, so if you are going for that type of thing you are more then likely that breed of person. You are more of a business person it is like you are bread to be that. Like you really have to want to do it because it is not easy work at all. The work determines who you are and everything else plays off of that. Like, they sit in there rooms and play play station, for activities.
Do you think that they do things on campus that you and your friends are not interested in?

Yah, it's only the culinary people that play play station for some reason, I don't know what it is, but, personally, well I guess I should have thought of that before I came here but, there is no music scene here at all. There is one course worth one credit, and then you just get together and play. Then one thing I have done that I have had the most fun doing is in music and that has all been off campus because there is nothing to do. They do provide a way to get there but you have to initiate it to get there, it is not like they come to you and say this is what we have. They are very good about providing when there is interest. I guess there is not a lot to do, the nearest town there is not even anything you can do there.

Any other experiences you would like to comment on?

Well now it is like the first level of students have dropped off. People that were here just for the college thing are gone. Classes are cut in half now, there is now a lot more one on one, well not even one on one but like more involved a lot more focused. You do a lot more.

Why do you think the students didn't like it?

They have to work. I don't know...like my Biology 2 class it is probable one of the hardest courses these people will ever take in their lives. I can see why, I had, I took advanced placement Biology in High School and without it I probably be in the same boat they are. Once
she gets going she doesn’t stop. You well the first semester Biology class was a cake walk, it was literally a cake walk, and people got used to that. Now this semester and she walks into class and starts going and goes until the end and does not stop at all. What I think the whole small school thing is, you come here to learn, there is not really well actually something like this you are isolated. If you wanted a place to go have fun you should have gone to a state school. I think I finally realize all the way through elementary school, middle school, and even first part of High School. Yah I need to work here. Maybe that is why the experience I had before helped me and others just didn’t have that and still haven’t figured it out. They just need to figure it out.

*How do you think they figure it out?*

I don’t know how I just know they have to.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

I like it right now, ah when I first started I was skeptical. Was I choosing the right field?

Were you skeptical only about the culinary field?

Well really about if this was the right college for me.

Why?

Because it is so far away from home.

Is that the only reason?

I was afraid I was not going to do well, but I am doing ok now.

Ok, so what is your experience now, you said it is different now.

Yah, I like it, it is really fun. More fun now.

What is it that is making you have more fun?
I like the activities, you know the different trips to towns. I did the game show once and that was fun. The hypnotist and especially the road trips.

*What other experiences have you had here?*

Canoeing, I like it here was the first time I have done it.

*When was the first time?*

Orientation

*Any other positives parts to orientation?*

I don’t remember, I just remember the canoeing.

*Back to your first semester when you were unhappy were there other experiences that contributed to that, or you feel could have helped you with it?*

Well me and my roommates we did not get along.

*Did you do anything about that?*
I moved before Christmas vacation. So that helped.

*Other experiences that might have affected your unhappy here?*

Just my roommates and being unsure about being here.

*What made you change your mind and what makes you happier here this semester?*

Because it is more easier this semester. The classes are a little easier this semester, I work during free time, and do school work and hang out with my friends.

*What made you decide to come back to Paul Smith’s?*

Well my family was rooting me on, and I wanted to come back, so I did.
Tell me about your Paul Smith’s College Experience?

Well, it has been one of adventure. A lot of bad times as far as education wise, especially with there upper division program. They didn’t put enough time forth auditing anything else into it in my opinion. They built the program around one guy and he is gone, so the program is gone. The actual challenge to what they set the program up to be is gone. So I do not think they put enough time into it. The two year program anyone can do it as seen by the graduation students. The baking program is good as far as learning techniques and everything like that but they don’t care who they graduate. They will graduate anyone.

Your feelings towards graduating anyone, how does that make you feel?

I do not like the fact that this years senior class has a students who’s graduated when they wrote there final in green crayon and passed the class. To me that is not the level I thought I was spending X amount of extra thousands of dollars of getting but that is the end result. It doesn’t impress me. I was guaranteed coming back into this program that they were going to selective on their student and to me the only selection they have done is can you afford to pay the bill.

Sticking with the selection, how do you think that selection affects you and your education?

They way I look at it is, well coming out with the Associates Degree you just have a background
knowledge of all the basics. With the Bachelors degree you should have the knowledge, you have got to have some skills there, and you have got to have people where this is the field they want to be in at least for five years, and you are not getting that. You are just getting a bunch a people that are hanging out in College for another two years, paying another well whatever it costs to live on campus. I am not impressed.

*Any other experiences you feel strongly about?*

I think the two things that upset me the most about this college is they lost Mr. Peters, fully understanding why he left, but there lack of attempting to hire someone new. When they did have someone who probably would have worked well, was very out going very new wave. They just turned him down in the end. That doesn’t impress me. As far as I am concerned they should have hired Mr. Cheney to take Mr. Peters spot. All they have done in the in term is create a problem where Mr. Wood doesn’t have the time and all of these new teachers that they are bringing in, well I can not say the new ones for this year but like Mr. Donaldson who was a great man really wasn’t an instructor, wasn’t meant to teach. That finance class was a waste of my time.

*Other experiences?*

I liked France!
I had a riot in France, I did. I liked France and I liked the fact Paul Smith’s has given me the opportunity to travel not only to Europe but to Alaska. I liked the fact well one of the reasons why I came to Paul Smith’s was the connections down the road. You should be able with Alumni to at least hook up with someone from area to area and be able to get a foot in the door that way, or hopefully get a foot in the door. That was one of the main things with Paul Smith’s was looking at their Alumni. They have a strong past alumni, I don’t know a lot about the more recent alumni per say but past Alumni are real strong. A lot of them own businesses and run corporations and that gives you a foot in the door.

When you look back on Paul Smith’s what experiences will you remember?

Finally getting into a program that was challenging, that wasn’t a regurgitation of information you actually have to think. It showed you where the industry was going and what it is going to be and is. Fun times. The only thing I can hope for Paul Smith’s is sooner or later that they started something with the Bachelors’ program that was really good and they get back on track with it and they don’t make the bachelor program turn into the associate program that they actually see that it is a form of higher education. You are paying a lot of money for it and it should mean something at the end and I think they have lost site of that.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

It's good, that is basically it. People complain about this School, but there is nothing wrong with this school. It is a very good school, a very good program that I am in so it is a good experience, I am learning a lot. Yah, that's it, it's a good experience I think it is fun. Just because there is nothing to do doesn't mean it isn't fun. I find stuff to do so it is a good experience it is fun. There is a lot of stuff to do.

What are the things that you do and find to do?

Well, I visit people, I walk around. I am a social kind of person so I can go anywhere and people know me. Why I don't know.

Could you elaborate a bit more on what you mean when you say that it is a good experience?

Teachers are cool. They are actually on a teacher, student, I am your friend, Mother, Father, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin kind of thing. It's actually like that, because it is a small school and with a small teacher ratio, like they say ten to one, not that it is exactly like that but you know. They know you, they really know you, they know your name by the second day, and they know you from other teachers. It is just they are there to help you and be your friend. That is a good experience, you need that home away from home.
For you Paul Smith’s has created that feeling?

Yes

Any other experiences you feel you have had here at Paul Smith’s you would like to comment on?

The stuff that goes on, the night life that goes on here at Paul Smith’s College. The little night games they have, stuff to do that makes it fun you just go have fun. The game shows, the hypnotist guy, and wax hands and the sumo wrestling it is just fun.

So you have been involved in all of those activities?

Oh yah you better get involved in something or you will get board. That’s what happens they complain about how boring things are, but yet those are the people sitting in their rooms not doing anything, watching TV. Get up, get out and do something, or read a book, study, do some homework.

Well it sounds like all of your experiences here have been positive?

Yes, I am a positive guy you have to be positive.
Why?

Why, because otherwise you are pouty, pouty all day and all of the time. Who wants to be pouty, if I am pouty that makes you pouty and now there are two pouty people. Somebody got to be happy to make other people happy you have to be positive to bring other people up. So that's what I do I am positive. You know I like it here, it's fun.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

It has been really good so far, I am learning a lot of stuff. It is fun, you know it is all alright to me.

Can you elaborate a little bit to tell me what you have been learning?

I am learning how to do everything along with the cooking, how to run the bakery and all of that stuff.

So you feel that you are more competent in your skills?

Yes, overall I am more confident in everything I do in my field.

Any other comments about Paul Smith's?

Yah, Buxton.

Ok, tell me a little about Buxton?

The food is horrible.
Horrible how?

I don’t know it is just the same stuff all of the time. It just doesn’t taste good.

What do you think they can do about it?

Nothing

You do not think that they can do anything about it?

Probably not.

Would you say that your biggest complaint here would be the food?

Yes, that would be it.

Is there anything at Buxton that you think they do right?

The drinks are alright, they can not do too much to them. The ice cream is alright.

Do you find that Buxton is hurting your experience here at Paul Smith’s?
I don't know I just spend more money at the snack bar.

Do you find the food at the Snack Bar ok?

Yah it is ok.

What type of food do you eat at the snack bar that you can not get up at Buxton?

Well, a turkey club.

They do not make turkey clubs at the sandwich station at Buxton?

No, well I mean if you tell them how you want it made, and they do not have a toaster for one thing.

Do you think that you would be happier with Buxton if there were a toaster at the sandwich station?

Yah, probably, you know it would make sense to have a toaster.

Tell me more about the variety at Buxton?
The variety just does not change enough. The quality of the food, you know. I mean the food looks like it is cooked alright so I do not think that it is a problem there. I think it is the food they buy. Anyway I have a micro fridge now so I do not have to worry about it as much.

*Are there any other experiences you would like to comment on?*

Well, there is nothing to do on campus.

*What about the student activities?*

Well I guess they are alright, I never really go they are to late. I do think that they should put Bakers together as roommates, because we have to get up so early.

*Would you go to the activities if they were at a better time for you?*

No, probably not.

*Are there any activities here that you do like?*

Snowmobiling.

*Do you have to go home for that?*
No, I brought my sled up here.

_Have you met people here to go snowmobiling with?_

A couple.

_Any other activities?_

I watch T.V.

_Do you have any suggestions for activities that you think might help?_

Yah, a 24 hour loud dorm, they have a 24 hour quite but not a place we can play music and not have to worry about getting in trouble.

_Would you want to live there?_

Sure, oh I have one more thing. Parking behind maintenance, it is a pain in the ass. You know a kid got his car smashed up and stuff. You know if I was parking right next to my dorm someone would hear it, out there someone can break in, vandalize, you know that kind of stuff because no one can see or hear it.
What do you think security has done about it?

Well I think the fact is that it is way out there, nobody hears anything or sees anything happen. It just makes me a little nervous having my car out there. I have seen State Troopers go through there every so often since that incident but I am not sure it really helps.

How do you think the parking could be changed or adjusted so you would feel better?

I do not know, they say it is because there were so many Freshman this year, so I guess there is nothing they can do about it.
Please tell me about your Paul Smith’s College Experience?

I like my Paul Smith’s College Experience, I really have no complaints. I can not wait to graduate because I am very anxious to move and do something. Overall I liked it, you know the courses and studies, I have not had any problems with that. Campus Life is pretty decent, you know there are few corks here and there.

Such as?

Administration, and stuff like that. Some things that they do it seems like they do not want to change.

Do you have any examples?

Yes, Graduation. It sucks in the gym and they are very unwilling to change. You tell them that you guys never change anything and they say look we gave you a library and a new front entrance to the school, but I do not remember anyone ever asking for that. Well there is a lot of stuff, well it seems like they are stuck, it is a core group of people that have been here for years, and every year it is the same thing they do not want to change. New ideas are not taken with a lot of enthusiasm. Everyone is upset with how change might effect their job, they are kind of in a rut
doing things over and over again.

*Do you have other examples of that?*

Yes, the food in The Den. It has been the same menu since I started here in 1997. The prices have not change, that is a good thing but the food has not changed either.

*Have you made suggestions or do you know if other students have made suggestions?*

Yes, people have. They did make a few different changes, but the menu itself has not changed, but you have to ask for certain things like mozzarella sticks and chicken fingers. Like you have to ask if they have it, it is not advertised that they have them anywhere. The people that work there are kind of grumpy at times.

*Let's go back to the issues you have with administration, do you have other examples?*

Well I see a lot of thing, policies... I know you see people in the beginning of the year and they tell you there door is always open. Like, Mr. Robertson they tell you that you are more likely to see him in the Sawmill and in the Culinary Labs then you are in his office and no one ever sees him. Also, they never come to student government meetings, Mr. Banks comes to every one and I have a ton of respect for him, he listens to what the students want and really wants to make things change. You just do not see any other of the Vice-Presidents walking around or sitting in
on a class. They just go about their daily business.

You said that you feel Mr. Banks truly listens to what the students have to say, do you feel the others do not?

It is not that I feel they do not care but because Mr. Banks is in charge of campus life and he has to deal with students directly it is part of his job, but he seems to personally take an interest in it too. It is where the other ones like, Mr. Real, his is the one in charge on academic affairs? Yah, he should be talking with students more. Mr. Robertson he has all of those other duties, it would be good to see him. He does show up to things but he seems really out of touch on the day to day stuff.

Other experiences?

Overall, all of my instructors have been pretty cool. I like that, you know you can talk to them, if you miss class especially if you are sick, they are understanding as long as you go see them. They are always there to help you after class, and things like that. They get to know you on a first name basis, that’s cool. The Chefs have been great, you can tell they love what they do, they actually put a lot of effort into it, and you get to have a good rapport with them. Chef Wood is just cool, he is good to talk to.

Back to the Den, how do you feel the incidences you described have effected your Paul Smith's
Experience?

Let's see, ok, say I for some reason I miss dinner at the cafeteria, which the food up there is decent, I have never had any real serious problems with it. So you have to go to the Den, it is the same thing that haven't changed. So you ask do I want a hamburger or do I want a chicken sandwich? There is no real inventiveness. It would be nice for example if the salad bar was open all the time instead of just lunch. The do a phenomenal effort at lunch, if you go in there they have pizza, sandwich specials, four to six different kinds of coffee. Then you go in there after seven o'clock and there is nothing. There is one coffee, you do not get to choose if you want a flavored coffee or if you want normal. It is also behind the counter you don't even know if it is decaf or not. They don't have salad out. You don't want to ask the people because they are not real friendly, they really do not want to put in any more effort then they have to. I kind of bugs me because I know quite a few of them, I am friendly with them. I understand what they go through, it is tough, here they are directly cooking food for people, but they are not friendly at times. I joke around with them, we will joke, I tell them that service sucks, then they half joke with me and make me feel like I am burdening them. Then I will see how they act with student that they do not know, and they give them an attitude if they want something a little different then what is on the menu and has been on the menu for at least four years now.

*Have you or other students you know of talked to the managers about them?*

I know that there have been concerns about the customer service at The Den.
Have you seen an improvement since the concern has come about?

I don’t know, maybe a little bit. See now it seems like they are edgy now too, because they want to know who complained. They are even more defensive, like one of the girls that work there that is a student, said one of the other ladies that works there professionally, is really upset because she thinks that she is going to get fired because she does not have customer service skills, and she doesn’t know the hospitality industry, this is just her part time job. But is doesn’t matter if you don’t know the hospitality industry you are still in it and you have to be hospitable.

Do you think that is just the people in the Hospitality industry that have to worry about customer service skills?

No, everybody does, anytime you deal with customers you have to worry about it. Well, even not dealing with customers, it is just being socially responsible, you should try and be nice to as many people as possible. I try to, people think that I am not nice at times, but for the most part I try to be really really nice to people.

Other experience you would like to comment on?

Yes the people here, I have just gotten so close to the people. You can not forget the weather and the environment, which can be a negative and a positive, it is just beautiful. I do not think that I will live anywhere else that I can walk forty feet to go fishing, and that has been great.
Even some of the things that bother me I will still miss because there is a certain amount of cockiness to it.

*What are some of the things that bother you?*

Sometimes things here just seem a little bit backwards. Half the time when it is busy you can not get onto the Internet because the server is slow. They make a big deal about taking away every bodies cable, because we are going to get T1 lines, then you find out the lines are not going to come until mid way through the year and there are only four buildings that ended up having them because they didn't end up saving the money they wanted to save. So you have people in four buildings with the potential of having T1 access then they have to pay $100 too. So you think what is the catch? So even though it kind of frustrates me because as a student you want your voice heard, you still have to sit back and laugh at it, because no one is doing it maliciously. Look at the administration, it is not like they are ultimately benefitting from it, they are just pretty much normal people. They are not driving fancy cars and wearing nice three piece suits, they are just like my parents. At least you know they are not personally benefitting from it. Even the trustees, you think that they would be well I don't know. But then you meet some of them and they are just normal people, they just seem to come out of the woods to hang out. I like that, it is that kind of cockiness that I like. I know a lot of people, like instructors, even if they are not in the hospitality division, I still know them. Maybe I had a class with them or I sat down with them at lunch and got to know them. I like that and that is what I am going to miss.
You feel these are the things that make Paul Smith's, Paul Smith's?

Yes, especially when we went to the Hotel Show, we were talking to this girl from Virginia Tech. and she couldn’t believe the things that we can do here. We can have a little charcoal grill outside of your dorm and you can cook, she said they can’t do that. She said she knows these martial arts guys and they have to keep there stuff locked up in the Police station. She couldn’t believe you can have a chain saw in your room as long as you take the gas out. You can bring your guns to school so you can hunt here. The girl was just shocked and couldn’t believe that it was allowed. It is just special here, it is different here then a lot of places. You do have to get used to thing, like you can not walk to the store, you have to drive to town. Here it is defiantly a place you can feel comfortable. Here they can not do anything about the geographic location but they still do enough stuff to get you into town if you need it. There is enough going on, on campus that really you don’t have to leave your dorm at all, well sometimes it is too much and people actually don’t leave their dorm. I just think that it is was great experience. It was a different environment, I came from well I live in the city, then I came up here. I am ready to go back to the city but I am going to miss it.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

Well when I first started?

Yes

I started in the Spring of 1998, I was a full time landscaper with my Dad. I decided that it was not for me so I always had a part time job cooking, so I decided to come here. The way I was accepted I was really happy with it, see being a non traditional student I was accepted pretty well by all of the, you know, the staff and students and everything. I have had a good time so far and met a lot of people. The only reason I came back for another two years was because of the faculty and staff, they bend over backwards for you, they will do anything you want, they do extra hours, that really impressed me. That personal touch that they give you I like a lot and it has been a good experience.

Any other experiences you would like to comment on?

Sure, the first semester I was here I was not an RA, I had a roommate that I really did not care for, I think I had an 18 year old roommate at 27 years old, and we just did not connect. Anyway, I decided to become an RA, to meet new people and get involved a little bit. I was an RA for 6 semesters, then I ended up being a Head Resident for another 2 semesters. That has made me
learn a lot about others people and myself. Being an RA will be great for my resume too, I have learned leadership skills, how to talk to people and how to manage big crowds.

*Any other experiences?*

As far as the curriculum I am in, the Culinary Arts and Service Management, I think that it is one of the best programs here, just because the way all of the Chef Instructors are well, they know their stuff and teach it well. They also have a lot of patience for the kids that do not know anything or are new at it. The overall experience has been wonderful, but I am happy I have only seven weeks left.

*So you would sum up that all of your experiences at Paul Smith's have been positive?*

All of them except the Buxton experiences. I have never enjoyed there food, I don't like the way that it is prepared. I don't know if it is just me or if it was them, but Buxton and I have had it out a couple of times, but I still do not eat there and I haven't eaten there since I have been here.

*Then where do you eat?*

Well I go into town, I eat in my room, sandwiches and stuff like that.

*When you say Buxton, do you mean the cafeteria and the snack bar?*
I would say the cafeteria more then the snack bar, I think that the snack bar is better because the food is prepared right there for you and it is not cold, and I can see who is making it. At the cafeteria I don’t know how long it has been sitting out there and I do not know who is making it and it just makes me a little weird. Plus everyone sticking there hands in there, and I am not a big fan of that. Ever since I started taking classes here with sanitation and stuff, well sanitation was the big one. There are so many diseases you can get just by people touching the food, it just grosses me out.

_It is just Buxton where you get grossed out with buffet style food or is it anywhere?_

Anywhere buffet style I am pretty much grossed out. Over vacation I ate at a breakfast buffet and I was still grossed out. They take the tongs and through them back into the pan, right onto the food. Then you have people picking up food with there hands, and we are talking people from anywhere, it is just disgusting. So yah, when I think about it I just it is just the whole buffet thing.

_When you voiced your concern to Buxton, did they listen to you and resolve the issues that you had?_

Ken did, see we had an argument a few summers ago about the food. We patched things up, he explained to me that he could only do so much and there is only so much available with the food and workers and this and that. So he was really good to me, but as far as Lilly went she was kind of nasty and I still don’t really talk to her.
Nasty How?

Just rude, just eat it. Your paying for it just eat it, it is not a big problem this is all we do and can't help it if you do not like it. So starve if you do not eat.

How do you feel about the changes that they made over the summer? Have you been up to Buxton since the summer?

Yes, actually I have been up there a couple of times this semester because I had to. I like the new sub thing, if I do go up there I will eat at that place. I guess it goes back to, I can see and I know who is making it and she is sanitized or has gloves on, you know stuff like that. It just makes me more comfortable, it could just be a mental thing, I don't know.

Because of the issues you have does that make you feel that the quality is bad too, or is it just the sanitation issue?

I do not think that the quality of the food is bad, well some stuff is sketchy but you will find that anywhere. The quality is up there, I think it is the way it's prepared and once is comes out it is not properly taken care of in the bins and it does slip into danger zones. I think they need to have some system when the students get their food, maybe have a box of gloves there or extra tongs so students don't end up using their hands. Even if they had people serving the buffet line for you that would be better.
Are there any other suggestions you feel could improve your experience at Buxton?

No, not really. Ken has done a wonderful job, I mean he hears it constantly about how bad it is or this and that. He doesn’t take it to heart, he does the best he can with what he has, and I appreciate him for that.

Any other experiences you would like to comment on?

I would just like to go back and say that the experience that I have had here is wonderful. The teachers’ have been wonderful. I just can’t see myself learning at another establishment, you know culinary arts. The weather here is not the best but it’s good for studying, to me, you know you are confined to your room and you do have to do stuff. I am not a big winter sports fan but I make the best of it, it is just a good place to learn.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College experience?

Well it is the Adirondacks and that's great. It's different then all of the other schools.

Different How?

Well, our program is different then programs at other schools, we are more hands on then they are. Our program we make sure that we understand it before we actually do it. Another program that I know has a dinning room that the first year students run. They only learn from their mistakes and don't know how to do it until it is to late. At that place you can go buy your lunch or whatever and they do not learn from their mistakes until they have made it to a professional level. Here we do it before we do it and then we get sent out to do our Externship and or Internship, you know stuff like that. As for the experience there is not as much to do as other colleges because they are closer to towns, but we have things to do they are just at a harder level. We have the Adirondacks to deal with the mountains, the trees, the forest and all of the other stuff to deal with. It is just a 100% better then any other college so far.

Tell me a little more about your experience here?

Well the biggest experience so far on campus would have to be the Culinary Salon. Staying up until all hour of the morning, getting almost no sleep for almost four days. That was honestly the
biggest thrill of my life so far. You not only get to do that but then you get praised for it, which was not part of it or part of your reason for doing it, but is was really rewarding at the end.

The trips we have, all of the that I have taken so for that are experiences that I would never imagine taking. I would have never gone to Montreal and seen a Baseball Game up there or even just seen the strips. I would have never gone apple picking, we went to Vermont and picked apples.

*Did you take all of those trips with Student Activities?*

Yes, it is things like that, I would have never imagined myself being in the Adirondacks if is wasn’t for Paul Smith’s. I love it up here but I just would not have seen myself here if it was not for a program like the one they have now. The experiences always come you just need to realize them when they come. The experiences everyday getting up just seeing what you are going to have, snow, no snow or what. It could be a sunny day it could be a blizzard day, every day can be an experience, that is what I take it as. Oh, also when we fill orders for other people. When we make desserts for student activities and family weekend, it is all building experience. It is part of your education but you are actually building your experience. You have made the mistake once in class and now you are doing it a second time and you learn from your mistakes, which most on the teachers will say that you learn from your mistakes so if you learn from that it is great.

*How else do you feel that you have been able to learn from your mistakes?*
Working at the Buxton Cafeteria I do 50% of the catering, you know I help out with catering. See there is something else that I never thought that I would do catering, and that is one of the experience that I truly enjoy.

*Tell me a little bit more about working for Buxton, how do you like it?*

At the moment I am not liking is so much. It is the fact that they cut everyones hours. It is a great opportunity, I do dishes most of the time but I consider myself a strong worker because when someone doesn’t come in they call me. I can do sub, pizza, and I also do catering and that is where you get to be the most creative because you have to make the presentation look great, and it is a very interesting and exciting thing to do when you get to be creative.

*So the only reason you do not like it right now because they cut your hours?*

Yeah, I used to work 5 days out of the whole 7 days, and now I am down to 2. Before I had all this stuff to do and now I have nothing to do. I am not there just for the money but I went from $100 or so every 2 weeks to a $25 pay check every 2 weeks. I love working for Buxton and everything but sometimes they can be real pains.

*Pains how?*

Well, you will be doing stuff and then for some reason come up with a new stipulation that you
can’t do it one way you have to do it this way and it is more of a corporate decision than a clientele decision. They do it because corporate wants them to but the student may not want it that way.

*Do you have an example of that?*

Well, I would have to say our food variety. Week in and week it is the same thing, a corporate set thing, like in the beginning of the year we could do a variety of things and now it is a corporate thing where every Saturday and every Sunday are the same. There still some variety but everything is still the same. Every month it is the same dish every month. All of the dishes we had this month we will have next month. There is no change for new ideas. It get redundant after a while, there is no big variety. They always have the subs, pizza and salad bar but those are the things that are every day, and people eat them. It is the main entree that gets redundant after a while.
Tell Me about your Paul Smith's College experience?

I picked this school because it is a small school and I come from a small town so I felt comfortable with the small school. I also love the outdoors so when I stepped foot on campus I knew it was the place I wanted to be for four years of my life. You have to be comfortable with your school and I just clicked with Paul Smith’s.

Do you know what is it about Paul Smith's you clicked with?

Well the first day everyone was so friendly, it did not matter who it was or what rank they were they were just so amazingly friendly. All of the teachers that I was introduced to seemed to be such helpful people. The classes, well what is really cool is that they have supplemental classes and tutoring for every single class you can have that. I always need extra help in math, so that is cool.

Do you feel that the supplemental instruction has helped you?

Yes, Defiantly!

Any other experiences?
The canoeing I love canoeing, just the fact of being able to go. Dorm experience is like life lessons 101.

How?

Because you have to learn to deal with people and how they act and how they live. I had a roommate who, I have to move out because we just did not click. The way she acted and she was promiscuous and I don’t do that. You just have to deal with so many situations, we just had a girl go into insulin shock in out dorm. Everything that your parents teach you has to click when you come to school. My Mom has a medical background, and we have had three friend who have gotten injured and I have been there to call Campus Safety, I knew what to do.

You said you were having roommate problems, do you feel that situation was handled ok?

Well we had three huge fights, I mean screaming and yelling and almost violent. I had to move out, just to not deal with it anymore. I lived with her a semester and a half so I took it day to day and just dealt with the current situation but like she well. I think that she was jealous of me. She always bashed how close me and my parents are and she would call me a spoiled little brat. I just did not need to deal with that, I am here for an education.

Were the R.A. ’s and Student Life helpful when you were having these troubles with your roommate?
Yes they were. Actually one of my friends that I know from lab told me that her roommate just moved out, so I said like where do you live. She lives in the Culinary dorm, Lakeside. See Lakeside is an all culinary dorm and a wellness dorm. I lived in Livermore which is rowdy and dirty. Now I live in Lakeside which is all culinary and quiet and calm. All I had to do is go to DSL and they switched my keys, I did it all in one day. I checked out checked in and moved in all in one-day, everything went smoothly.

Which aspects of Lakeside do you feel you prefer over Livermore?

I like lakeside more because I can get done what I need to get done for my classes. I sort of could get my homework done in Livermore even thought it was loud, but now there are no drugs. In Livermore you could always smell them and I didn’t like it because I didn’t do it and they just had such a lack of respect for others.

Where the R.A. doing anything about the drug situation in Livermore?

See they have all of these little tricks on how R.A.’s can’t find out. They just put now R.A.’s in Livermore to crack down on it and it actually has improved this semester. I have been over there a few times since I moved and it has gotten a lot better.

Any other experiences you would like to comment on?
I like how this school is more well, yes grades and regular classes count but it is so hands on.

That is what I really like because that is how I learn, I learn better when I do it. It is great to go into lab and you absorb so much information from the Chef and other students. See Paul Smith’s is really big on group projects and presentations and it teaches you social and people skills, and that is a big thing to me too. See you are learning how to act in the business, they drill it into your head to act professional. Everyday is professionalism, how you dress and do your hair, sanitation, everything. It is not just an education it is life lessons 101.

*So you would say that all of your experiences with Paul Smith’s are positive?*

Yes
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

So far it has been really nice. I love it here in the Adirondacks. Basically why I came up here is because it is really small but everything gives you sense of community. I did have a few problems with a couple of classes last year, but I got that straightened out this year.

Did you get any extra help for the classes you where having trouble with?

Well I stayed in my room and studied more. I didn't feel like really needed extra help I just needed to spend more time studying.

Were your professors' and instructors' understanding about that?

I actually did not go talk to them about it.

Do you know why you didn't go to them?

Well, first year English I just had to transfer out of his class because I just could not stand the way he was. He is very, very sexist. He said that a man can not be friends with a female without thinking of sexual things, and stuff like that and I just couldn't stand it. He also said that you no longer have an imagination after seven or eight and therefore you could not write anything about
a dot. I actually wrote a page poem on a dot, I want to go and give it to him, just to show him.

So anyway I transferred into another class and I had trouble because I was so behind because it was an English class.

*Did you talk to your advisor about the problems you were having with that instructor?*

My advisor is really hard to get a hold of, I still have trouble finding him.

*Do you think that you would have felt comfortable talking to your advisor about that situation?*

Sure, if I could have found him.

*Are there any other experience you have had here that you would like to comment on?*

Yes, the labs. I like the hands on learning, it helps me a lot. There is one lab that I did not quite like, charcuterie. Even though I can understand why, you could not get your own meat to work on even in your group. We watched movies and demonstrations all of the time and things like that. I just wish that was different.

*When you were having trouble in lab, were the Chefs good about extra help and working with you?*
Yeah, sure if you want to stay after they will. See this year I feel much more comfortable here and know people better so I will stay after and get help when I need it.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

Ok, well that question is a little broad. Well, I didn’t know that I was going to come to Paul Smith’s because I had never heard of it. But, I came across a brochure in my guidance counselor’s office one day and it looked really cool. It helped that I didn’t really like any of the other schools I was accepted to so I decided to come up here and visit. It was a really great visit, it turned out to be parents weekend when my Mom and I came up. It was really cool because there were all sorts of things going on, like the plane ride, you could have characters done, the woodsmans’ team were doing demos and stuff. Everyone was out and about with a lot to do so it was fun and really exciting. Anyway I really liked the setting and stuff so I decided to come. Then I had orientation in the summer of ‘99 after graduation and that was basically it. Well my orientation roommate never came back then I went to Germany directly after that, then came directly back to Paul Smith’s as a R.A. I was in the EET program and finished that in a year and a half so now I am Natural Resources.

You mentioned you came to orientation, did that help finalize your decision to come to Paul Smith’s?

Well, for me it was tuff, like I said my roommate that I spent all my time with at orientation because we were in all of the same groups and stuff. She never came back, but I had already decided that I was going to come here so orientation did not add to that or detract. Orientation
for me was just one of those things that I had to do so I did it. For me it was a mute point I just went because I had to go.

*You mentioned that you are an R.A., any experiences with that you would like to comment on?*

I am no longer a R.A. at this point in time. I was a R.A. for three school semester and the entire last summer. Well, yah, I am glad that I had the experience of being an R.A. but I am glad that I am not anymore.

*Why?*

I liked being a R.A. I just did not like not having any time for myself, it just seemed like someone was always there. I just wanted time alone to do things I wanted to do.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

I studied my first two semesters here then I went on my internship at the Hotel Saranac.

What did you think about that?

I liked it a lot, I got to apply a lot of what I learned. Then the next semester I went to Disney.

How did you like that?

I like it, I got to work with a lot of great people and got to meet a ton of people. It was a really great experience for me.

You said that you studied a lot your first two semesters, can you tell me more about that?

Well I studied because there is not a lot to do here. They need more stuff.

Like what?

More clubs or sports, you know things to do, anything to do.
Do you participate in the activities that they have?

Yes, but it is still not enough. It is really boring around here. I am thinking of transferring to another school for my four year degree.

Is it only because you find it boring here, or is there another reason you are thinking of transferring?

I just want to go somewhere where there is more stuff to do, a variety of things to do.

What are the things you like to do?

I like tennis, play the violin, and to have somewhere to go where I can hang out with my friends.

I am also thinking of changing my major but I am not sure to what.

Do you know what you want to change your major to?

No I don’t know, I am not sure.

So the activities that they have on campus, do you think they are good?

I think that they were better last year, because no one goes to any of the events this year.
Were the events different last year?

No, the events are the same ones as last year so I have done them already.

Is there another reason you find it so boring here?

I do not have a car so I can not always get into town to do something different. So I feel like I am stuck here.

Is there any other experiences you would like to comment on?

I think that the faculty is really good here. I know that at another school I might not get the one on one I get here.

How did you use the one on one to benefit you?

I would get extra help in labs, when I did not get it the first time the Chefs' would take time and help me understand. I think that is really good.
Tell me about your Paul Smith's College Experience?

Since I have been here I have met a lot of people, and made a lot of new friends. I have a lot of fun outdoors and the teachers are very knowledgeable, well at least most of them.

Can you elaborate a bit on that for me?

Well there are a few that really do not know exactly what they are doing. Don’t get me wrong for the most part everyone knows that they are doing.

Do you find that it hinders your experience having instructors that do not know what they are doing?

No, not really because it is in areas where I am around people that do know what they are doing so between all of us we can figure it out, we just are not learning anything from them.

Other experiences?

What kind of experiences are you looking for?

When you look back on Paul Smith's College what are the things that you are going to
Defiantly the surroundings, the area, this is just a beautiful place to be. I would not have gone to a College where you could not go outside. For the most part all of our labs are outside, so we are not sitting in a classroom looking at picture books, we are outside doing stuff. That is going to be what I think of most, the outdoors. I love the fact we are outside doing what we are suppose to be doing.

*Is that the reason you chose Paul Smith's?*

Yes it is, I actually never came up here to see the College. I was accepted and payed my deposit and just came up. So I never saw it before I got here. I had heard a lot of great thing of Paul Smith's from the people in my area. Since I have been here I have found even more people in my area that know Paul Smith's. So basically I love the surrounding, being outdoors, the job placement rating, yah that stuff.
Tell me about your Paul Smith’s College Experience?

So far?

Yes.

When I decided to come back to school, see I graduated from Keene State in 1994. Anyway when I decided to come back to school I know it was going to be something with the outdoors. I was talking to people from my home town that are graduates of Paul Smith’s, they had nothing but god things to say about it. Then this past summer at work I ran into another Paul Smith’s grad and he had nothing but good things to say as well. So I came into school with high spirits and I was vary excited about the possibilities here. It is good, I was a little worried here at first being 26 and older then the majority of the students, and all of that and how I would fit into that whole college experience again. Being a R.A. and Head Resident really has helped, putting me into more of a leadership role with the students. So my experience here has been good and the class activities are good and well, pretty much what I remembered. My motivation is greater now because I understand why I am in school and where the money is coming from, so I feel like I am giving more effort in my studies. Well, my experience has been good.

When you were telling me that your experience has been good, the tone of your voice was not all positive?
Well, there is a little bit of the, well there is not a lot going for people that are 26. I feel like I fit in ok with the student body and I get along with them all but at the same time there is not a lot of things to do except homework for people that are in there mid 20's. There is a handful of people that I have got to know that are my same age, some are students and some are faculty and staff. But at times it just feels like another Friday night and I am sitting in my dorm room. You know it is to far to just drive to town everyday, just to do stuff. I am just more used to always having stuff to do, out and about. As far as the school is concerned I am getting a lot out of it. But the social aspect of it, there is a little bit of hesitation because it is so secluded and there is not a lot of people that you don't see everyday, so it is hard to meet new people.

Have you tried to start up activities for people in your age group or do you have any ideas for activities?

Well I enjoy just about all outdoor activities, and I was hoping to do more mountain biking in the fall and again in the spring but with all the snow it's hard. I love mountain biking and I found in college my first time around it was my escape. I would go out with a group of people and go mountain biking then come back all muddy and dirty. It was great. I was hoping to get out and do more hiking and biking and just getting out. I have a problem with time management, plus I am spread a little thin. With homework and what ever else I do not have much time to get out and play during the week, weekends are different. So I guess I am a hard person to get motivated, once I am out doing it I love it but I have trouble getting out of the confines of my room. Until I get on a regular schedule I just don't have time. So I guess I have not done much
to get activities going.

*Have you made any suggestions to the appropriate people?*

Well I think that the outlets are there, there is a mountain bike club and whatnot. Just with my time commitments to the woodsman’s team and the forestry club, the bike nights were the same as team practices. The week is just too short for me to do what I want to do.
Appendix B
Dear Student,

Your institution is interested in systematically listening to its students. Therefore, your thoughtful and honest responses to this inventory are very important.

You are part of a sample of students carefully selected to share feedback about your college experiences thus far. Your responses will give your campus leadership insights about the aspects of college that are important to you as well as how satisfied you are with them.

To preserve confidentiality, your name is not requested.

Thank you for your participation.

Instructions:
- Use a No. 2 pencil only. Please do not use ink or ballpoint pen.
- Erase changes completely and cleanly.
- Completely darken the oval that corresponds to your response.

Each item below describes an expectation about your experiences on this campus. On the left, tell us how important it is for your institution to meet this expectation. On the right tell us how satisfied you are that your institution has met this expectation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Importance to me...</th>
<th>My level of satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - not important at all</td>
<td>very satisfied - 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - not very important</td>
<td>satisfied - 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - somewhat unimportant</td>
<td>somewhat satisfied - 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - neutral</td>
<td>neutral - 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 - somewhat important</td>
<td>somewhat dissatisfied - 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 - important</td>
<td>not very satisfied - 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - very important</td>
<td>not satisfied at all - 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 21. The amount of student parking space on campus is adequate. | 2 |
| 22. Counseling staff care about students as individuals. | 3 |
| 23. Living conditions in the residence halls are comfortable (adequate space, lighting, heat, air conditioning, telephones, etc.). | 4 |
| 24. The intercollegiate athletic programs contribute to a strong sense of school spirit. | 5 |
| 25. Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students. | 6 |
| 26. Computer labs are adequate and accessible. | 7 |
| 27. The personnel involved in registration are helpful. | 1 |
| 28. Parking lots are well-lighted and secure. | 2 |
| 29. It is an enjoyable experience to be a student on this campus. | 3 |
| 30. Residence hall staff are concerned about me as an individual. | 4 |
| 31. Males and females have equal opportunities to participate in intercollegiate athletics. | 5 |
| 32. Tutoring services are readily available. | 6 |
| 33. My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major. | 7 |
| 34. I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts. | 1 |
| 35. The assessment and course placement procedures are reasonable. | 2 |
| 36. Security staff respond quickly in emergencies. | 3 |
| 37. I feel a sense of pride about my campus. | 4 |
| 38. There is an adequate selection of food available in the cafeteria. | 5 |
| 39. I am able to experience intellectual growth here. | 6 |
| 40. Residence hall regulations are reasonable. | 7 |
| 41. There is a commitment to academic excellence on this campus. | 1 |
| 42. There are a sufficient number of weekend activities for students. | 2 |
| 43. Admissions counselors respond to prospective students unique needs and requests. | 3 |
| 44. Academic support services adequately meet the needs of students. | 4 |
| 45. Students are made to feel welcome on this campus. | 5 |
| 46. I can easily get involved in campus organizations. | 6 |
| 47. Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course. | 7 |
| 48. Admissions counselors accurately portray the campus in their recruiting practices. | 1 |
| 49. There are adequate services to help me decide upon a career. | 2 |
| 50. Class change (drop/add) policies are reasonable. | 3 |
| 51. This institution has a good reputation within the community. | 4 |
| 52. The student center is a comfortable place for students to spend their leisure time. | 5 |
| 53. Faculty take into consideration student differences as they teach a course. | 6 |
| 54. Bookstore staff are helpful. | 7 |
| 55. Major requirements are clear and reasonable. | 1 |
| 56. The student handbook provides helpful information about campus life. | 2 |
| 57. I seldom get the "run-around" when seeking information on this campus. | 3 |
| 58. The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent. | 4 |
| 59. This institution shows concern for students as individuals. | 5 |
| 60. I generally know what's happening on campus. | 6 |
| 61. Adjunct faculty are competent as classroom instructors. | 7 |
| 62. There is a strong commitment to racial harmony on this campus. | 1 |
| 63. Student disciplinary procedures are fair. | 2 |
| 64. New student orientation services help students adjust to college. | 3 |
| 65. Faculty are usually available after class and during office hours. | 4 |
| 66. Tuition paid is a worthwhile investment. | 5 |
| 67. Freedom of expression is protected on campus. | 6 |
| 68. Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their field. | 7 |
| 69. There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus. | 1 |
| 70. Graduate teaching assistants are competent as classroom instructors. | 2 |
| 71. Channels for expressing student complaints are readily available. | 3 |
| 72. On the whole, the campus is well-maintained. | 4 |
| 73. Student activities fees are put to good use. | 5 |
Your institution may choose to provide you with additional questions on a separate sheet. The section below numbered 74 - 83 is provided as a response area for those additional questions. Continue on to item 84 when you have completed this section.

Choose the one response that best applies to you and darken the corresponding oval for each of the questions below.

99. So far, how has your college experience met your expectations?
   - Much worse than I expected
   - Quite a bit worse than I expected
   - Worse than I expected
   - About what I expected
   - Better than I expected
   - Quite a bit better than I expected
   - Much better than I expected

100. Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far.
    - Not satisfied at all
    - Not very satisfied
    - Somewhat dissatisfied
    - Neutral
    - Somewhat satisfied
    - Satisfied
    - Very satisfied

101. All in all, if you had it to do over again, would you enroll here?
    - Definitely not
    - Probably not
    - Maybe not
    - I don't know
    - Maybe yes
    - Probably yes
    - Definitely yes

CONTINUE TO THE NEXT PAGE
Choose the one response that best describes you and darken the corresponding oval for each of the items below.

102. Gender:
   ① Female
   ② Male

103. Age:
   ① 18 and under
   ② 19 to 24
   ③ 25 to 34
   ④ 35 to 44
   ⑤ 45 and over

104. Ethnicity/Race:
   ① African-American
   ② American Indian or Alaskan Native
   ③ Asian or Pacific Islander
   ④ Caucasian/White
   ⑤ Hispanic
   ⑥ Other
   ⑦ Prefer not to respond

105. Current Enrollment Status:
   ① Day
   ② Evening
   ③ Weekend

106. Current Class Load:
   ① Full-time
   ② Part-time

107. Class Level:
   ① Freshman
   ② Sophomore
   ③ Junior
   ④ Senior
   ⑤ Special Student
   ⑥ Graduate/Professional
   ⑦ Other

108. Current GPA:
   ① No credits earned
   ② 1.99 or below
   ③ 2.0 - 2.49
   ④ 2.5 - 2.99
   ⑤ 3.0 - 3.49
   ⑥ 3.5 or above

109. Educational Goal:
   ① Associate degree
   ② Bachelor's degree
   ③ Master's degree
   ④ Doctorate or professional degree
   ⑤ Certification (initial or renewal)
   ⑥ Self-improvement/pleasure
   ⑦ Job-related training
   ⑧ Other

110. Employment:
   ① Full-time off campus
   ② Part-time off campus
   ③ Full-time on campus
   ④ Part-time on campus
   ⑤ Not employed

111. Current Residence:
   ① Residence hall
   ② Fraternity / Sorority
   ③ Own house
   ④ Rent room or apartment off campus
   ⑤ Parent's home
   ⑥ Other

112. Residence Classification:
   ① In-state
   ② Out-of-state
   ③ International (not U.S. citizen)

113. Disabilities:
   Physical disability or a diagnosed learning disability?
   ① Yes
   ② No

114. When I entered this institution, it was my:
   ① 1st choice
   ② 2nd choice
   ③ 3rd choice or lower

115. Major:
   Fill in major code from list provided by your institution.

116. Item requested by your institution:
   ①
   ②
   ③
   ④
   ⑤
   ⑥

Your Social Security Number is requested for research purposes and will not appear on any report.

Social Security Number:
Write your Social Security number in the nine spaces of the box provided.
Completely darken the corresponding oval.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this inventory.
Please do not fold.
Appendix C
## Fall 2000 Student Activities Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Number of Events Throughout the Fall 2000 Semester</th>
<th>Number of Students in Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blood Drives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonfires/Jam Sessions</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comedians</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Shows</td>
<td>4- Blitz, Name That Tune, TV Trivia, Olympics</td>
<td>10-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handwriting Analysis</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual/Cultural</td>
<td>2 SEA Conference; Take Back the Night</td>
<td>20-200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaoke</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magician- Eco-Magician</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday Night Football</td>
<td>15- One Weekly</td>
<td>5-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Night</td>
<td>15- One Weekly</td>
<td>10-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music/ Bands</td>
<td>7- 3 Acoustic; 4 Bands</td>
<td>10-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>8- Velcro Wall; Bungee Run; Wax Hands; Dunk Tank, Sumo Wrestling; Bouncy Boxing; Casino; Gigantic Hot Tub</td>
<td>25-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Tournaments</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Trips</td>
<td>24- 13 Saranac Lake; 11 Various cities</td>
<td>5-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Tournaments</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendors</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Event</td>
<td>Number of Events Throughout the Spring 2001 Semester</td>
<td>Number of Students in Attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood Drives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bonfires/Jam Sessions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comedians</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>45-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dances</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Game Shows</td>
<td>5- Blitz, Name That Tune, TV Trivia, Olympics</td>
<td>10-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypnotist</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual/Cultural</td>
<td>3 Martin Luther King Jr.; Woman’s History; Wilderness Survival</td>
<td>20-30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karaoke</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>35-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ping Pong</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club Events</td>
<td>2 CAST Dance; Forestry Club Festival</td>
<td>35-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movie Night</td>
<td>15- One Weekly</td>
<td>30-125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music/ Bands</td>
<td>3 Bands/7 Open Mic</td>
<td>10-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Novelty</td>
<td>5- Dunk Tank; Carnival Games: Airband</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pool Tournaments</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10-25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road Trips</td>
<td>36- 13 Saranac Lake; 11 Various cities; 12 Lake Placid</td>
<td>5-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sony Tournaments</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vendors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50-125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D
INSTRUCTIONS: Carefully read each question and select one of the two alternative answers. Circle the answer which comes closest to how you usually feel or act.

Record your answer on the profile sheet by placing a check √ by the appropriate question in each column. Total each of the eight columns after all responses have been recorded. (Please note that questions 22 and 26 have been omitted from this form.)

1. Are you more careful about
   a. People's feelings
   b. Their rights

2. When you have to meet strangers, do you find it
   a. Something that takes a good deal of effort
   b. Pleasant, or at least easy

3. Does following a schedule
   a. Appeal to you
   b. Cramp you

4. Do you usually get on better with
   a. Imaginative people
   b. Realistic people

5. Are you naturally
   a. Rather quiet and reserved in company
   b. A good "mixer"

6. Is it harder for you to adapt to
   a. A routine
   b. Constant change

7. Which of these two is the higher compliment?
   a. He is a person of real feeling
   b. He is consistently reasonable

8. Would you judge yourself to be
   a. More enthusiastic than the average person
   b. Less excitable than the average person

9. In doing something with many other people, does it appeal more to you
   a. To do it in the accepted way
   b. To invent a way of your own

10. Are you at your best
    a. When following a carefully worked out plan
    b. When dealing with the unexpected.

11. Do you get more annoyed at
    a. Fancy theorists
    b. People who don't like theories

12. Is it higher praise to call someone
    a. A person of vision
    b. A person of common sense

13. Do you more often let
    a. Your heart rule your head
    b. Your head rule your heart

14. When you think of some little thing you should do or buy, you
    a. Often forget it until much later
    b. Usually get it down on paper before it escapes you

15. Can you
    a. Talk easily to almost anyone for as long as you have to
    b. Find a lot to say only to certain people or under certain circumstances
16. Do you think it is a worse fault
   a. To show too much warmth
   b. To be unsympathetic

17. If you were a teacher, would you rather teach
   a. Courses involving theory
   b. Fact courses

18. When it is settled well in advance that you will do a certain thing at a certain time, do you find it
   a. Nice to be able to plan accordingly
   b. A little unpleasant to be tied down

19. Can the people you meet tell what you are interested in
   a. Right away
   b. Know after they really get to know you

20. In your daily life, do you
   a. Rather enjoy an emergency that makes you work against time
   b. Usually plan your day so you won’t need to work against time

21. In a large group, do you more often
   a. Introduce others
   b. Get introduced

22. NO QUESTION

Which word in the following pair appeals to you more? Circle “a” or “b”

23. a. Punctual b. Leisurely
25. a. Production b. Design
26. NO QUESTION NO QUESTION
27. a. Gentle b. Firm
28. a. Indiscriminate b. Critical
29. a. Calm b. Lively
30. a. Theory b. Experience
31. a. Literal b. Figurative
32. a. Imaginative b. Matter-of-fact
Appendix E
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dorms</th>
<th>Alumni</th>
<th>Blum</th>
<th>Clinton</th>
<th>Currier</th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Franklin</th>
<th>Hillside</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Lakeside</th>
<th>Lambert</th>
<th>Livermore</th>
<th>LMS</th>
<th>Saratoga</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Ed</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>All Male</td>
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