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PREVIEW

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**Russel, John Edward**

THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND MARKETING FACTORS  
ON ATTRACTION OF STUDENTS TO PRIVATE GRADUATE BUSINESS  
SCHOOL STUDY

*Pace University*

D.P.S. 1985

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PREVIEW

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The Impact of Personal, Institutional and  
Marketing Factors on Attraction of Students  
to Private Graduate Business School Study

Prepared for  
Pace University

by

John E. Russel

December 1984

PREVIEW

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PREVIEW

## CHAPTER I

### The Problem

#### Statement of the Problem

The prime objective of this research is to determine the factors which attract prospective students and new enrollees--particularly women, minorities and older students--to graduate business study at private nonsectarian New York metropolitan area colleges and universities. Knowledge of these factors will lead to determination of the key institutional and marketing approaches that will result in more efficient and effective recruitment of graduate business students. This may in turn enable graduate business schools to increase enrollment or maintain enrollment at reduced institutional cost.

#### Specific Problems

The first problem is to identify the factors which influence students, full-time students, women students, older students and non-white students to enroll at private nonsectarian collegiate graduate business schools in the New York metropolitan area, and to establish the relative importance of these factors.

The second problem is to identify the factors which influence non-enrolling applicants, non-enrolling applicants for full-time study, non-enrolling women applicants, older non-enrolling applicants and non-white non-enrolling applicants to apply to but not to enroll at a private nonsectarian graduate business school; to establish the relative importance of these factors; and to compare

the influence levels determined with relative levels determined for enrollees.

The third problem is to identify the factors which influence non-enrolling inquirers, non-enrolling inquirers for full-time study, non-enrolling women inquirers, older non-enrolling inquirers and non-white non-enrolling inquirers to inquire of but not to enroll at a private nonsectarian graduate business school, to establish the relative importance of these factors, and to compare the influence levels determined with relative levels for enrollees and non-enrolling applicants.

#### Definition of Terms

New York metropolitan area includes New York City and those portions of the states of New York and New Jersey within a radius of fifty miles of New York City's legal borders.

Nonsectarian colleges and universities are institutions of higher education which are neither public nor church related whose academic programs are registered with the State Education Department of either the State of New York or the State of New Jersey.

Institutional approaches include but are not limited to establishment of relatively low cost for courses; offering courses at sites close to homes or places of employment of prospective students; emphasizing the reputation of the school, the faculty or a specific program; offering a large variety of courses; providing opportunities for research; providing attractive financial packages; and making faculty available to prospective students.

Marketing approaches include but are not limited to such factors as MBA forums; college visits; open houses; opportunities

for campus visitation; catalogs or bulletins; newspaper advertisements; magazine advertisements; radio and television advertisements; scholarship or assistantship offers; interviews with academic deans, department heads, admissions officers or faculty members; posters or flyers posted at previous institution; college guides (Baron's, Peterson's); brochures describing the program; a letter or phone call from a faculty member concerning the program; and a conference presentation.

Enrollees are people who are registered for at least one course for academic credit at a private nonsectarian graduate school of business in the New York metropolitan area.

Non-enrolling applicants are people who submit official applications for admission and whose applications are on file at private nonsectarian graduate schools of business, and who are not known to have been rejected for admission to any such school, and who are not among the enrollees at any such school in the New York metropolitan area.

Non-enrolling inquirers are people who submit written, telephone or in-person statements of interest in graduate study and whose names are on file at private nonsectarian graduate schools of business, but who are not among the enrollees at any such school in the New York metropolitan area.

## CHAPTER II

Need for the Study

The debate has been joined on the question of enrollment prospects for colleges and universities over the coming twelve years. Some statisticians and knowledgeable observers believe that enrollment in American higher educational institutions will decline moderately or even sharply in the foreseeable future; other authorities believe that postsecondary enrollment could stabilize or even increase over the next twelve years.

All acknowledged experts on enrollment trends seem to accept the basic demographic facts which challenge collegiate schools in their efforts to maintain current enrollment totals or to increase their enrollments. It is an actuarial reality that "by 1992 the United States will have 26% fewer 18 year olds than in 1978."<sup>1</sup> This was reported by Jack Magarrell in The Chronicle of Higher Education.

Authorities on both sides of the enrollment outlook debate also appear ready to acknowledge that declining population figures reported by the Bureau of the Census mean that by the 1990s there will be a loss of some half-million high school graduates who would be potential college freshmen.<sup>2</sup> Only a radical decline

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<sup>1</sup> Jack Magarrell, "Despite Drop in Number of 18-Year-Olds, College Rolls Could Rise During the 1980s," The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 21, 1980, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> "Projections of the Population of the United States: 1977 to 2050," Current Population Reports, Population Estimates and Projections (U.S. Department of Commerce: Bureau of the Census, Series P-25, No. 704, July 1977), pp. 5, 37-50.



in the high school drop-out rate could reduce this decrease.

The pool of New York State high school graduates from which New York metropolitan area colleges and universities obtain a majority of their entering freshmen is likely to shrink by greater numbers than will that of any other state. John Stiglmeier, Ph.D., Director of the Information Center on Education of the State Education Department of New York, issued a report on December 7, 1979, showing that high school graduates in New York numbered 246,945 in 1976-77, but they are expected to number 181,953 in 1986-87, and only 139,594 in 1995-96.<sup>3</sup> Thus, the New York State Department of Education is on record as expecting the State's figures for high school graduates to account for more than a fifth of the national decline in high school graduates by 1996.

The New York State Education Department has projected a continuation of the decrease in the number of public and private high school students graduating in New York State each year. The statewide total was 216,082 in 1982-83. The number is expected to drop to 199,840 in 1984-85 and to 172,848 in 1989-90.<sup>4</sup> The total decline expected over seven years is 23 percent.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) has predicted that due largely to the magnitude of the projected declines in the numbers of eighteen to twenty-two year olds, colleges and universities will not be able to offset the anticipated sharp decline in the number of high school graduates who enter college

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<sup>3</sup>Telephone interview with James J. Brady, Chief, Bureau of Statistical Services, Information Center on Education, The University of the State of New York, The State Education Department, Albany, New York, November 1984.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

shortly after completing secondary school. This organization has predicted moderate declines in total undergraduate and graduate enrollment, even after making provision in its projections for some increases in part-time student enrollment. The NCES reported a peak of combined graduate and undergraduate enrollment of 12,465,000 in fall of 1983, and a gradual decline to 11,810,000 in fall of 1992.<sup>5</sup>

In addition, the NCES has concluded that institutions offering four-year undergraduate programs will experience far greater declines in enrollment than will two-year colleges.<sup>6</sup> The NCES bases this conclusion on its observation that two-year colleges have been more successful than senior colleges in attracting adults twenty-five years of age or older; it assumes that this trend will persist through the 1980s. NCES notes that older students comprised 39 percent of the undergraduates at two-year colleges in 1977, while only 22 percent of the undergraduates at four-year colleges were twenty-five or older in that year.<sup>7</sup> In fact, the NCES estimates that enrollments at four-year colleges, inclusive of graduate students, will decline from 7.3 million in 1981 to 6.7 million in 1988, while enrollments will fall off only slightly at two-year colleges during the same seven-year period.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Telephone interview with Vance Grant, Office of Statistical Services, National Center for Educational Statistics, Washington, D.C., November 5, 1984.

<sup>6</sup>"College Enrollments to Peak in 1981, NCES Study Predicts," Higher Education & National Affairs, March 28, 1980, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

Furthermore, NCES has taken the position that full-time equivalent enrollment will drop more rapidly than headcount enrollment through the 1980s.

The NCES has indicated through its projections that it does not believe the expected influx of so-called nontraditional students or adult learners will offset the decline in the number of traditional college-age students. It has indicated, rather, that the decline of 600,000 enrollees or slightly more than eight percent will result in about double that decline in full-time equivalent enrollment over the next seven years. This will be true, according to NCES, because the 6.7 million students in four-year colleges in 1988 will include larger numbers of part-time students than NCES projected for the fall of 1981.<sup>9</sup>

The American Council on Education has predicted that eleven states will experience enrollment declines in the 1980s, with New York and New Jersey prominent among them. The Council has estimated that the states for which it has projected declines in enrollment, which in 1975 registered 28 percent of the nation's freshmen, will experience significant decreases in the college-age population and can be expected to continue to export more eighteen-year-olds to colleges in other states than they import to their own colleges from other states.<sup>10</sup>

The Office of Public Information of the State Education Department of New York has reported that total enrollment in the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Cathy Henderson, Changes in Enrollment by 1985 Vol. 3, No. 1 (Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, Policy Analysis Service Reports, June 1977).

State's elementary and secondary schools--including both public and private schools--would decline 3.7 percent in 1981. Data compiled by that office show that declines in enrollment in elementary and secondary schools are to be expected at least until the end of this decade.<sup>11</sup> Since it takes twelve years for increases in first-grade enrollment to be felt at the college level, the available data suggest that reduced numbers of eighteen year olds in college will persist well into the 1990s.

A Carnegie Commission report written by Allan M. Cartter indicates that the shrinking pool of young people will lead to a declining market for elementary and secondary school teachers, which will in turn affect college enrollment negatively.<sup>12</sup> Cartter states that the primary beneficiaries of increasing numbers of part-time students of all ages will be community colleges.<sup>13</sup> He volunteers his opinion that, on the average, private comprehensive colleges and universities and less highly selective liberal arts colleges will do less well in attracting part-time students than will two-year colleges.<sup>14</sup>

Time and again, the author has heard professional presentations on enrollment prospects in which reference has been made to a vast, untapped pool of potential college students who are black. Yet black student enrollment actually declined in the late 1970s.

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<sup>11</sup>(Press Release) NEWS, Office of Public Information, New York State Education Department, Albany, N.Y., August 29, 1980.

<sup>12</sup>Allan M. Cartter, Ph.D's and the American Labor Market, Report prepared for the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976).

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

A report issued by the Southern Regional Education Board documents a decrease of one percent in black student enrollment in colleges and universities between 1976 and 1978, and describes a 2.6 percent drop in the number of blacks in all graduate programs over the same two-year period.<sup>15</sup> In addition, this report observes a trend among blacks away from full-time toward part-time enrollment, and away from four-year colleges and graduate institutions toward two-year colleges.<sup>16</sup>

One strategy proposed to offset losses in enrollment of traditional undergraduate students referred to in an American Council on Education report,<sup>17</sup> and mentioned at many conferences attended by the writer, is to increase graduate enrollment. The total graduate student population has approximated 1.3 million students nationwide for many years. Actual fall 1982 graduate enrollment was 1,323,000 students. Preliminary fall 1983 graduate enrollment nationally was 1,338,000 students. Projected fall 1984 graduate student enrollment for the United States is 1,379,000.<sup>18</sup> Thus, gradual increases in graduate enrollment are occurring. These data suggest that the expectation of increased graduate enrollment is realistic.

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<sup>15</sup> Black and Hispanic Enrollment in Higher Education, 1978: Trends in the Nation and South, Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, Georgia, 1980.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Jack Magarrell, "Despite Drop in Number of 18-Year-Olds, College Rolls Could Rise During the 1980s," The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 21, 1980, pp. 1,11.

<sup>18</sup> Telephone interview with Vance Grant, Office of Statistical Services, National Center for Education Statistics, Washington, D.C., November 5, 1984.

Those skeptical of the potential of colleges and universities to offset expected traditional student declines in enrollment often point to the development by American business of a "shadow education system" that rivals traditional higher education in size and resources. Companies based in the United States spend an estimated \$10 billion a year to provide education and training for an estimated 12.7 million people. Four out of five of the country's largest companies--those with 500 or more employees--offer their workers education and job-related training that bypasses colleges and universities.<sup>19</sup>

Carol Frances, Chief Economist and Director of the Division for Policy Analysis and Research of the American Council on Education, challenges the skeptics by taking a more optimistic view of enrollment prospects in the 1980s and 1990s. She has stated that, despite the drop in the number of twenty-two-year-olds enrolling as graduate students four years after the initial decline in traditional undergraduate freshmen, graduate and undergraduate enrollment combined could actually rise during the 1980s. According to Frances, an excellent way to offset expected declines in enrollment in the 1980s would be to enroll more graduate students.<sup>20</sup>

Frances, intending "to counter overactive pessimism and thus expand realistic perspectives upon which decisions that determine the future of higher education are made,"<sup>21</sup> suggests twelve ways to

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<sup>19</sup> Jack Magarrell, "Despite Drop in Number of 18-Year-Olds, College Rolls Could Rise During the 1980s," The Chronicle of Higher Education, April 21, 1980, pp. 1,11.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

obtain 1,098,000 new full-time equivalent students in the 1980s. However, she does not explain exactly how colleges and universities are to accomplish the objectives included in her report. She points, for example, to increased enrollment of graduate students as one of the twelve ways, but she does not recommend particular approaches to increase graduate student population. Furthermore, her conclusion is not based on a scientific study of factors that influence bachelor degree holders to attend graduate school. Rather, her views result from her intuitive belief that graduate schools can attract more students through various unspecified means to be decided upon by the schools themselves.

Such readers of Frances' report as Doctor Edward J. Cook, President of the C.W. Post Center of Long Island University, have questioned its value. Cook has responded: "Don't tell me that there are large numbers of people in this country who are not enrolled in colleges and universities. Tell me how to influence them to enroll."<sup>22</sup>

The College Board, also optimistic concerning adult student prospects, in announcing the establishment of the Office of Adult Learning Services in August of 1980, stated, "Through its Office of Adult Learning Services (OALS), the College Board conducts activities to improve access to postsecondary education for adults."<sup>23</sup> Doctor Carol Aslanian, Director of the new office, when contacted by telephone on December 5, 1980, told this writer that

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<sup>22</sup> In-person conversation with Edward J. Cook, March 5, 1981.

<sup>23</sup> Office of Adult Learning Services (New York: The College Board, 1980).

the Office of Adult Learning Services wants to improve access to graduate level study as well as to undergraduate education.<sup>24</sup>

The major goals of the Office are to:

"Provide new programs, training and publications to support the transition of adults to and from education.

"Assist institutions in strengthening their capabilities in lifelong education.

"Develop the skills of professionals who serve adults.

"Assemble and disseminate information about adult learning.

"Advance knowledge in the field of adult learning."<sup>25</sup>

Aslanian told this writer on October 28, 1980, that the University of Massachusetts had contracted with the Office of Adult Learning Services to provide a systematic study of the adult student market for graduate and undergraduate study in fifty communities served by that institution.<sup>26</sup>

That the College Board has contracted to do such research for the University of Massachusetts suggests the need for more research concerning factors which could influence adults to enroll in graduate or undergraduate courses of study.

Doctor Howard R. Bowen, R. Stanton Avery Professor of Economics and Education at Claremont Graduate School in California, states:

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<sup>24</sup>Carol Aslanian, telephone conversation.

<sup>25</sup>Office of Adult Learning Services (New York: The College Board, 1980).

<sup>26</sup>Carol Aslanian, meeting on October 28, 1980.