

ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION BY LEVEL OF  
COMPUTER USE, RACE, AND GENDER

by

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(Abstract)

Extensive research is available about both academic and social integration among college students (Braxton & Hirschy, 2004; Dennis, 1998; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005; Tinto, 1975 & 1987). As college students spend time and become more involved in the campus community, academic and social integration increases (Astin, 1977; 1985; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, Andreas, Lyons, Strange, Krehbiel, & MacKay, 1991), which leads to student retention. There are differences, however, in academic and social integration by race and gender. Research also suggests that college students are spending more time on computers (Bugeja, 2006; Fallows, 2005; Gemmill & Peterson, 2006; Hawkins & Paris, 1997; Jones, 2002; Jones, 2003; Messineo & DeOllos, 2005; Rainie, Kaleoff, & Hess, 2002; Reisberg, 2000) though women and minority students still lag behind their peers when using a computer (Fallow, 2005; Hawkins & Paris, 1997; Messineo & DeOllos, 2005).

Currently, however, there is no literature that examines the effects that computer use and race and computer use and gender may have on academic and social integration. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between academic and social integration by computer use and race and computer use and gender.

Data from the College Student Experience Questionnaire (CSEQ) (Pace & Kuh, 1998) were employed to explore these issues. A dataset of 2,000 respondents that included representative numbers of the entire sample of men and women as well as Caucasians and respondents of other races was used. The respondents were categorized as low or high computer users based on responses to a series of items on the CSEQ. Other CSEQ items were used to assess respondents' academic and social integration.

Results indicate that differences for academic and social integration exist by level of computer use. Overall, high computer users are more academically and socially integrated than low computer users. The results also indicate that academic integration does not differ by level of computer user and race or level of computer use and gender.

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