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Academic Goals, Role Performances, and Grades: A Symbolic Interactionist Explanation

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ABSTRACT

Despite the extensive literature on formal education beyond high school, little research has focused on the relationships among academic goals, academic effort, and grades. In this article, a cross-sectional survey of first and second year university students from the Great Plains region supported a symbolic interactionist model of study routine and grades. Other people's appraisals, self-motives, and self-description as studious are good predictors of academic goals, and academic goals and self-motives are good predictors of study routine. Multivariate analysis revealed that students who set high academic goals were far more likely than those who did not to get good grades. Furthermore, those students whose goal was to be a good student achieved this by having a study routine that consisted of five role-making behaviors.

INTRODUCTION

> *One of the most perplexing things I have noticed about college life is the propensity of many students to skip class. As a naïve young first-year student, I was both surprised and intrigued by this behavior. Why would so many people spend so much money on tuition and then not show up to get what they paid for? Some of my fellow students attended classes sporadically at best and only on test days at worst. Some got lecture notes from friends, read the text and hoped that was enough, or simply did not worry about it at all* (Wyatt 1992: 201).

As illustrated by Wyatt's observations (1992), class absenteeism is bewildering, but so are other behaviors associated with college students and their academic achievement. For example, research shows that there is a weak relationship between student effort and grades (Arwood 1995; Schuman et al. 1985). Schuman et al. (1985) in a series of studies at the University of Michigan found no meaningful relationship between the amount of time spent studying and grades. When exploring the factors associated with grades at one

university in the Upper Great Plains region, Arwood (1995) also failed to find a meaningful relationship between study time and grades. He found that the best predictors of present semester grades were time management, absences due to oversleeping and hangovers, and time spent socializing with friends.

As baffling as these findings may appear, some researchers (Astin 1984; Rau and Durand 2000) have discovered a relationship between student effort and grades, but only after they controlled for the characteristics of the students in the sample and expanded the conceptualization of student effort to include a study routine and class absenteeism. The Schuman et al. studies were done at the University of Michigan, where the large majority of students were academically inclined and studied over twenty hours per week. The strength of the relationship differs for a sample of students where the majority studied fewer than twenty hours per week (Rau and Durand 2000: 24); students at Illinois State University who had a strong academic ethic committed "long, regular hours to their studies" and, because of it, obtained good grades. However, it is not only how much time students invest; when and what they do while they are studying is also important; the relationship between student effort and grades is stronger for students who study throughout the week than it is for those who prepare at the last minute (Michael and Miethe 1989). Unlike the debate over the relationship between the amount of time spent studying and grades, there is little debate regarding the impact of class absenteeism on grades (Arwood 1995; Craig 1990; Wyatt 1992). Generally, the relationship is negative (Arwood 1995).

The focus of the present research is on describing the dimensions and causes of academic effort and explaining their relationships with grades. Arwood and Hess (1998) found academic goals of students were related significantly with academic role-taking and one's identity as a university student.[1] Their research also determined most undergraduate students wanted to graduate; some also wanted to do well in difficult classes and to graduate with honors; and being a parent was a motive for doing well. Nevertheless, as noted at the beginning of this article (Wyatt 1992), students appear to

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[1] "Role-taking is the process of anticipating the responses of others with whom one is involved in social interaction" (Stryker 2002: 62). Those others do not have to be present for role-taking to occur (Mead 1934).

want more from college than just earning a degree. Some are looking for a spouse; are there to compete in college sports; or want to have fun at their parents' expense.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

An important question Arwood and Hess (1998) posed still needs to be addressed: Once students set their academic goals how do they go about achieving those goals? In particular, relationships among academic goals, study routine, other dimensions of effort, and grades must be explained. This investigation is important because knowledge of the factors associated with practical role performances could help students achieve their academic goals (Latham and Steele 1983; Locke et al. 1988; Zimmerman et al. 1992). It would also provide administrators of university programs designed to enhance academic achievement with useful information.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

A review of the literature turned up no studies that looked at these factors in tandem. There are several studies that focused on academic effort and final grades (Arwood 1995; Michaels and Miethe 1989; Pugh 1976; and Schuman et al. 1985), academic goals (Arwood and Hess 1998), self-efficacy (Arwood and Hess 1998; Schunk 1984; Zimmerman et al. 1992), employment while in school (Marsh 1991), personality adjustment and characteristics (Hallinan and Williams 1990; Stone 1951), and teacher effectiveness (Thielens 1977), but none that looked specifically at the chain of relationships that tie relevant factors together to explain student role performances. Studies that focus on academic effort, academic goals, and related factors are looked at in more detail below.

ACADEMIC EFFORT

Academic effort involves time spent studying, class attendance, using the library and Internet, interacting with instructors, and study routines. Study routines are central to this research; there are at least two general kinds of routines—cognitive strategies and acts of self-regulation (Pintrich and De Groot 1990). Cognitive strategies are used to remember information, and involve activities such as saying key words over and over again, paraphrasing information, and outlining chapters and class notes; acts of self-regulation include scheduling time to study, monitoring one's comprehension, and

persisting at boring and difficult tasks (Pintrich and De Groot 1990). Strage (1998) and Rau and Durand (2000) also measured study routines in terms of diligence and time management, but Strage (1998) included measures of judicious note taking while Rau and Durand (2000) focused specifically on persisting at difficult tasks by accounting for student's academic locus of control.[2] None of these studies focused on the relationship among academic goals, study routines, and role performances.

GOALS

Most of the research on goals deals with them in a general way. The focus has been on the properties of goal setting (Ivancevich 1976; Locke et al. 1988) and the role of commitment and motivation in setting and attaining goals (Bagozzi 1992; Burke and Reitzes 1981; Quick 1979; Schunk 1984). Additional studies have found goal setting improves the likelihood that tasks will be performed (Arwood 1995; Ivancevich 1977; Kim and Hammer 1976; Latham and Steele 1983; Locke et al. 1988; Quick 1979; and Zimmerman et al. 1992); that students whose goals are to earn a degree and get a good job have higher involvement in academic activities (Stage 1989); and, students who feel it is important to have friends or parents respect or be proud of them, and also see themselves as good students, have strong academic goals (Arwood and Hess 1998).

OTHER FACTORS

A dominant theme in the literature is that students are "motivated to excel in the activities that support the meaning of their identities" (Reitzes and Burke 1980: 45).[3] Students who see themselves as academic strive academically. Research has also found reference groups and significant others influence individual achievements (Bandura 1986; Earley and Kanfer 1985; Ellis et al. 1971; Kemper 1968).

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[2] Rau and Durand (2000: 35) measured academic locus of control with the following questions: (1) "I can easily be talked out of studying;" (2) "I often end up daydreaming when I study;" (3) "I am easily distracted when studying;" and, (4) "I can study for an hour or more and still keep undivided attention on my homework."

[3] Role identities are "internalized positional designations" (Stryker 2002: 60). In other words, they are the self-meanings people have of themselves as occupants of social positions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the review of literature, an adequate explanation of the relationships among academic goals, role performances, and grades must address the dimensions of role performances. Researchers must also show how performances are related to an identity of a student and his or her goals. Finally, researchers should focus on social factors that enhance academic identity, academic goals, and role performances.

Structural symbolic interactionists deal with such issues. Structural symbolic interactionists argue role choices "operate within a given social structural context" by creating and sustaining a stable set of meanings about oneself (Serpe 1987: 46). They also claim actors develop, maintain, and alter their "selves" through role-taking, role-making, and self-verification. As mentioned earlier, role-taking is the process of determining what others would do, or would want the actor to do, if they were in the actor's situation. On the basis of role-taking,[4] actors learn to use reflected appraisals (Heimer and Matsueda 1994) as schemas[5] to make a role (Callero 1994). In this sense, academic role-making is the process of creating an academic role performance in concert with academic role-taking. Indeed, Arwood and Hess (1998) found that students who relied on persons who stressed the importance of academic effort, a very conventional societal expectation, had stronger academic goals than those who did not. Moreover, those who experienced reflected appraisals as students and who would rather study than party were more likely than other students to describe themselves as studious. These "studious" students also had stronger desires to attend class, study, do well in difficult classes, have a high GPA, and graduate with honors. Finally, when faced with reflected appraisals that contradict one's own self-meanings, people attempt to change those appraisals so they will match the self-meanings; when this self-verification process fails,

[4] Hewitt (2003: 116-117) argued role-taking is one way actors respond cognitively to the emotional response they have after evaluating others' appraisals of them. It is the way people respond to the emotional component of the looking glass self. Cooley (1902: 152) proposed the looking glass self entails "the imagination of our appearances to the other person; the imagination of his [or her] judgment of that appearance; and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification."

[5] "Schemas refer to the cultural assumptions, taken-for granted rules, and generalizable procedures that underlie social life" (Callero 1994: 233). Role expectations also act as resources for role-making (Callero 1994); when students observe others acting as students, they integrate these role performances into their own academic orientations. Using the role that students used in high school to make a role in college is also an example of role as resource (Collier 2000: 287).

people experience psychological distress that can be dissipated by altering self-meanings (Burke 1991).

As the above discussion implies, structural symbolic interactionists treat the self as a social force. People, college students included, are motivated to confirm their self-images. This confirmation process begins once students have set their goals. Their academic identity will be maintained only to the extent students behave in ways consistent with their academic goals; it is only by acting like a student that they will receive appraisals from others that indicate that they are indeed a good student (Burke and Reitzes 1991; Callero 1985; McCall and Simmons 1978). Gecas (2000: 101) states there are three self-motives: (1) the authenticity motive—people act to assure themselves that they are faithful to their ideals; (2) the self-efficacy motive—people act to assure themselves that they are agents of their own wishes; and (3) the self-esteem motive—people act to "maintain or enhance a favorable evaluation of oneself." These self-motives will be called up "and will elicit concurring role performances when people want to maintain ties with those others with whom … [their] identity is aligned in social interaction, when they have strong commitments or investments in the identity, and when they expect intrinsic and extrinsic gratifications from concurring role performances" (Arwood and Hess 1998: 39).[6] Self-motives are often expressed as plans of action associated with an actor's self-image.

MANAGEMENT OF IDENTITIES

Role-identities are definitions of self in relation to the social positions people occupy. University students have as many role-identities as they have "enduring, normative, reciprocal relationships with other people" (Thoits 1991: 103). They have multiple identities—student; adult; child; employee; friend; etc—that they arrange in a hierarchy of salience and a hierarchy of prominence. A *salient identity* is the likelihood that an identity will be called up in specific situations (Stryker, 2002). When students' academic identities are very salient, it is likely that they will create situations where they can perform many of the roles that are typical of a student, like attend class, study, and use the library. A *prominent identity* is tied to one's ideal self (McCall and Simmons

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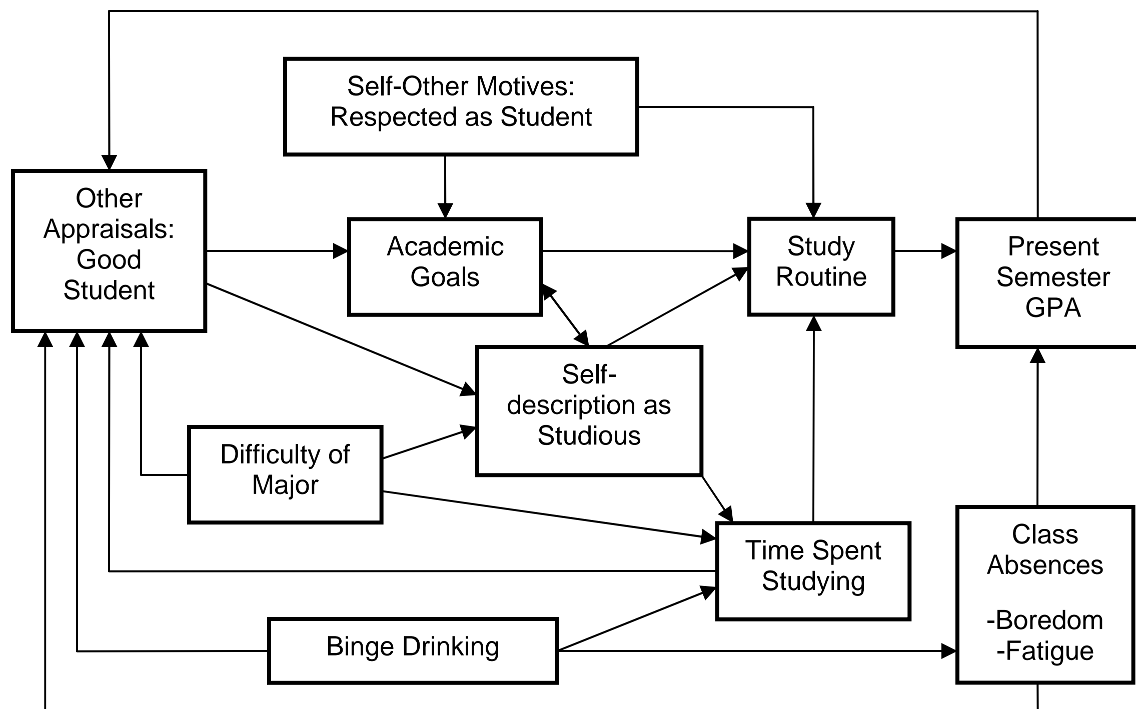
[6] These are the same points made by McCall and Simmons (1978).

1978). It is engaged as emotional responses to social situations (McCall and Simmons 1978). Students who emotionally want to be respected by others as a good student have a prominent identity of a student.

It is important to note, even if students want their identity of a student to be salient and prominent, it may not be possible because of role conflict. Role conflict arises when students have other role-identities that are as equal to, or more important than, the student identity. Therefore, a situation may arise where students may need to choose one role-identity over another. For example, many college students are employed. Working the night before a major exam may attenuate study time and alter the way they usually study. Some students also have role-identities of "socializer," "partier," "parent," and so forth that also may weaken their academic efforts. For example, "partier" will attenuate academic efforts by leading to class absences and could lead others to appraise the student as someone not interested in academic pursuits (Arwood 1995). Other than for drinking and time spent socializing with friends, it appears that most students are able to manage their identities in ways that minimize role conflict (Arwood 1995).

CAUSAL MODEL

The relationship among academic goals, study routine, and other relevant factors is shown schematically in Figure 1—Casual Model of Student Role Performances.



HYPOTHESES

Several hypotheses have been derived from this model.

$H_{1a\text{-}b}$ There are positive associations between desire for respect as a student and (a) academic goals and (b) study routine.

$H_{2a\text{-}b}$ Appraisals of being a good student and not a partier is related positively with (a) self-description as studious and (b) academic goals.

$H_{3a\text{-}c}$ Self-description as studious is related positively with (a) academic goals, (b) extensiveness of a study routine, and (c) hours spent studying per week.

$H_{4a\text{-}d}$ The number of days of binge drinking per week is related positively with (a) class absences from class due to boredom and (b) class absences due to fatigue, and is associated negatively with (c) time spent studying per week and (d) appraisals of being perceived as a good student and not a partier.

$H_{5a\text{-}c}$ Perceived difficulty of major is related positively with (a) self-description as studious, (b) time spent studying per week and (c) appraisals of being perceived as a good student and not a partier.

$H_{6a\text{-}b}$ Time spent studying per week is associated positively with (a) being perceived as a good student and not a partier and (b) extensiveness of a study routine.

H_7 There is a positive association between academic goals and extensiveness of a study routine.

H_8 The extensiveness of a study routine is related positively with present semester GPA.

H_{9a-b} Absences due to boredom is associated negatively with (a) present semester GPA and (b) being perceived as a good student and not a partier.

H_{10a-b} Absences due to fatigue is associated negatively with (a) present semester GPA and (b) being perceived as a good student and not a partier.

H_{11} There is a positive association between present semester GPA and being perceived as a good student and not a partier.

TEST OF THE FRAMEWORK

THE DATASET

This research utilizes data collected by Arwood and Hess (1998). The dataset came from a 90% random sample of 144 first and second year students (n = 130) enrolled in four sections of Introduction to Sociology at a four-year university in the Great Plains region during the spring semester of 1997 (Arwood and Hess 1998: 41). Only 107 of the 130 students had complete answers to all questionnaire items; the analysis is limited to these students.

VARIABLES

Role performances/ study routines were measured in terms of the extent of a student's study routine.[7] Five items were utilized: practice saying the important facts over and over, try to make things fit together, keep studying even if material is dull and uninteresting, arrange a place to study free of distractions, and use the library to get supplemental information for class assignments. Response categories were 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = some of the time, 4 = most of the time, and 5 = always. When these items

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[7] Pretests and factor analysis were used to check for construct validity and reliability of this and other scales. Only items that were highly correlated with the relevant factor were included in the final construction.

were added together they made up an index ranging from a low of 5 (no study routine) to a high of 25 (extensive study routine).

Time spent studying was derived from a question that asked students to check the number of hours they spent studying during a typical week; there were ten categories ranging from a low of "none" to a high of "over 32." The value was standardized to a fifteen credit hour load by dividing number of hours spent studying by the number of credit hours enrolled in during the semester then multiplying that value by fifteen.

Academic goals were measured by how important it was for the respondents to be a good student. Students were asked to respond to the importance of the following items: graduating with honors; doing well in hard subjects; studying for classes; attending class; and having a high GPA. Responses categories were: 1 = not at all important, 2 = not too important, 3 = somewhat important, 4 = pretty important, and 5 = very important. When added together the index ranged from a low of 5 (no importance) to a high of 25 (high importance).

Others' appraisals were measured by asking students how strongly they agreed with two questions: "friends believe I am a good student" and "close friends believe that I enjoy partying more than studying (this items was reverse coded). A six item response scale ranged from a low of 1 (strongly disagree) to a high of 6 (strongly agree). The constructed index ranged from a low of 2 (lowest agreement) to a high of 12 (highest agreement).

Students were also asked to identify how important it was for their friends to respect them as students and for their parents to be proud of their academic abilities. Both items ranged from a low of 1 (not at all important) to a high of 5 (very important). The resulting index—*self-other motives*—ranged from a low of 2 (not important) to a high of 10 (very important).

Self description as studious was measured by asking students to rank themselves on two seven-point scales of self-adjectives. They ranked themselves from 1 (least descriptive) to 7 (most descriptive). Each set had one adjective related to academics; the responses to these two adjectives (academic and studious) were added together to get an index score ranging from 2 (least descriptive/salient) to 14 (most descriptive/salient).

There was only one measure of role conflict—number of times per week of *binge drinking*. A person was said to be binge drinking when he or she had five or more drinks per occasion. Students were asked to indicate the number of days they drank during a typical week and how many drinks they had on each occasion. The number of times of binge drinking, therefore, ranges from 0 (no binging/role-conflict) to 7 (high binging/role-conflict).

Difficulty of major was operationalized by asking students if their major (if they had one) was "a lot easier," "somewhat easier," "about the same as," "somewhat harder," and "a lot harder" than most other majors. The scale ranged from a low of 1 to a high of 5.

The measures used for *class absenteeism* were previously developed by Arwood (1995). Students were asked to indicate the number of absences for the following reasons: personal problem (other than being ill or having a hangover); illness that you had; illness in the family (or other family problem); didn't feel like going; hangover; class was boring; didn't like teacher; college excused absence (sporting activity, band, judging team, etc.); had to work; weather (icy roads, snow storm, etc.); had transportation problems; took an early or late vacation/weekend; studied or prepared for another class; other. For the present analysis, two measures of class absenteeism were utilized: the number of absences due to fatigue (hangover and oversleeping) and boredom with classes (did not feel like going and class was boring). Absences were standardized to a fifteen credit hour load by dividing the number of absences by credit hours enrolled in during the semester then multiplying that value by fifteen.

Present semester GPA was calculated using responses to the listing of courses taken during the current semester and the grades students expected to get in those classes. Present semester GPA ranged from 0.00 to 4.00.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

The analysis of this study is divided into three parts. The first part consists of a univariate analysis that shows the mean and standard deviation of each variable (see Table 1). The second part provides a test of hypotheses and a description of the bivariate

relationships through the use of correlation analysis (Table 2). The third part is a multivariate analysis of role performances (Tables 3 and 4).

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for Variables in the Study (n = 107)

Variable	Mean	s
Other appraisals - good	7.15	.43
Other appraisals - respect	8.33	.62
Self as studious	6.53	1.92
Academic goals	19.46	1.48
Hrs spent studying	.57	3.31
Difficulty of major	3.38	3.53
# binge drinking	.90	.76
Study routine	17.16	.92
Absences due to fatigue	.24	1.37
Absences due to boredom	.58	4.00
Present semester GPA	3.11	.30

Hypothesis Testing. Pearson's product-moment correlation is used to determine the degrees to which the variables are related. An alpha level of .05 was the cutoff for rejecting the null hypotheses. A Pearson's correlation matrix showing the strength of the relationships among the variables can be found in Appendix A. An analysis of the Pearson's correlation coefficients supports all of the hypotheses deduced from the Causal Model of Student Role Performances except for the association between perceived difficulty of the major and time spent studying. Results of hypothesis testing are found below

Table 2. Tests of Hypotheses (n = 107)

H_R	Independent variable	Dependent variable	r	Strength
H1a	Motives – respect	Academic goals	.514**	strong
H1b	Motives – respect	Study routine	.382**	moderate
H2a	Other appraisals – good	Self as studious	.472**	moderate
H2b	Other appraisals – good	Academic goals	.468**	moderate
H3a	Self as studious	Academic goals	.436**	moderate
H3b	Self as studious	Study routine	.273**	moderate
H3c	Self as studious	Time spent studying	.256**	moderate
H4a	Binge drinking	Time spent studying	.201*	weak
H4b	Binge drinking	Absences - boredom	.415**	moderate
H4c	Binge drinking	Absences - fatigue	.503**	strong
H4d	Binge drinking	Other appraisals - good	-.484**	moderate
H5a	Difficulty of major	Self as studious	.314**	moderate
H5b	Difficulty of major	Time spent studying	.081	none
H5c	Difficulty of major	Other appraisals - good	.288**	moderate
H6a	Time spent studying	Other appraisals-good	.339**	moderate
H6b	Time spent studying	Study routine	.307**	moderate
H7	Academic goals	Study routine	.586**	strong
H8	Study routine	PGPA	.370**	moderate
H9a	Absences – boredom	PGPA	-.183*	weak
H9b	Absences – boredom	Other appraisals - good	-.348**	moderate
H10a	Absences – fatigue	PGPA	-.310**	moderate
H10b	Absences – fatigue	Other appraisals - good	-.509**	strong
H11	PGPA	Other appraisals - good	.468**	moderate

Although nearly all of the hypotheses were supported, the strengths of two relationships were weak; the number of days of binge drinking per week is only weakly (r =-.201) related with time spent studying, and absences due to boredom with classes is only weakly related with present semester GPA (r = -.183). On the other hand, four relationships revealed strong associations: self-other motives-respect with academic goals (r=.514); binge drinking with absences due to fatigue (r =.503); academic goals and extensiveness of study routine (r =.586); and, absences due to fatigue (oversleeping and hangovers) with other appraisals as a good student (r =-.509). All of the other associations were moderate in strength.

Multivariate Analysis. Table 3 is a regression model describing the best predictors of the extensiveness of students' study routines. The overall model is statistically significant (F = 8.200; p < .0001). Moreover, the model explains 32.2% (Adj. R^2 = .322) of the variation in study routine, with only academic goals as the crucial predictor variable (beta = .458). When partialing out the effects of other predictor variables, as is done with the calculation of partial and part correlations, partial-order and part correlations are much weaker than the zero-order correlations; although the drop from r = .586 to $r_{xy.z}$ = .381 and r_p = .328 for the relationship between academic goals and study routine is substantial, the relationship is still moderately strong.[8]

The differences in zero-order, partial order, and part correlations for the relationship between other appraisals as a good student and study routine (r = .339; $r_{xy.z}$ = .045; r_p = .036) is also especially notable. The intercorrelations with other variables, especially with academic goals, reveals that academic goals intervenes between other appraisals as a good student and study routine.

Table 3. Least Squares Regression: Study Routine by Predictor Variables (n = 107)

	Coefficients					Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p	Zero-order (r)	Partial ($r_{xy.z}$)	Semi-part (sr)
(Constant)	3.207	2.532		1.267	.208			
Other appraisals-good	.101	.224	.049	.451	.653	.339	.045	.036
Motives-respect	.304	.259	.113	1.172	.244	.382	.117	.094
Self as studious	.010	.120	.008	.081	.935	.273	.008	.007
Academic goals	.519	.127	.458	4.099	.001	.586	.381	.328
# binge drinking	-.072	.266	-.025	-.271	.787	-.189	-.027	-.022
Difficulty of major	.092	.369	.021	.250	.803	.143	.025	.020
Hours spent studying	.505	.466	.096	1.085	.281	.307	.108	.087

R^2 = .367 Adj. R^2 = .322 F = 8.200 p < .001

[8] Partial correlation reveals the association between a predictor (independent) variable and a criterion (dependent) variable while partialing out the effects of all other (control) variables in the model (Green and Salkind 2003: 272). Part correlation, which is also called semi-part correlation, is similar to the partial correlation but it partials out the intercorrelations between the control and predictor variables, but not the intercorrelations between the controls with the criterion variable (Green and Salkind 2003: 272). Part correlation is important when the partial correlation and part correlation differ substantially.

Table 4 is a regression model describing the best predictors of present semester GPA. The overall model is statistically significant (F = 6.708; p < .0001). Moreover, the model explains 32.6% (Adj. R^2 = .326) of the variation in present semester GPA, with three key predictor variables: academic goals (beta = .376), absences due to fatigue (beta = -.239), and self-description as studious (beta = .199). When partialing out the effects of other predictor variables, the correlation between study routine and present semester GPA drops from r = .370 to $r_{xy.z}$ = .068. This means that other variables in the model explain most of the variation in present semester GPA that study routine does and a tad more.

Table 4. Least Squares Regression: Present Semester GPA by Predictor Variables (n = 107)

	Coefficients					Correlations		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p	Zero-order (r)	Partial ($r_{xy.z}$)	Semi-part (sr)
(Constant)	1.663	.399		4.171	.001			
Motives-respect	-.047	.041	-.112	-1.149	.253	.157	-.116	-.092
Self as studious	.037	.018	.199	2.053	.043	.444	.204	.164
Academic goals	.066	.021	.376	3.134	.002	.511	.303	.250
# binge drinking	.119	.072	.146	1.642	.104	.296	.164	.131
Difficulty of major	.020	.057	.029	.346	.730	.207	.035	.028
Hours spent studying	.070	.044	.155	1.602	.112	-.110	.161	.128
Study routine	.011	.016	.068	.673	.503	.370	.068	.054
Absences due to fatigue	-.497	.212	-.239	-2.344	.021	-.310	-.232	-.187
Absences due to boredom	.083	.136	.058	.609	.544	-.183	.062	.049

R^2 = .384 Adj. R^2 = .326 F = 6.708 p < .0001

DISCUSSION

The results of hypothesis testing support the Casual Model of Student Role Performances developed in this paper. The findings support the propositions that students who set high academic goals will be far more likely than those who do not to get good grades. Although study routine did not turn out to be one of the better predictors of students' grades, academic goals and seeing self as studious did. Furthermore, when other students see them as academically inclined, their self descriptions as studious will have a similar effect on grades. However, class absences due to fatigue associated with

hangovers attenuates these effects.

It is clear that more research is needed to test the veracity of the causal model developed in this paper. Generalizability beyond this sample should be taken with care; the students used in the sample were primarily from urban and rural areas in the Upper Great Plains region who are predominantly white and of European decent. The use of control variables like age, race, social class, gender, and IQ might also have produced more meaningful results.

The model might also be improved by exploring in more depth the contributions role-taking and role-as-resource (self-other motives) have for identity construction as a student and for setting academic goals. Both conceptualizations demonstrate the social embeddedness of academic identities and role-making. Heimer and Matsueda (1994) found that the role-taking of different generalized others explains variations in delinquency. This differential role-taking can be applied to college students' identities and academic goal setting, especially when it is paired with Rau and Durand's (2000) notion that college students can be dichotomized into those who have an academic ethic and those who are part of a party subculture. The reason absences due to fatigue are related to present semester GPA may be due to the role-taking of the generalized other of this subculture. Moreover, students may be using this subculture's behavior and perspectives as resources to build identities, goals, study routines, and class attendance that belie an academic ethic. The concepts of role-taking and role-as-resource make this study sociological, but their operationalizations were somewhat limited; articulating the study's Casual Model of Student Role Performances by adding variables and including more extensive operationalizations of role-taking and role-as-resource may prove valuable, particularly if they are paired with traditional sociological concepts of gender, race, and social class.

Nevertheless, the implications of the present study may prove valuable to students who are starting college and/or who are developing plans to achieve their academic goals. Students at this university whose goal was to be a good student practiced saying the important facts over and over, tried to make things fit together, studied even if material was dull and uninteresting, arranged a place to study free of distractions, and used the library to get supplemental information for class assignments. Moreover, academic

goals, along with self-descriptions as studious, were a good predictor of present semester GPA. Finally, the results of this study can help university administrators create an atmosphere that promotes student goal setting and engagement in these role-making behaviors.

APPENDIX A

Pearson Product-Moment Correlations Among the Study's Eleven Variables (n = 107)

		A	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
a	Present semester GPA										
b	Other appraisals-good	.487**									
c	Motives-respect	.157*	.187*								
d	Self as studious	.444**	.472**	.045							
e	Academic goals	.511**	.468**	.514**	.436**						
f	Hours spent studying	.289**	.357**	.223**	.256**	.349**					
g	Difficulty of major	.207*	.288**	.046	.314**	.202*	.081				
h	# binge drinking	-.110	-.484**	-.104	-.239**	-.232**	-.201*	-.103			
i	Study routine	.370**	.339**	.382**	.273**	.586**	.307**	.143	-.189*		
j	Absences due to fatigue	-.310**	-.509**	-.108	-.297**	-.259**	-.051	-.196*	.503**	-.266**	
k	Absences due to boredom	-.183*	-.348**	-.036	-.227*	-.287**	-.186*	-.142	.415**	-.223**	.461**

* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$

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