UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

FOREIGN LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

THE ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC FACTORS RELATED TO STUDENTS' SUBJECT FAILING AT THE JOURNALISM DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF EL SALVADOR, SEMESTER I – 2000.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Imídeo G. Nérici (1985) points out in his book, "Hacia una Didáctica General Dinámica", that university teaching should avoid four things. First, university studies should not only aim to prepare students to pass exams. Second, university students should not limit themselves to just take notes and then memorize them. Third, university students should neither play passive roles nor limit themselves to know just what the teacher gives them. Fourth, university students should not be kept away from the problems their community and country face.

The four aspects mentioned above can be closely related to the academic factors that might have influenced the subject failure at the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador in semester I-2000.

This document includes the statement of the problem investigated; the objectives that guided the investigation; a theoretical framework which contains the theoretical aspects related to the topic, based on the consulted literature; the hypotheses and methodology used; the sampling section that describes not only the population and sample of the study, but also the statistical procedure to calculate it and the instruments used to collect the data. It also contains the most relevant findings of the research. These are presented based on the areas of the model designed, which are the Professor's methodology in the teaching learning process for the subject students had failed and for the one they had passed and felt most satisfied

with; Students' academic performance; Students' participation in extra-curricular activities; Students' evaluation of the classroom environmental factors; and Students' evaluation of the school. Finally a list of all the references consulted is included.

I.   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In our country, the University of El Salvador, as an institution of tertiary education, is being affected by the subject failing phenomenon. In accordance to a research done in this university about "Rendimiento de la Educación Universitaria" (1992), the academic failure at the University of El Salvador included students' subject failure and attrition. This study shows the subjects of the different schools that overpass the 50% of subject failures are the ones referred to the areas of Chemistry, Mathematics, and Statistics.

Moreover, it is necessary to place this research in the specific context, where the process is being addressed. Consequently, the definition to be used in the study of the subject failure phenomenon, in semester I-2000, at the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador, is given below.

Subject failure is defined as **the student's lack of success in achieving the average of six, which is the lowest passing grade in any specific subject at the end of the semester.**

The following model will be used in order to study the phenomenon of subject failure during semester I-2000 at the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador.

The model includes two major categories: **Academic factors and Non-Academic factors.**

This study will be focus on the students' view since based on the importance of this phenomenon, this research will try to answer the following general

4

question: What are the academic and non academic factors that influenced students' subject failure in the Journalism Department of the UES, Central Campus, in the first semester of the year 2000?

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Graham and Weiner, formerly a social studies and English teacher at a junior high school, and an associate professor in the Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), respectively, have shown that teachers tend to sympathize with students whose failure they attribute to lack of ability, while they get angry with students who fail for lack of effort. Students read the implicit message in these emotional cues the same way: pity is an ascription of low ability, anger one of low effort.

Other common teacher behaviors send similar signals. "A student who receives a lot of praise from the teacher for an easy success is perceived as high in effort (and therefore low in ability), when compared to another student who achieves the same outcome and is not praised," Graham and Weiner write. Likewise, students who receive unsolicited help from the teacher are also perceived to be low in ability.

To understand the consequences of these subtle and indirect cues about ability and effort, it first has to be understood how we tend to think about ability and effort. Most people believe ability to be a personal characteristic that is relatively fixed and beyond the individual's personal control. "This means that failure due to low aptitude is perceived as a characteristic of the failing individual, enduring over time, and beyond one's personal control," the authors say. Effort, on the other hand, is seen as something that can vary from one situation to the next and that the individual can control.

Various emotions are associated with these perceptions. For example, a pupil who believes he or she has failed because of low ability is likely to feel humiliation and hopelessness, emotions associated with beliefs that personal failures are due to uncontrollable causes. On the other hand, a student who believes he or she has failed because of low effort, may feel guilty about not having tried harder but optimistic about doing better in the future.

How does all this affect student motivation? Graham and Weiner describe how two students who both fail the same math test might respond in very different ways. Jane, who has always done well in the past, attributes her failure to inadequate preparation and feels guilty. The anger and criticism expressed by her teacher and parents reinforce her perception that lack of effort, not inability, was the cause of her failure. Optimistic that she will do better on the next exam if she tries harder, Jane is motivated to find a math tutor and spend more time studying.

Susan, on the other hand, has done poorly on previous math tests and attributes this latest failure to low ability, a perception that is reinforced by the teacher's sympathy and lack of criticism. Believing that she is unable to do anything to improve her performance, Susan decides to drop out school.

What is being suggested here is that motivation not be seen as something existing solely in the student that he or she brings to the classroom and academic tasks; but rather as an outcome of meaningful participation in the classroom and the social practices that accomplish its everyday practical activities.

Disincentives to effort and learning are also found within the classroom. Teachers may not insist that students work to their full potential for a variety of reasons, including protecting them from failure. They may

offer challenging work but undercut their own expectations by offering students an easy way out. For example, teachers who provide students with summaries of the main ideas of a course take away the lesson in self-directed study and personal responsibility that comes from puzzling out the ideas for themselves. Giving multiple-choice tests instead of essay questions places a premium on recall and frees students from the need to make connections between principles or to apply them in new situations. Giving students the questions—sometimes even the answers—that will appear on the next test means that they have no excuse for failing the test, but it also means that they have no incentive for mastering the material.

These situations are not rare. Educational researchers note an increase in teacher-student "bargains," those usually tacit but sometimes explicit agreements in which teachers lower their standards in exchange for classroom cooperation. Some teachers engage in these agreements not only to maintain order but also because society holds them responsible for fulfilling its education goals. High graduation rates are seen as an indication of success, and bargains embodying lower standards let teachers and students off the hook without wholly abandoning the appearance of serious work.

"Preventive classroom management" offers teachers an alternative to traditional—but ever less effective—authority as the principal method to win the attention and cooperation of students. Indeed, modern management strategies are being developed that engage students as a cooperative social group in which they learn to regulate their own behavior without the imposition of external authority. The eventual goal is students who are responsible for much of their own learning and the selection of many of their academic tasks.

John W. Thomas, an independent educational researcher and visiting scholar at the University of California, Berkeley, claims that setting higher academic expectations to encourage greater effort and more learning has been one of the key strategies of a reform movement. For example, higher-order thinking is an earnestly sought intellectual capability. Signs that one possesses this skill include the ability to note relationships among ideas and extend concepts and principles to other contexts. An essay test rather than a test of memory and recall is required to assess the status of this skill. But the kind of integrative learning required to write a good essay is undermined if, on the day before the test, the teacher passes out a review sheet giving students the essay questions and model answers to go with them.

In other words, Thomas explains, when students are asked to do integrative thinking, they are compensated "by being given the answers to integrated questions in advance of the test." As a result, they are challenged to do little more than memorize the handout sheet.

On the other hand, Thomas has found that certain kinds of supports can induce the kinds of study practices that lead to mastery of course content and the kinds of integrative learning and problem-solving skills necessary to succeed in college or the workplace. Setting clear goals and teaching students the techniques of studying are two important supports. Testing students on the material covered by homework and class work is also important. Rather than supplying review sheets, teachers can test students' understanding of the subject by asking them direct questions or by giving them time to ask questions.

Thomas, like other researchers, finds feedback to be a critical support. The more individual students receive written comments from their teachers, the more inclined they are to develop study aids, such as note taking, Thomas

said. The more thorough the feedback on quizzes and homework, the more likely they are to manage their study time effectively and to take the initiative for their own learning.

Thomas cautions, however, that it will not be easy to rid the nation's classrooms of compensatory practices. "These practices may ensure that students succeed in a course to some degree," he said. "Removing these compensations carries with it a great risk of student failure and, by extension, teacher failure. . . We cannot expect teachers to act in ways that will increase the risk of student failure (increasing homework, raising standards, dropping compensations) unless and until we are able to demonstrate to them that other provisions (feedback, articulated practice material, study-skills training) will offset the risk they anticipate."

At the School of Economics and Commerce of the University of Melbourne, full-time students are expected to take four subjects each semester and the normal duration of the Bachelor in Commerce (Bcom) pass degree is three years. With four subjects the total class hours for lectures and tutorials will amount to some twelve or thirteen hours per week. This may seem small in comparison with what is customary in secondary schools or in university courses involving laboratory work, but new students in particular should realize that they are also expected to do much private reading and prepare essays and other written work. They should therefore avoid accepting too many outside commitments, or seeking employment during the academic year. The atmosphere of a university is not one of a teacher instructing pupils, but one of self-education on the part of the students, aided by lecturers and tutors, from advice can readily be sought on any points of difficulty arising from their studies.

Students in full-time employment are limited in their own interests to two subjects per semester. To attempt more is to run the risk of failure. It follows that for part-time students the duration of the Bcom (Bachellor in Commerce) pass degree is six years, but the maximum length of the course is limited to eight years. In arranging their courses and selecting their subjects, part-time students should pay close attention to the rules governing the order in which particular subjects can be taken. It is no longer possible to arrange timetables so that part-time students can always attend lectures at convenient times, and there will inevitably be occasions when they have to obtain leave of absence from their employer. If at all possible, students are urged to take at least one year of their course full-time.

After having presented a general background about students' subject failure, it will be necessary to make clear what academic and nonacademic factors have to do in the subject failing phenomena.

A. Academic Factors

These factors have been sub-divided into *Students, Professor's,* and *Institutional areas.*

The student's area includes students' academic background as well as performance, and student's participation in campus activities. These are some of the factors related to subject failure according to the theory read. The aim of this area is to find out to what extent the students' academic background, performance, and student's participation in campus activities influenced students' subject failure.

The professor's area includes professor's methodology used in the subjects that present the highest number of failures. This particular area will be devoted to relate professor's methodology in the teaching learning process to the students' academic performance.

The last one is the institutional area. This one contains administrative processes. This area is specifically aimed at determining the relationship among students' subject failure and all the factors previously mentioned.

B. **Non-Academic Factors**

These factors have also been sub- divided into two areas as follows: Student's and Institutional areas.

Regarding student's area, it includes students' parenthood, students' sex, and their identification with the institution. The purpose of this area is to determine to what extent all these factors influenced the students' subject failure at the Journalism Department.

Within the Institutional area are found the infrastructure itself and its resources related to the educational process such as material, and human ones. The main objective of this is to determine if the university resources influenced students' subject failure in semester I-2000.

III. OBJECTIVES

1) Find out if students' subject failure was influenced by their academic background and their academic performance.

2) Relate professors' methodology in the teaching-learning process to students' subject failure.

3) Determine if there is a difference between women and men's subject failure in the Journalism Department.

IV. HYPOTHESES

1. The professors' methodology in the teaching-learning process influenced the subject failure at the Journalism Department during semester I-2000.

2. More women than men failed one or more subjects in the Journalism Department during semester I-2000.

3. The lack of motivation and interest influenced students' subject failure at the Journalism Department.

V. METHODOLOGY

The aim of this study was to find out the Academic and Non Academic factors that influenced students' subject failure at the Journalism Department during the first semester of the year 2000.

There was the need to measure and explain the subject failure phenomenon; for that reason the survey research method was used. This was a sample survey since the nature and the purpose of the study was related to Education and Social Sciences and it studied only a portion of the population.

The most challenging type of survey is one that seeks to measure intangibles such as attitudes, opinions and values, or the sociological and psychological constructs, like the reasons the population of students had for failing subjects as well as the implications related to University entities such as Faculty and Administrators, teaching- learning methodology, students' economic factors, job related reasons, students' preparation for entering college.

The opinions, attitudes, and values were not directly observable but they were inferred from responses given by the subjects to the questionnaires specially designed for this purpose. Since it was a survey of intangibles, this was limited by the fact that the data that was collected was only indirectly measuring the variables the study was concerned about. This limitation depended on how well the observations measured the intangible variables.

The steps involved in this survey research are:

A. Planning: The survey research began with the question that could be answered by means of the survey method. The question of our study was:

What were the academic and non-academic factors that influenced Students' subject failure in The Journalism Department of The School of Arts and Sciences of The University of El Salvador, Central Campus in the first semester of the year 2000?

In order to find out the answer to this question, the research was divided into two areas: one dealing with the academic factors and the other with the non-academic . The area of the academic factors was subdivided into: students' factors, teachers' factors , and institutional factors. The area of the non-academic factors consisted of: students' factors and the institution resources factors (for more information refer to the theoretical framework).

Once the subjects were selected, their information (residence, telephone numbers, etc.) were drawn from the Administration office of the School of Arts and Sciences.

B. Sampling:

1.	The population of this study was formed by the students who failed one or more subjects in the Journalism Department of The School of Arts and Sciences of the University of El Salvador during semester I-2000.

2. The sample included students who fulfilled the characteristics determined by our study. The subjects were selected according to a simple random sampling with one substitution that was designed for each Department within the School of Arts and Sciences (refer to the Sampling Section for more information).

C. Conducting the survey:

1.   Pilot study: once the data gathering questionnaire was ready, the pilot study was run to determine if the designed questionnaire would provide the expected data.

2.   Field work

The steps that were followed for gathering the information were:

a.   Phone calls: they were made in order to set a date with the subjects of the sample for an interview. In case one of the subjects could not be contacted or he/she refused to be interviewed, the substitute was taken.

b.   Visiting their workplace or house: After contacting the subject of the sample, they were visited, either at their job or at their house to administer the questionnaires.

D. Data processing

The steps that were followed for processing the data were:

1. Designing the data base using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

2. Coding the information.

3. Entering the data into the data base.

4. Analyzing and interpreting the data.

5. Writing a Report

6. Socializing the results.

VI. SAMPLING

A. <u>Population</u>

The population of our research was 210 students of the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador and 51 sample ones were taken out. They were selected randomly and by taking into consideration that they had failed one or more subjects in semester I-2000.

B. <u>Sample</u>

The sample was taken in relation to the number of students that failed one or more subjects the eight Journalism Department of the School of Arts and Sciences. The sample was calculated, using the following formulae:

$$n = \frac{Z^2PQN}{E^2(N-1) + Z^2PQ}$$

Where : **n** = sample; **N** = population ; **Z** = score; **PQ** = percentage to be included or excluded; **E** = standard error.

The following procedure shows the way the sample of the Journalism Department was calculated:

$$n = \frac{Z^2PQN}{E^2(N-1) + Z^2PQ} \qquad n = \frac{(0.68)(210)}{(2.09) + (0.68)}$$

$$n = \frac{(1.65)^2 (0.5)(0.5)(210)}{(0.1)^2 (210\text{-}1) + (1.65)^2 (0.5)(0.5)} \qquad n = \frac{142.8}{2.77}$$

$$n = \frac{(2.7225)(0.25)(210)}{(0.01)(209) + (2.72)(0.25)} \qquad n = 51.5$$

$$\mathbf{n = 51}$$

C. **Instrument**

        The instrument used was a questionnaire. This questionnaire contained questions related to the areas included in the model designed to study the subject failure phenomenon of the Journalism Department in semester I-2000. These areas were: academic background and performance of the sample students, the professor's methodology, and the role of the university as an institution in the students' subject failure.

VII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The sample of this research was composed of 51 students from the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador. All of them had failed one or more subjects during semester I-2000. The following table shows the sample general characteristics such as sex, marital status, and age.

A. SAMPLE CHARACTERIZATION

Table 1: Relationship between Students' Sex and Marital Status

SEX	MARRIED		SINGLE		TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
	F	%	F	%		
MALE	2	3.9%	24	47.1%	26	51%
FEMALE	3	5.9%	22	43.1%	25	49%
					51	100%

Relationship between Students' Sex and Marital Status
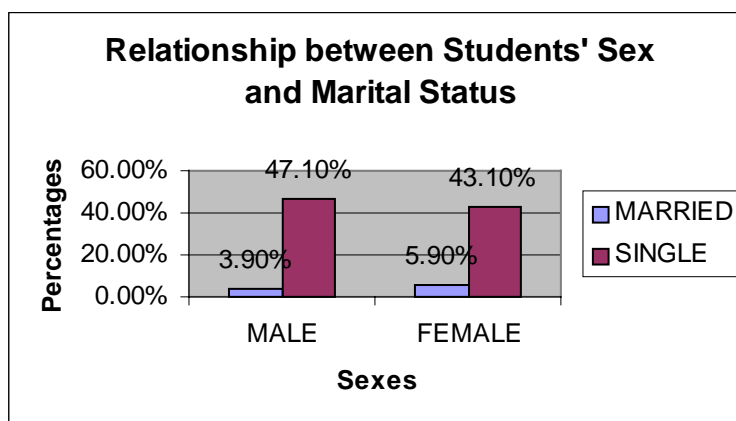
Table 2: Students' Age

Age of Students	Frequency	Percentage
18-22	29	56.86%

23–27	13	25.49%
28–32	3	5.88%
Didn't Answer	6	11.76%
	51	**100%**

STUDENTS' AGE

11.76%
5.88%
25.49%
56.86%

- 18-22 years old
- 23-27 years old
- 28-32 years old
- Didn't Answer

TOTAL OF MEN AND WOMEN

51%
49%

% of Total

1 Males
2 Females
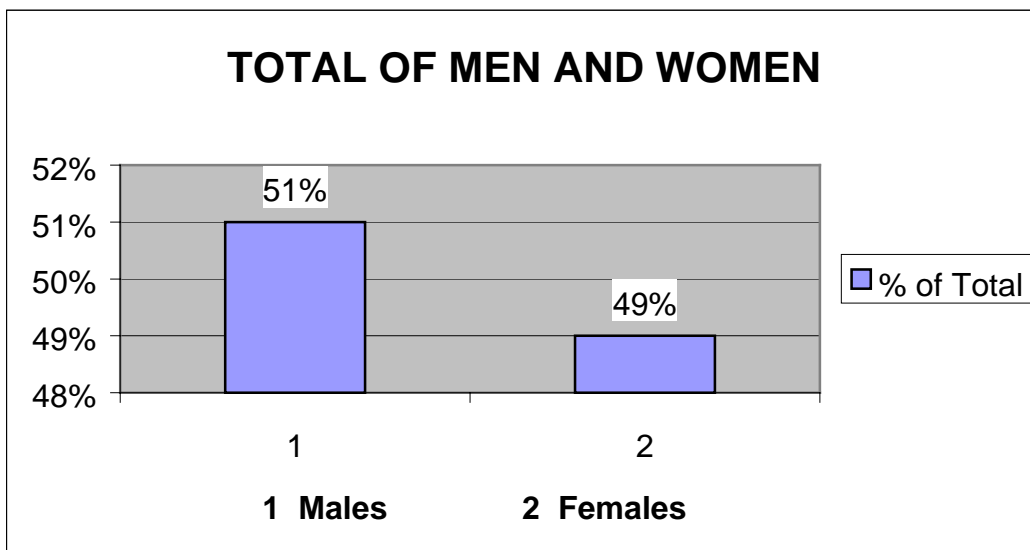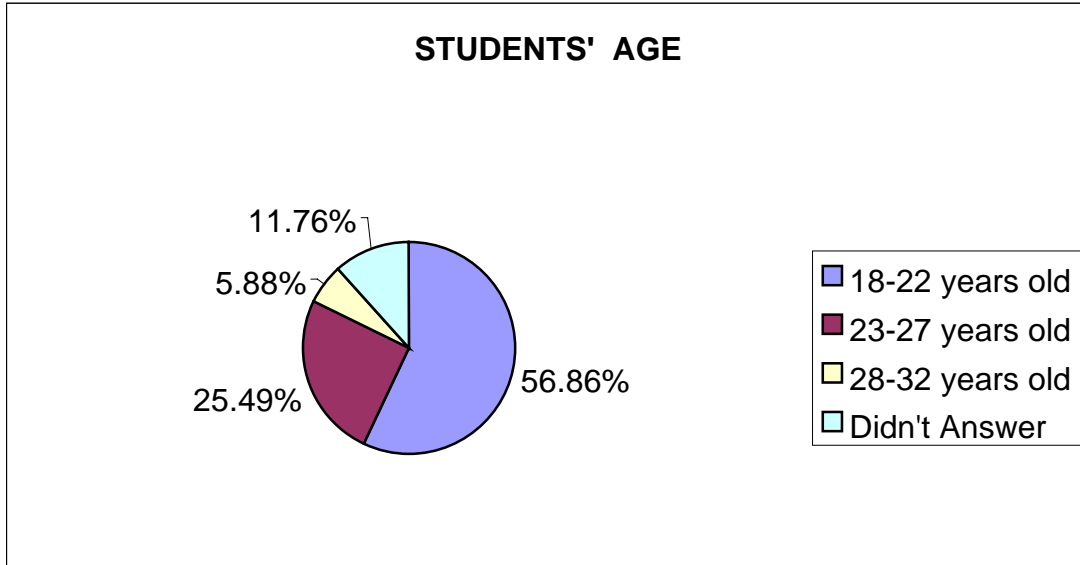
B) STUDENTS' IDENTIFICATION WITH THE INSTITUTION
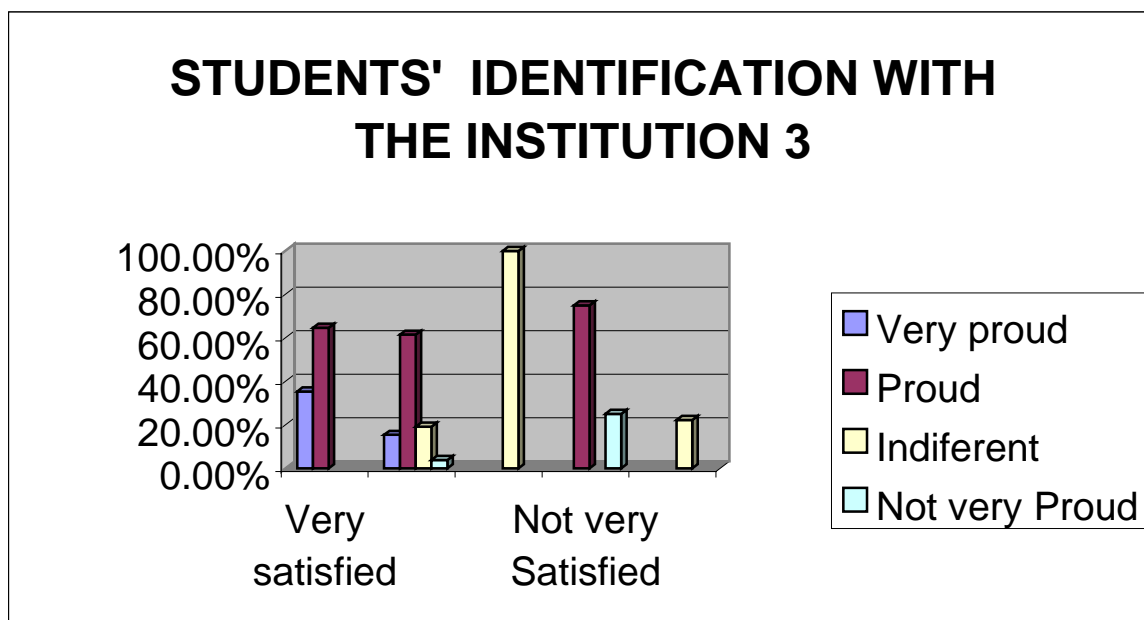

STUDENTS' IDENTIFICATION WITH THE INSTITUTION 3

Table 3: Relationship between the way sample students feel about their career and how they feel about being a UES student

How students feel about their career	How students feel about being a UES student							
	Very proud		Proud		Indifferent		Not very proud	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very satisfied	6	35.3%	11	64.7%				
Satisfied	4	15.4%	16	61.5%	5	19.2%	1	3.8%
Indifferent					2	100.0%		
Not very satisfied			3	75.0%			1	25.0%
Unsatisfied					2	22.2%		

One of the most interesting findings is illustrated in Table 3, which presents the relationship between the way students feel about their career and how they feel about being a student at the University of El Salvador. Half the students said to feel proud about being a student of this institution and very satisfied or satisfied with the career they are currently studying. This means that these students are not only studying the career that they want to, but also they are studying that career in an institution they feel proud of. These two aspects play a fundamental role in the students' academic performance since they feel both very satisfied or satisfied with the career and proud of the institution.

C. STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

A second finding that is necessary to be mentioned is the results gotten from relating the way students feel about the career they are currently studying and the number of subjects they had failed since they began up to semester I-2000. A third of students had failed between one and three subjects although they said to feel very satisfied or satisfied with their career. Even though the number of subjects they had failed is not very high if the year these people began their studies (1995 – 2000) is taken into account, it becomes a relevant aspect due to the way they said to feel with the career they are studying at the moment. This is presented in the following table.
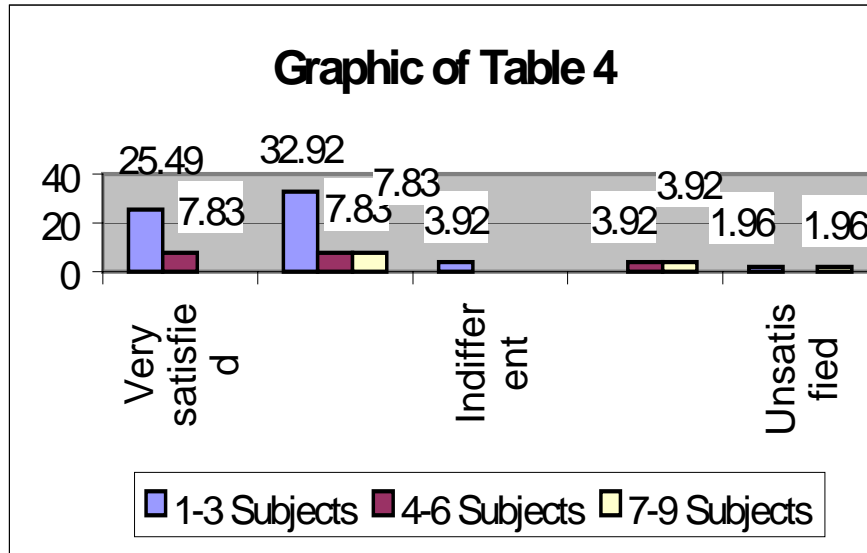
C. STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Graphic of Table 4
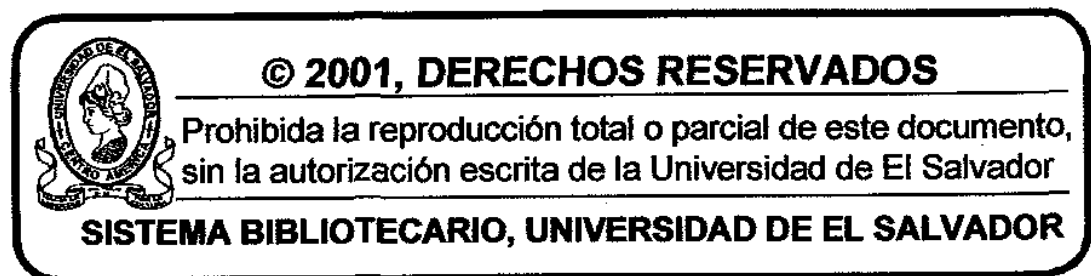
Table 4: Relationship between the way students feel about their career and the number of subjects they had failed until Semester I-2000

	1-3 Subjects		4-6 Subjects		7-9 Subjects		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very satisfied	13	25.49	4	7.83			17	33.33
Satisfied	18	32.92	4	7.83	4	7.83	26	50.98
Indifferent	2	3.92					2	3.92
Not very satisfied			2	3.92	2	3.92	4	7.83
Unsatisfied	1	1.96			1	1.96	2	3.92
							51	100.0

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23

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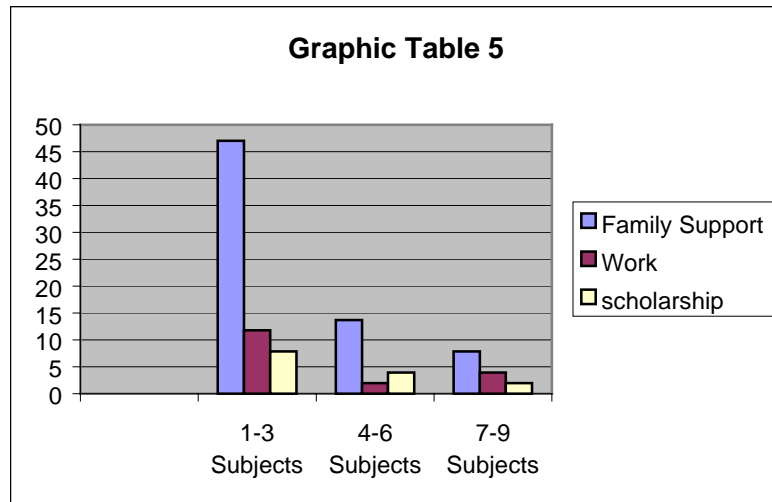

Graphic Table 5

Table 5: Relationship between how students support their studies and the number of subjects
 they had failed until Semester I-2000

	1-3 Subjects		4-6 Subjects		7-9 Subjects		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Family Support	24	47.05	7	13.72	4	7.84	35	68.62
Work	6	11.76	1	1.96	2	3.92	9	17.64
Scholarship	4	7.84	2	3.92	1	1.96	7	13.72
							51	100.0

As it is shown in table 2, half of the students, whose parents or any other relative support them economically, had failed one, two, or three subjects until semester I-2000. Six out of nine, who work in order to support themselves economically in their studies, had also failed the same number of

subjects. Four out of seven with a scholarship had failed between one and three subjects, too. These results can be viewed in two different perspectives.

The first one has to do with the high number of students who had failed one or more subjects in semester I-2000, regardless of their family support. These students are supposed to be full-time ones; therefore, they can devote more time to their studies than the ones who have to work in order to support themselves at the university. It is clear enough that these students cannot blame lack of time for their failure.

The second perspective is related to the fact that a significant number of students, who work to support their studies, had failed one or more subjects in semester I-2000. Even though students who work face more difficulties, especially the ones dealing with time, having to work does not always justify subject failure by itself. However, as it is stated in the last two paragraphs of the Theoretical Framework, this type of students, at the University of Melbourne, have particular restrictions due to their special social conditions.

One of them has to do with the number of subjects they can register in one semester; that is, if a full-time student is allowed to register four or five subjects, according to their study curriculum, in one semester, part-time students (i.e. the ones who work) are allowed to register only two. This means that part-time students take more time to finish their studies at the university. Furthermore, the document states that these pupils are obliged to become full-time students for the last year of studies. By doing this, the institution somehow guarantees students a good academic preparation in the different fields of study.

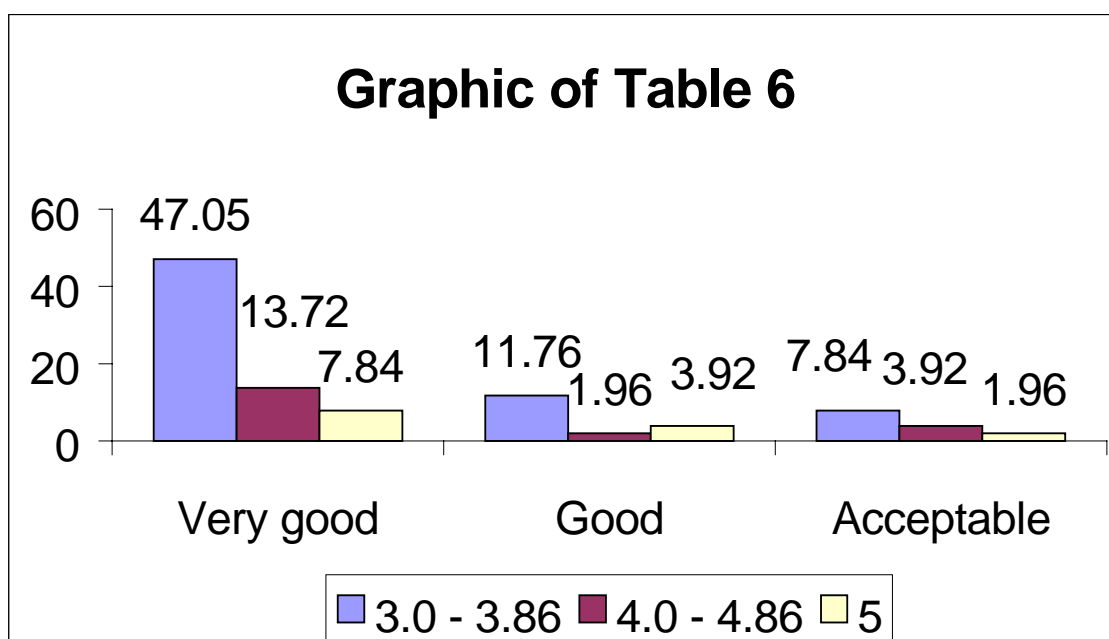## D. STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Graphic of Table 6

Table 6: Relationship between students' academic performance and students'
Participation in extra-curricular activities

	3.0 – 3.86		4.0 – 4.86		5.0		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Very good	24	47.05	7	13.72	4	7.84	35	68.62
Good	6	11.76	1	1.96	2	3.92	9	17.64
Acceptable	4	7.84	2	3.92	1	1.96	7	13.72
							51	100.0

Extra-curricular activities are considered to be those that are developed as complement to the ones carried out as part of the class. These activities are not related to the subjects in the curriculum, and are likely to be directed by students themselves. Extra-curricular activities are necessary in the education process as a whole since the ones students perform in the classroom seem to be insufficient and... They are insufficient because they do not reflect a set of social and essential activities for a good formation process. They are... because students' expression opportunities are somehow being limited and artificially imposed as if everybody were the same. In

26

tertiary education, these allow the students to exercise themselves in the practical-professional and theoretical and investigation fields. They also provide the students with a more com

plete vision about modern civilization[1].

Students' participation in extra-curricular activities seems to have little relationship with their academic performance since half of the students said to participate in these activities not very often (that is, 3.0 – 3.86 represents "sometimes"; 4.0 – 4.86 "hardly ever"; 5.0 "never") and have a very good academic performance. However, students' participation in extra-curricular activities might represent not only the low level of identity with the university, but also the lack of involvement in activities, which according to Nérici, play a very important role in the students' academic preparation.
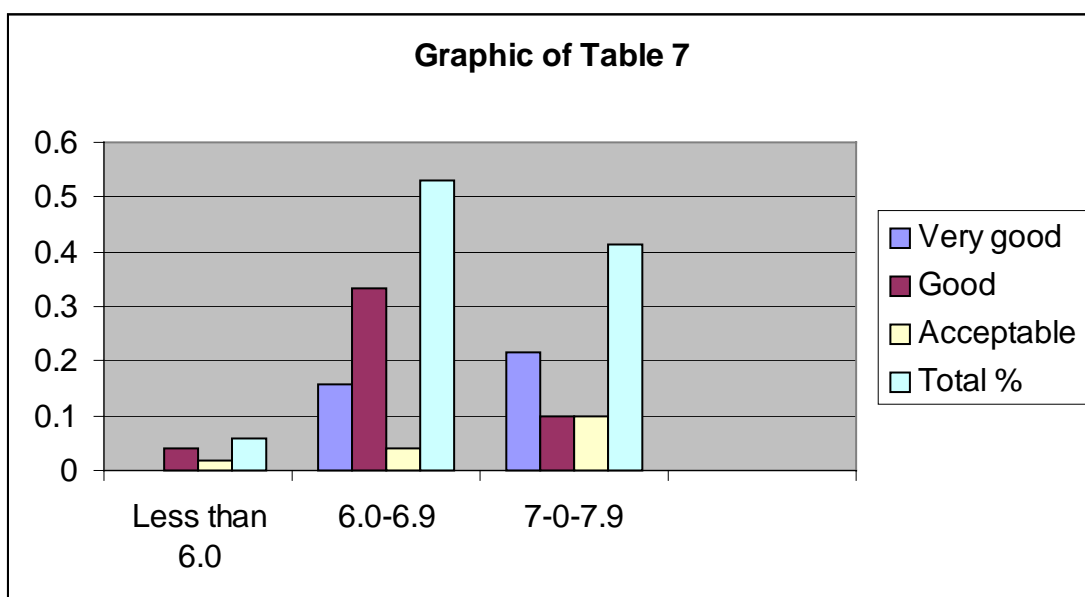

Graphic of Table 7

Table 7: Relationship between students' general grade and how they consider their academic performance

	Very good	Good	Acceptable	Total

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[1] Nérici, Imídeo G. **Hacia una Didáctica General Dinámica** (1985)

	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Less than 6.0			2	3,91	1	1,96	3	5,88
6.0 – 6.9	8	15,86	17	33,33	2	3,91	27	52,94
7.0 – 7.9	11	21,56	5	9,8	5	9,8	21	41,17
							51	100

One of the things that caught our attention is the way students evaluate their academic performance (that is, half of them consider themselves to be very good or good students) and the general grade they say to have (half of them said to have a general grade in the range of 6.0 – 6.9) This means that this general grade is considered to be good or very good just due to the fact that they had passed the subject (since 6.0 is the minimum passing grade at the university). This contrast does not only have to do with the way students define terms such as "Very good", "good", or "acceptable", but also with individual differences among students. These differences, according to A. Petrovski (1979), are:

1. Student's attitude towards studying. This can be a very responsible one or a very indifferent one.

2. Student's general academic development. This happens to be either very high, which includes the fact that students have a considerable amount of information, in relation to their age, in the different areas of knowledge, or very limited.

3. Student's ability to process any new material. This ability has to do with their aptitude to work and understand that new material by themselves. On the contrary, their disability to do so implies a total lack of study habits to work by their own, which is usually combined with their habit to learn as much as possible by using only their memory.

4. Student's interests. These can vary as the ones students clearly express when feeling interested in a particular field of knowledge or occupation, or as the ones students show when having no interests in any of the fields or occupation.

E. THE TEACHING-LEARNING METHODOLOGY

In order to make a comparison between the professor's methodology in both subjects, the one that students failed and the one they passed and felt most satisfied with, the sample pupils were asked, in the questionnaire, to evaluate both methodologies. As a result, students evaluated the first methodology as good and the second one as excellent or very good. This represents that the methodology used by the teacher, whose subject students failed, reflects lack of students' participation in the different classroom activities. The other methodology, on the contrary, focuses on students' involvement in their learning process, which is just guided by the professor.

F. DISCUSSION OF THE HYPOTHESIS.

HYPOTHESIS 1

The professors' methodology in the teaching learning process influenced the subject failure in the Journalism Department during semester I-2000.

According to this , the professors' methodology did not influence in the subject failure phenomenon among the students of journalism in semester I-2000 . Though 86.3% considered the professors' methodology in the Journalism Department as acceptable, in the light of the Chi-Square it is not acceptable because the obtained value of the nule hypothesis is lower than the X^2 table value with an error of 0.10.
(See the results in the next table)

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.194[b]	1	.275		
Continuity Correction[a]	.440	1	.507		
Likelihood Ratio	1.364	1	.243		
Fisher's Exact Test[a]				.411	.264
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.167	1	.280		
N of Valid Cases	44				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.27.

HYPOTHESIS 2

More women than men failed more subjects in the Journalism Department during semester I-2000.

Like hypothesis 1. This hypothesis according to the chi-square is not accepted. The obtained value equals 1.64 which is the lower than X^2 table value with an error of 0.10. (See the table below.)

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.640[a]	2	.440
Likelihood Ratio	1.666	2	.435
Linear-by-Linear Association	.804	1	.370
N of Valid Cases	51		

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5.
The minimum expected count is 5.88.

HYPOTHESIS 3

The lack of motivation and interest influenced students' subject failure at the Journalism Department.

It can be inferred that the lack of motivation did not influence students failing subjects in semester I-2000. As the results show the value of 2.82 with an error of 0.10, which is also lower than the value given in the X^2 table. Nevertheless , the nine causes that the students said had affected the subject failing problem, the lack of motivation had 41.19% against 58.82% of the answers that were distributed in the other causes. (See the table below) .

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	Exact Sig. (2-tailed)	Exact Sig. (1-tailed)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.194[b]	1	.275		
Continuity Correction[a]	.440	1	.507		
Likelihood Ratio	1.364	1	.243		
Fisher's Exact Test[a]				.411	.264
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.167	1	.280		
N of Valid Cases	44				

a. Computed only for a 2x2 table

b. 1 cells (25.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.27.

In general, the results obtained in the hypothesis testing did not provide the expected results with maybe due to the reduced sample used.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This research has allowed the authors to identify the academic and non-academic factors that influenced the subject failure at the Journalism Department of the University of El Salvador in semester I-2000.

One of the things that seems to be influencing subject failure in that academic unit is the students' academic performance. Their general grade ranks between 6.0 and 7.9, as the majority of them said. Their results at the end of the semester can also be related to the number of subjects all of them had failed up to semester I-2000. Both phenomena, low grades and subject failure, are being caused, according to students, by their lack of motivation, interest, and devotion to the subjects; the professor's methodology; and the subject's level of difficulty.

Regardless of the fact that students' participation in extra-curricular activities does not affect their academic performance, it can be pointed out that this lack of participation in this type of activities is somehow affecting students' academic preparation, as Nérici states in his book, Hacia una Didáctica General Dinámica.

There is a general feeling about the way the sample students evaluated the conditions in which the facilities are. These were evaluated as to in very bad or bad conditions. However, this does not constitute a cause for students to change to another university, which might offer them something better in this sense.

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