

This questionnaire, created by Paula Clarke and Ted Hamilton, is being directed towards our former students — those who have taken one or more of our classes — and who have since successfully moved on from Columbia College. This document is designed to help us profile characteristics of students who have persisted in our courses. This is our independent research, a project that we have designed and financed over many years. If it is not obvious, our goal has been and continues to be to try to find ways to transcend some of the debilitating trends (in American culture and the culture of higher education) that function as barriers to authentic student development. The research on our students and our teaching does not formally represent the college at which we teach or any other institution, although it may eventually be used as an institutional resource. The integrity of this undertaking depends a good deal upon respondent honesty. We are not asking questions for you to tell us what you think we want to hear. We are asking questions in order to *learn* about what we do. If you have a critique of us, our courses, and/or something that we do, please describe it for us.

Please feel free to skip over questions that you do not wish to answer. If you want to say more than a space provides, please feel free to do so. If you have suggestions about questions that you believe we should ask, but have not, we would be delighted to entertain your suggestion(s). Similarly, if you believe that some of the questions we have asked should be re-worded, please provide us with your idea(s). Yes, some questions are asked more than once! As is usually true of any research involving human subjects, respondent anonymity is an important priority. Any details that we might use in a publication will be separated from distinguishing personal characteristics. Thank you for your help!

## PERSONAL BACKGROUND

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

### [1]. Age

(a) How old were you during the time that you attended Columbia College [approximately]? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) What year(s) did you attend Columbia? \_\_\_\_\_

[2]. **Marital Status** at the time you were at Columbia (mark “X” in appropriate box):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Single (never married)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Married / Domestic Partnership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Separated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If “Other”, please explain:

[3]. Are you a parent?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

[3a]. If “Yes”, how many children do you have and what are their ages? \_\_\_\_\_

[3b]. If you were a **parent while attending Columbia**, how many of your children were living with you **at the time**? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe:

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[5]. **Living arrangements while attending Columbia** (mark “X” in appropriate box):

<input type="checkbox"/>	Living in the dorms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living alone / with children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living with spouse / spouse and children
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living w/ boyfriend / girlfriend
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living with roommate(s) ( <i>how many:</i> )
<input type="checkbox"/>	Living with family (parents, other relatives)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If “Other”, please describe:

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[6]. While attending Columbia, were you **responsible for caring for other people**, such as a sibling, a grandparent, and/or some other relative or close friend (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sort of
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

If “Yes” or “Sort of”, please explain:

[7]. At the time I was at Columbia College, I believe that there was at least one person who **supported** what I was doing with my life (mark “X” in appropriate box).

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Agree somewhat
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

(a) Who provided support (mark all that apply):

- Immediate family member(s)
- Extended family member(s)
- Friends
- Faculty
- Other

If “Other”, please explain:

[8]. At the time I was enrolled in your classes, **economic support** came from, (check all that apply):

- Family
- Work / employment
- Federal Student Aid

- Scholarships
- Loans
- Personal savings
- Other

If “Other”, please describe:

[9]. If you were employed during the time you were enrolled in our classes, how many hours per week [approximately] did you work?

Hours work per week [employment] at the time \_\_\_\_\_

[10]. How many children are there in your family of origin? \_\_\_\_\_

(a) In recent decades a number of complex family forms have emerged in response to other changes in our society. This means that in contrast with the past more people have step-siblings, parents who divorced or never married, parents who do not live together all the time, and/or other complicated relationships. Would you describe your family as one of these new complex forms of family (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Agree somewhat
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Please describe:

[11]. Check ALL of following descriptions that apply to your position in your family of origin:

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am the eldest child                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am an only child                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am the youngest child                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am a middle child                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am the only boy / girl of two or more siblings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am an adopted child                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other  |

If “Other”, please describe:

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[12]. I have a very close and supportive relationship with at least one person in my immediate family (mark “X” in appropriate box).

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly agree    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Do not agree      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree |

[13]. Listed below are some life events/life circumstances. Please check as many of those that you believe have **ever** impacted **your life**.

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Divorce (self, parents’)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Untimely death (of a loved person – relative or otherwise)                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Living with a chronically ill person (mental and/or physical illness or disability) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Unexpected accident or tragedy (e.g. loss of a relationship)                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Complicated family relationships and/or circumstances                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Incredibly good luck  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other   |

Please describe:

[14]. Did any of the life events listed below **impact your life** in a significant way **during the time you were at Columbia College** (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- |                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Divorce (your own, other family, etc.)        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Death   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Loss / break-up of a significant relationship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Serious accident                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other type of event                           |

If other type of event, please describe:

## HEALTH

[1]. Did you have **any** health problems [mental and/or physical] of **any** kind during the time you were enrolled at Columbia College? Include accidents, allergies, sleeping problems, alcohol and/or substance abuse, eating disorders, etc (mark “X” in appropriate box)?





## SOCIAL GROUPS

[1]. Did you attend high school in Tuolumne and/or the surrounding counties [e.g. Calaveras, Amador, etc.] (mark "X" in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

[2]. While attending Columbia College, did you know people from high school who were also attending Columbia (mark "X" in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I knew a lot of people from my high school
<input type="checkbox"/>	I knew some people from my high school
<input type="checkbox"/>	I didn't know anyone from high school

[3]. Did you know or become acquainted with many people on campus when you attending Columbia College (mark "X" in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	I knew a lot of people on campus when I was at Columbia College
<input type="checkbox"/>	I knew some people on campus when I was at Columbia College
<input type="checkbox"/>	I didn't really know anyone very well when I was at the college
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If "Other", please describe:

[4]. Did enrollment in our courses have an impact on your friendships and/or relationships with your family (mark "X" in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
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No

If yes, please describe:

## EDUCATION

[1]. Are you the first person in your family to attend college (this means are you the first to have taken **any** college classes, it does NOT mean earn a degree) (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

Yes  
 No

[2]. Are you the first person in your family to **earn a college degree** (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

Yes  
 No

[a]. If there are others in your family who have earned college degrees, please list them, along with the highest degree they have earned, and where they earned the degree (the first line – in italics – is a sample):

<b>Family Member</b>	<b>Highest Degree Earned</b>	<b>Institution</b>
<i>EX: Mother</i>	<i>B.A.</i>	<i>Stanislaus State University</i>

[3]. Before I came to college I had experienced problems in/with school (e.g. did not like school, got into trouble, thought school was a ‘waste,’ thought I couldn’t succeed) (mark “X” in appropriate box).

Very true of me  
 True of me  
 Somewhat true of me

- Not true of me
- Not at all true of me

Any additional comments:

[4]. Have you ever been enrolled in any form of alternative education (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- Yes
- No

Please describe:

[5]. Was Columbia College the **first college** you **had ever** attended (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- Yes
- No

(a) Did you attend Columbia more than once (some individuals may have experienced ‘multiple starts’ at college) (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

If “Yes”, how many times did you attend Columbia (over a discontinuous period of time)? \_\_\_\_\_

(b) If you ‘started’ at Columbia more than once, how old were you at that/those time(s) (mark all that apply)?

	< 18	18 – 21	22 – 24	25 – 29	30 – 34	35 – 39	40 – 44	45 – 49	50 – 54	> 55
1 <sup>ST</sup>										
2 <sup>ND</sup>										
3 <sup>RD</sup>										
4 <sup>TH</sup>										

[6]. If you had attended other colleges, **how many other colleges had you attended** prior to coming to Columbia College? \_\_\_\_\_

(a) **Names of the other colleges** you had attended prior to coming to Columbia College.

[7]. If you had attended other colleges, what were the **reasons** for doing so?



[11]. At the time you were at Columbia, approximately how far did you commute to school (minutes and/or miles): \_\_\_\_\_

[12]. Which of the following options below best describes your experiences about financing your education (check all that apply)?

- Student Loans
- Work / employment
- Federal Student Aid
- Scholarships
- Private sources (e.g. parents, grandparents, savings, etc.)
- Employer contribution(s)
- Other

If “Other”, please describe

[13]. Were you ever on the Dean’s List when you were a student at Columbia College (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- Yes
- No

If “Yes”, how many times: \_\_\_\_\_

[14]. When you left Columbia College, did you (mark “X” in appropriate box):

- Transfer with an Associate’s Degree (AA)
- Transfer without an AA

Other

If “Other”, please describe:

[15]. If you transferred, to what college/university did you transfer?

[16]. Were you the kind of student who had more units than required for transfer (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

Yes  
 No

If you answered YES, what courses did you take that you “did not need?”

[17]. When you transferred, did you feel well prepared (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

Very well prepared  
 Well prepared  
 Somewhat well prepared  
 Not well prepared  
 Not at all well prepared (totally unprepared)

[18]. Did you enroll in demanding courses when you transferred (i.e. did you enroll in courses requiring heavy loads of reading, writing, critical reasoning and abstract thinking) (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

Very demanding courses  
 Demanding courses  
 Not demanding  
 Not at all demanding

Please describe, briefly:

[19]. I believe my early education (i.e. primary school through high school) was a good preparation for college (mark “X” in appropriate box).

- |                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly agree    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Agree somewhat    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Disagree          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly disagree |

[20]. If you could **change something** about your *early education* (before college), (a) what might that be, and (b) why?



[21]. If you could change anything about *your college education* thus far, (a) what would you change, and (b) why?

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[22]. Please list and/or describe any additional degrees, honors, significant recognitions, employment, internships (etc.) that you have earned since being a student at Columbia College:

<b>Additional Degrees:</b>	•
<b>Honors:</b>	•
<b>Significant Recognitions:</b>	•
<b>Employment / Internships</b>	•
<b>Other</b>	•

**CLARKE/HAMILTON CLASSES**

[1]. Did you know anything about us and/or courses before enrolling in them?

	Yes
	No

Please explain:

[2]. Reasons for enrolling in the first course you took from us (check all that apply)?

- It fit my schedule
- Subject seemed interesting
- Just curious
- My friend(s) were also in the class
- I needed it to fulfill requirements (graduation/transfer)
- A friend / family member had been in your classes
- Other

If "Other", please describe:

[3]. Did you ever drop or consider dropping one of our courses during the time you were enrolled in our classes (mark "X" in appropriate box)?

- Yes
- Sort of
- No

If “Yes”, which course(s) and what were the reasons for dropping or considering to drop (at the time)?

[4]. If you stayed (persisted) why did you stay? Please describe:

[5]. Upon reflection, do you believe (mark “X” in appropriate box):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  | Our classes are much too difficult                  |
|  | Our classes are difficult                           |
|  | Our classes are about the right level of difficulty |
|  | Our classes are not difficult                       |
|  | Our classes are not difficult at all                |

(a) Please explain:

[6]. Were you ever counseled **NOT** to take classes from us and/or to drop our courses (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sort of
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

If “Yes,” or “Sort of,” by whom (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Family
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friends
<input type="checkbox"/>	Advisor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Students
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

If “Other”, please explain:

[7]. As you probably know, most students avoid taking our courses and of those who initially enroll, most eventually drop. In your opinion, describe what you believe are the most significant reasons for this pattern. What are the most significant reasons why students drop our classes (if you ever dropped, please include your reasons for dropping)?

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[8]. As you probably know, students who persist in our courses are very likely to be very successful when they move on from Columbia College. If you are responding to this questionnaire, you are one of those students. What do you believe was and/or is different about you that you persisted (some of you may have dropped before eventually persisting) when and where others did not?

[9]. Do you believe that you made the best use of what our courses offer (e.g. extensive office hours, ability to see the work of others, opportunity to get feedback and/or pre-grading on work in-progress, ability to ask questions inside and outside of class about exam questions for at least four weeks, etc.) (mark “X” in appropriate box)?

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  | I made the very best use of the courses     |
|  | I made good use of the courses              |
|  | I made somewhat good use of the courses     |
|  | I did not make the best use of the courses  |
|  | I greatly under-utilized the course options |
|  | Other                                       |

If “Other”, please explain:

[10]. In comparison with most of the college courses that you have taken (mark “X” in appropriate box),

- Our classes (Paula and Ted) are very similar to most other courses
- Our classes (Paula and Ted) are similar to most other courses
- Our classes (Paula and Ted) are somewhat similar to most other courses
- Our classes (Paula and Ted) are not similar to most other courses
- Our classes (Paula and Ted) are not at all similar to most other courses

Please describe:

(a) Please list the course(s) you have taken from us:

<b>Paula's courses that I completed:</b>	
<b>Ted's courses that I completed:</b>	
<b>Team-Taught courses that I completed:</b>	

[11]. If you were to recommend **changes in our courses**, **what** would those changes be?

(a) What would be the **rationale/reasons** for instituting these changes?

Thank you for your time and input. If you have anything else you would like to say, please feel free to do so.