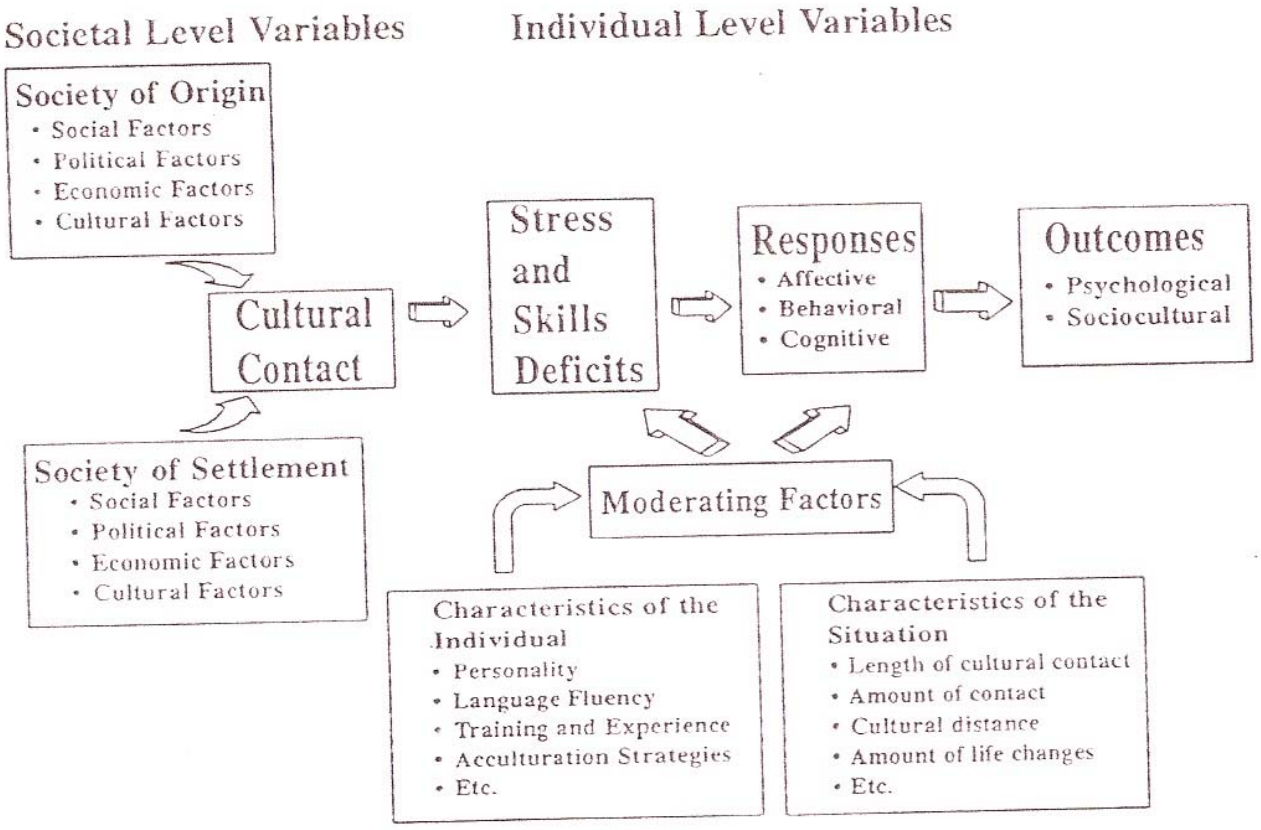
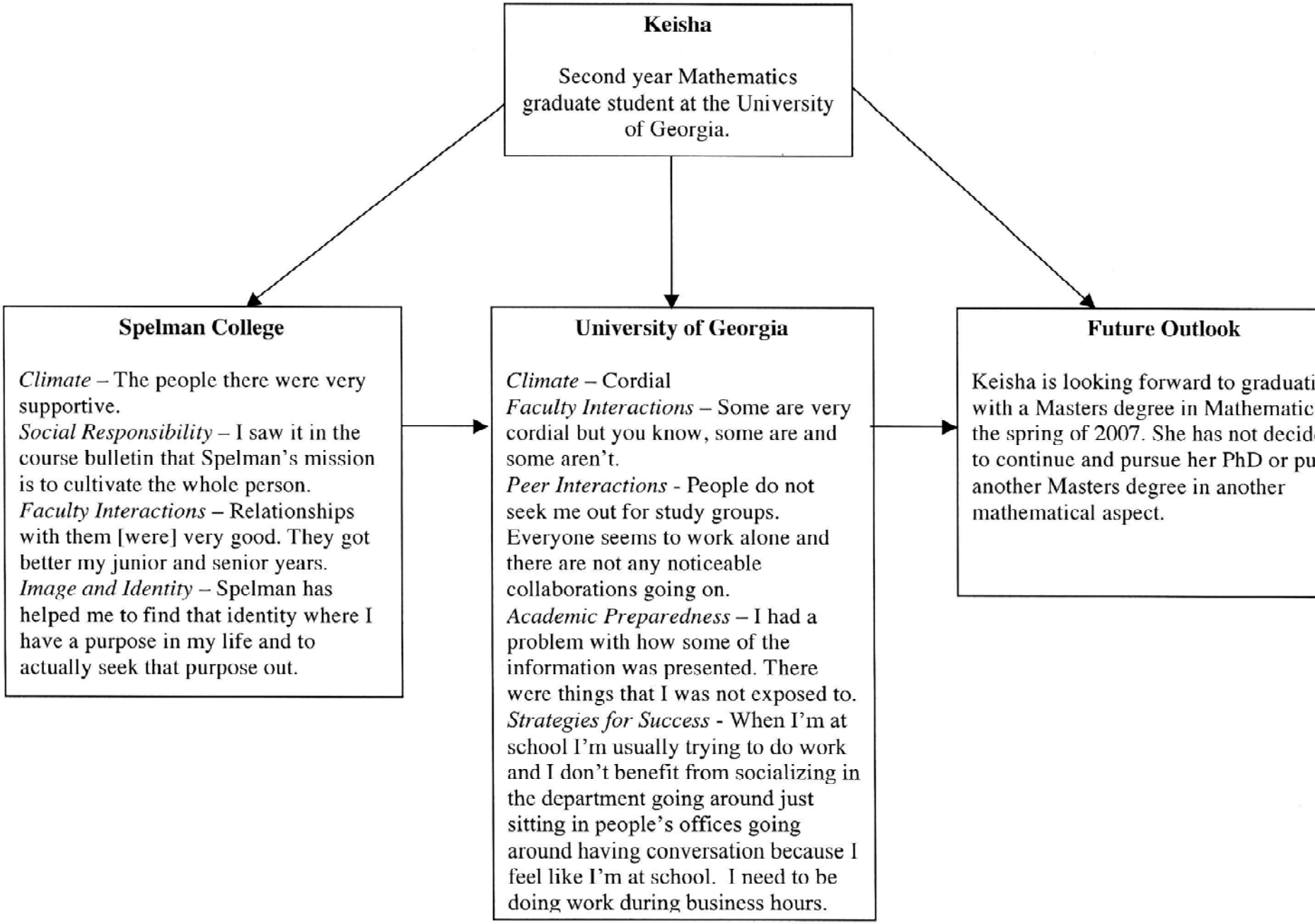
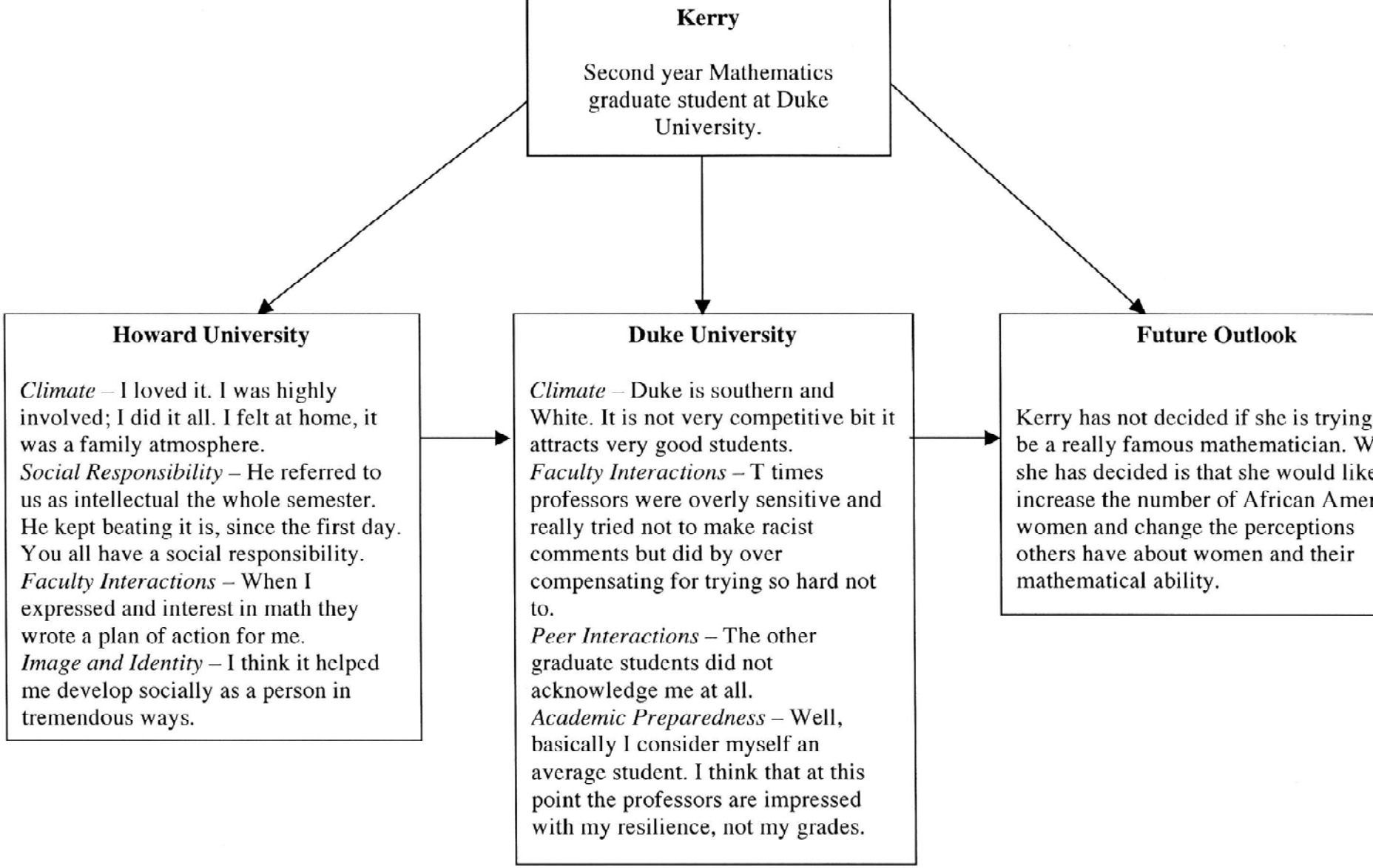
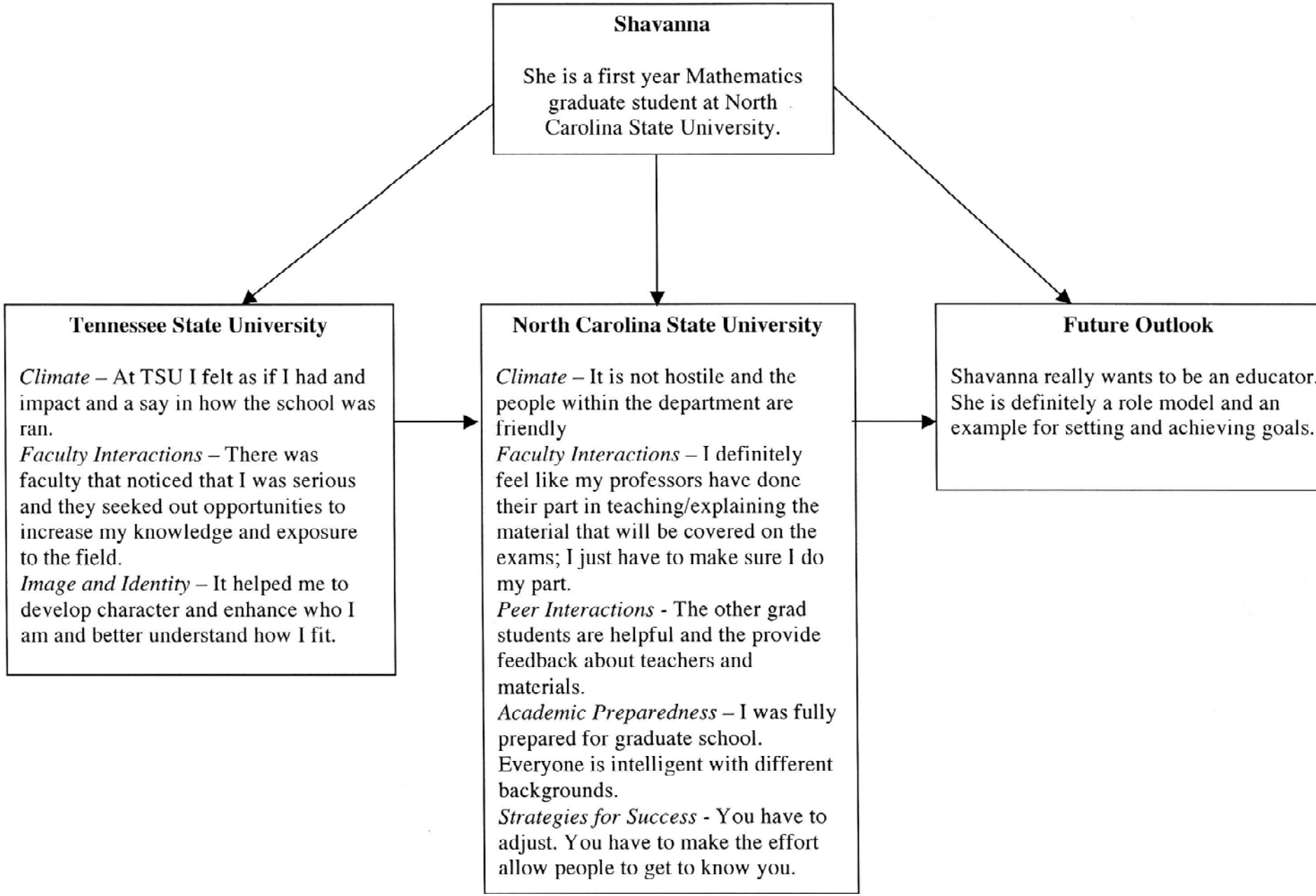
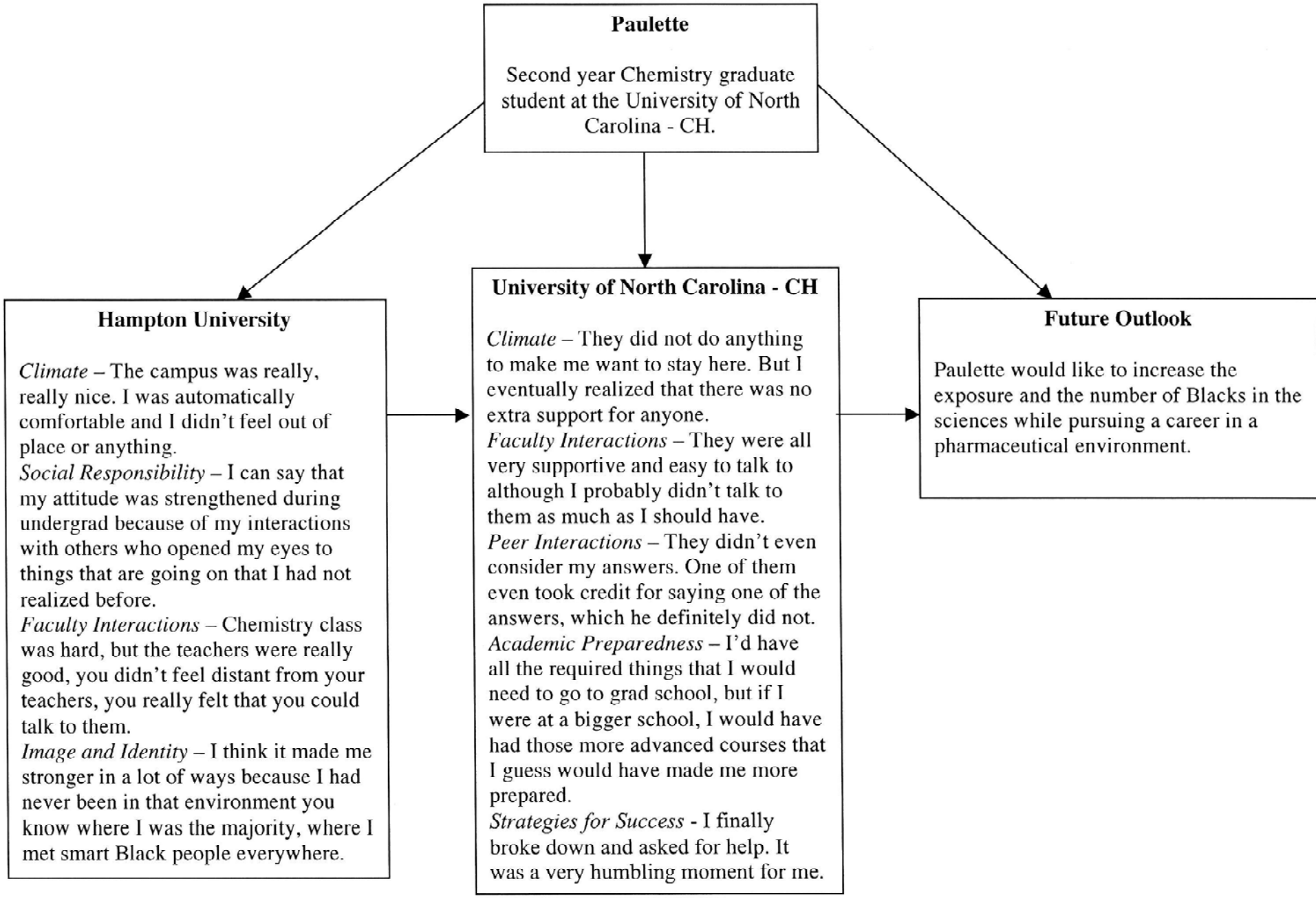
A Model of the Acculturation Process (Ward, 1996)

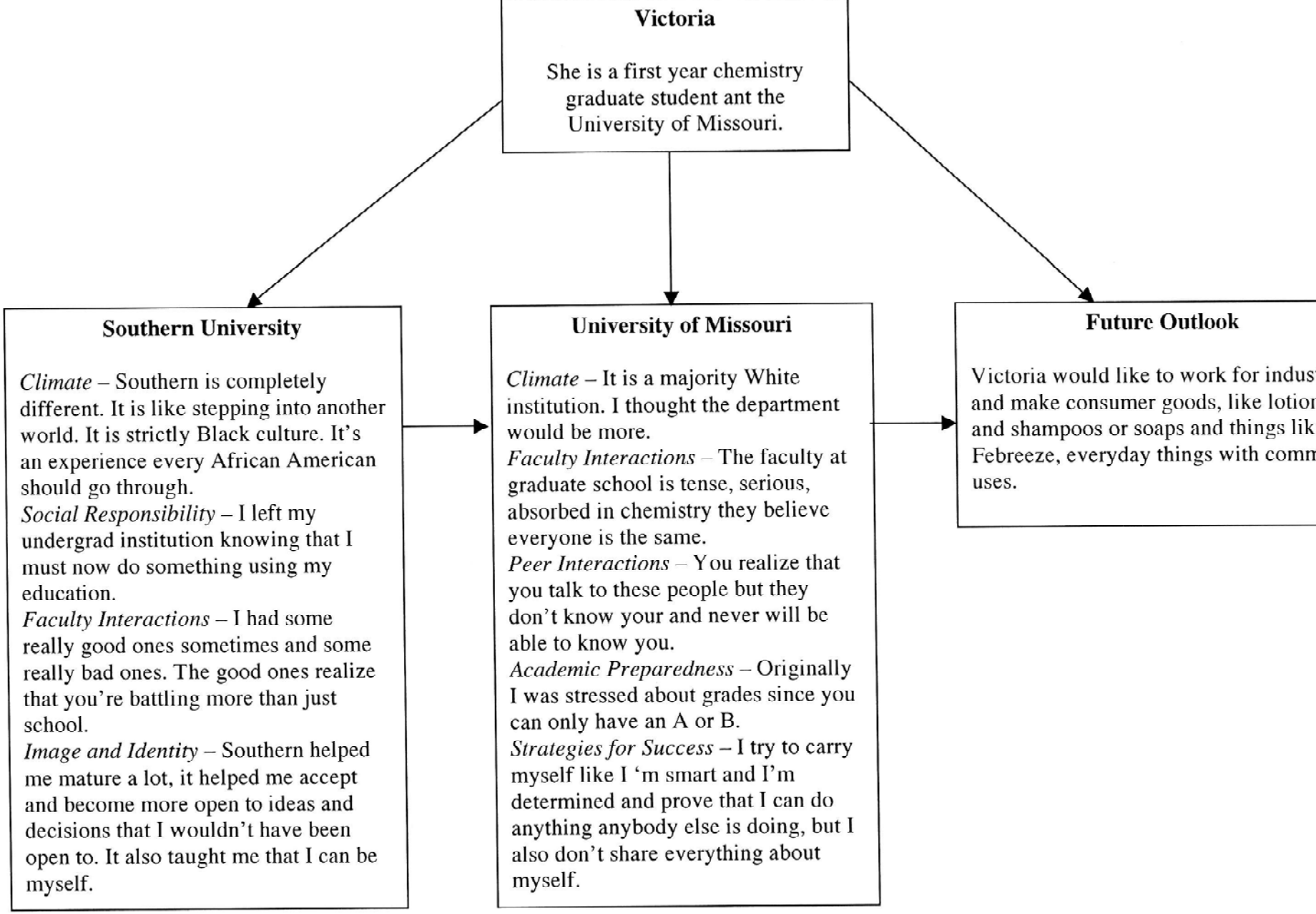


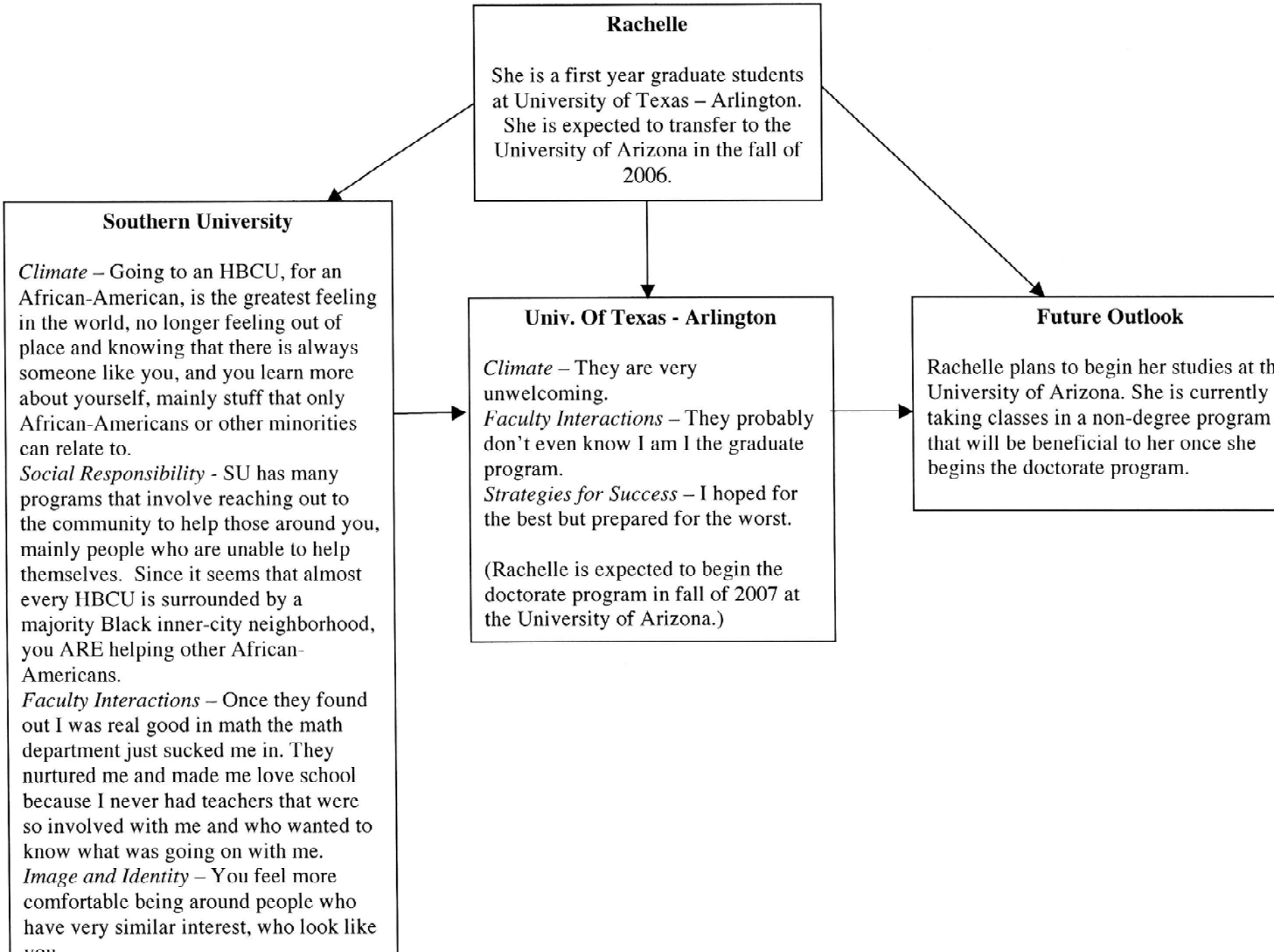

Keisha
Second year Mathematics graduate student at the University of Georgia.
Spelman College
Climate – The people there were very supportive.
Social Responsibility – I saw it in the course bulletin that Spelman's mission is to cultivate the whole person.
Faculty Interactions – Relationships with them [were] very good. They got better my junior and senior years.
Image and Identity – Spelman has helped me to find that identity where I have a purpose in my life and to actually seek that purpose out.
University of Georgia
Climate – Cordial
Faculty Interactions – Some are very cordial but you know, some are and some aren't.
Peer Interactions - People do not seek me out for study groups. Everyone seems to work alone and there are not any noticeable collaborations going on.
Academic Preparedness – I had a problem with how some of the information was presented. There were things that I was not exposed to.
Strategies for Success - When I'm at school I'm usually trying to do work and I don't benefit from socializing in the department going around just sitting in people's offices going around having conversation because I feel like I'm at school. I need to be doing work during business hours.
Future Outlook
Keisha is looking forward to graduati
with a Masters degree in Mathematic
the spring of 2007. She has not decid
to continue and pursue her PhD or pu
another Masters degree in another
mathematical aspect.


Kerry
Second year Mathematics graduate student at Duke University.
Howard University
Climate – I loved it. I was highly involved; I did it all. I felt at home, it was a family atmosphere.
Social Responsibility – He referred to us as intellectual the whole semester. He kept beating it is, since the first day. You all have a social responsibility.
Faculty Interactions – When I expressed and interest in math they wrote a plan of action for me.
Image and Identity – I think it helped me develop socially as a person in tremendous ways.
Duke University
Climate – Duke is southern and White. It is not very competitive bit it attracts very good students.
Faculty Interactions – T times professors were overly sensitive and really tried not to make racist comments but did by over compensating for trying so hard not to.
Peer Interactions – The other graduate students did not acknowledge me at all.
Academic Preparedness – Well, basically I consider myself an average student. I think that at this point the professors are impressed with my resilience, not my grades.
Future Outlook
Kerry has not decided if she is trying
be a really famous mathematician. W
she has decided is that she would like
increase the number of African Amer
women and change the perceptions
others have about women and their
mathematical ability.


Shavanna
She is a first year Mathematics graduate student at North Carolina State University.
Tennessee State University
Climate – At TSU I felt as if I had and impact and a say in how the school was ran.
Faculty Interactions – There was faculty that noticed that I was serious and they seeked out opportunities to increase my knowledge and exposure to the field.
Image and Identity – It helped me to develop character and enhance who I am and better understand how I fit.
North Carolina State University
Climate – It is not hostile and the people within the department are friendly
Faculty Interactions – I definitely feel like my professors have done their part in teaching/explaining the material that will be covered on the exams; I just have to make sure I do my part.
Peer Interactions - The other grad students are helpful and the provide feedback about teachers and materials.
Academic Preparedness – I was fully prepared for graduate school. Everyone is intelligent with different backgrounds.
Strategies for Success - You have to adjust. You have to make the effort allow people to get to know you.
Future Outlook
Shavanna really wants to be an educator. She is definitely a role model and an example for setting and achieving goals.


Paulette
Second year Chemistry graduate student at the University of North Carolina - CH.
Hampton University
Climate – The campus was really, really nice. I was automatically comfortable and I didn't feel out of place or anything.
Social Responsibility – I can say that my attitude was strengthened during undergrad because of my interactions with others who opened my eyes to things that are going on that I had not realized before.
Faculty Interactions – Chemistry class was hard, but the teachers were really good, you didn't feel distant from your teachers, you really felt that you could talk to them.
Image and Identity – I think it made me stronger in a lot of ways because I had never been in that environment you know where I was the majority, where I met smart Black people everywhere.
University of North Carolina - CH
Climate – They did not do anything to make me want to stay here. But I eventually realized that there was no extra support for anyone.
Faculty Interactions – They were all very supportive and easy to talk to although I probably didn't talk to them as much as I should have.
Peer Interactions – They didn't even consider my answers. One of them even took credit for saying one of the answers, which he definitely did not.
Academic Preparedness – I'd have all the required things that I would need to go to grad school, but if I were at a bigger school, I would have had those more advanced courses that I guess would have made me more prepared.
Strategies for Success - I finally broke down and asked for help. It was a very humbling moment for me.
Future Outlook
Paulette would like to increase the exposure and the number of Blacks in the sciences while pursuing a career in a pharmaceutical environment.


Victoria
She is a first year chemistry graduate student ant the University of Missouri.
Southern University
Climate – Southern is completely different. It is like stepping into another world. It is strictly Black culture. It's an experience every African American should go through.
Social Responsibility – I left my undergrad institution knowing that I must now do something using my education.
Faculty Interactions – I had some really good ones sometimes and some really bad ones. The good ones realize that you're battling more than just school.
Image and Identity – Southern helped me mature a lot, it helped me accept and become more open to ideas and decisions that I wouldn't have been open to. It also taught me that I can be myself.
University of Missouri
Climate – It is a majority White institution. I thought the department would be more.
Faculty Interactions – The faculty at graduate school is tense, serious, absorbed in chemistry they believe everyone is the same.
Peer Interactions – You realize that you talk to these people but they don't know your and never will be able to know you.
Academic Preparedness – Originally I was stressed about grades since you can only have an A or B.
Strategies for Success – I try to carry myself like I 'm smart and I'm determined and prove that I can do anything anybody else is doing, but I also don't share everything about myself.
Future Outlook
Victoria would like to work for indus
and make consumer goods, like lotio
and shampoos or soaps and things lik
Febreeze, everyday things with comm
uses.


Rachelle
She is a first year graduate students at University of Texas – Arlington. She is expected to transfer to the University of Arizona in the fall of 2006.
Southern University
Climate – Going to an HBCU, for an African-American, is the greatest feeling in the world, no longer feeling out of place and knowing that there is always someone like you, and you learn more about yourself, mainly stuff that only African-Americans or other minorities can relate to.
Social Responsibility - SU has many programs that involve reaching out to the community to help those around you, mainly people who are unable to help themselves. Since it seems that almost every HBCU is surrounded by a majority Black inner-city neighborhood, you ARE helping other African-Americans.
Faculty Interactions – Once they found out I was real good in math the math department just sucked me in. They nurtured me and made me love school because I never had teachers that were so involved with me and who wanted to know what was going on with me.
Image and Identity – You feel more comfortable being around people who have very similar interest, who look like
Univ. Of Texas - Arlington
Climate – They are very unwelcoming.
Faculty Interactions – They probably don't even know I am I the graduate program.
Strategies for Success – I hoped for the best but prepared for the worst.
(Rachelle is expected to begin the doctorate program in fall of 2007 at the University of Arizona.)
Future Outlook
Rachelle plans to begin her studies at th University of Arizona. She is currently taking classes in a non-degree program that will be beneficial to her once she begins the doctorate program.