I conducted my research on college student consumer spending because I wanted to find out how my peers spend their money and why. In addition, I wanted to put together my own survey to fill any gaps that previous research has yet to address. By the end of my research project, I hope to:

- Better understand where college students obtain their income and what they spend it on
- Discover new categories of spending that previous studies have yet to expose
- Provide useful information for local businesses as well as corporations about what college students look for in their products
- See trends in purchasing decisions that will impact the future of Marketing

However, upon examining my own university, which is classified as a commuter school, I realized that the consumer habits were much different:

- Spending on rent for an apartment or house
- Buying groceries rather than eating out or having a meal plan
- Car payments, gas, and insurance

Consumption habits do not just vary depending on the person, but also on the institution, geographic location, and income of the student.

I draw on previous investigations of college spending patterns including “World Consumer Lifestyles Databook 2013” and “Ten things College Students Waste Their Money On” to find out what researchers say college students spend their money on. I also examine my own university, which is classified as a commuter school, and realized that the consumer habits were much different.

Future Plans
- Fall 2015: Administer surveys to a large array of students at California State University Stanislaus
- Organize the data and find consistencies while making graphs and charts
- Decide whether the survey should be taken to other universities and compare how the results vary by region

Significance
According to study.com, college graduates earn up to 66% more than those who hold a high school diploma. The reason why this study is important is because college students are the future major consumers of America and any information about the how, what, when, where, and why of their consumer habits is essential. Not only will this survey provide information about how much they spend on products and services, but it will also give insight into new products, needs, or ideas of college students that the working professionals have not even thought of yet.

References