

Abstract Submitted  
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**Examining Physics Career Interests: Recruitment and Persistence into College** R.M. LOCK, Department of Engineering and Science Education, Clemson University, Z. HAZARI, Department of Engineering and Science Education and Department of Mathematical Sciences, Clemson University, P.M. SADLER, G. SONNERT, Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, Science Education Department — Compared to the undergraduate population, the number of students obtaining physics degrees has been declining since the 1960s. This trend continues despite the increasing number of students taking introductory physics courses in high school and college. Our work uses an ex-post facto design to study the factors that influence students' decision to pursue a career in physics at the beginning of college. These factors include high school physics classroom experiences, other science-related experiences, and students' career motivations. The data used in this study is drawn from the Persistence Research in Science and Engineering (PRiSE) Project, a large-scale study that surveyed a nationally representative sample of college/university students enrolled in introductory English courses about their interests and prior experiences in science.

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