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The Community College as a Baccalaureate-Granting Institution

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There should be little disagreement that, after a century of development from its origins as a junior college, the community college is no longer a marginalized institution of higher education. Moreover, its responsiveness to globalization, while retaining its sensitivity to local interests, continues to shape its development and higher education as a whole. Both the understanding of the community college mission and the enactment of mission have become central to scholarship on that sector of higher education. The nascent institutionalization of the community college baccalaureate degree now suggests that there are signs, not only of mission expansion, but also of a challenge to institutional identity. Has this institution become a new institution? Can we continue to call an institution that offers and grants baccalaureate degrees a community college?

The argument here is that this organizational change results in a challenge to institutional identity to the extent that these baccalaureate colleges are distinct from other non-baccalaureate-degree-granting community colleges. Their central defining characteristics have altered (Albert & Whetten,

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1985). Although they have extended their programming, they continue to view themselves and are viewed in legislation as community colleges; but such a perception may not be congruent with institutional identity. An organizational change of this magnitude—such as extending curriculum to significantly higher levels of education and adopting new norms such as meritocratic values—not only alters institutional purpose but may also lead to a new institutional identity.

This research examines the behaviors of community colleges as baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions. My purpose is to suggest that there is a potential for the development of a new institutional identity for those community colleges engaged in offering their own baccalaureate degree programs and in their granting of baccalaureate degrees. I examine traditional community colleges (those which historically provide sub-baccalaureate-degree programming) that have altered to become baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions.

Theoretically based explanations of community college behaviors are the exception rather than the rule. Several efforts to explain behaviors rely upon concepts such as the "cooling-out function" (Clark, 1980), "the practitioner's culture" (McGrath & Spear, 1991), and "the entrepreneurial college" (Grubb et al., 1997). One of the few theories that has found favor with scholars is institutional theory, neo-institutionalism particularly (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Dougherty, 1994). Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel (1989) as well as other neo-institutionalists argue that institutional motives, such as legitimacy and prestige, and organizational behaviors, such as the modeling of successful organizations, drive organizational actions. But these explanations alone are not sufficient to frame and explain organizational change, specifically the behaviors surrounding the institutionalization of baccalaureate degrees at community colleges. Other forces, aside from conformity to institutional environments and their standards, shape organizational actions (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002).

Organizational change in community colleges has been promulgated not only by institutional forces but also by external demands for change, including global forces, which buffet higher education institutions (Levin, 2001a; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). By using theories associated with organizational adaptation (Cameron, 1984) in conjunction with neo-institutional perspectives, we may find more even ground to explain the actions of community colleges. In the 1990s particularly, the globalization process was one of the principal forces acting upon community colleges (Levin, 2001a).

Globalization theory moderates neo-institutionalism's implications that homogeneity is the consequence of change within organizational sectors or institutional fields. Globalization theory, in contrast, argues that the globalization process produces divergence and diversity (Guillén, 2001) as lo-

cal sites respond to and incorporate elements of global patterns of behavior differently. The process of globalization leads to increasing interdependence in cultural, economic, and political activities across borders as well as an awareness of the reduction of temporal and spatial boundaries globally, mixing the local with the global (Appadurai, 1990; Guillén, 2001; Robertson, 1992; Waters, 1996). Organizations and institutions, generally, are sites where the globalization process is both played out and furthered; these sites reflect both global identities and local identities. That is, the case of culture shows a coexistence and interplay of global cultures and local cultures. While the global can penetrate the local, the local can also retain its historical character.

The "new institutionalism" (Powell, 1991), or neo-institutionalism, favors local and institutional actors over economic markets and competition as justifiable explanations of organizational action and alteration. In rejecting the economic market as the main source of power for institutional action and change, neo-institutionalism identifies the primary institutional agents as the state and the professions (Scott, 1995). Institutional theories do provide a compelling explanation for pervasive similarities among organizations and underline the stability of organizations over time (Di Maggio & Powell, 1991). However, the argument that state officials and professionals direct the social change process (Brint & Karabel, 1991; Davies & Guppy, 1997) is only partly accurate for community colleges. State officials certainly are influential as they establish norms and, through policy and funding behaviors, require conformity and standardization. But professionals are only marginally influential in directing change, given the historical tendency of community colleges to eschew the behaviors and values of the higher status educational institutions, such as research universities and private elite four-year colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 2003).

I modify the neo-institutional position on the baccalaureate degree at community colleges because, although the professions may take a major role in programmatic development (e.g., nursing programs), the state has primacy over the establishment of degree programs and degree-granting status. The formal institution, represented by the governing board and the administration (legally the arm of the chief executive officer), is an extension of the state (Carnoy, 1984; Levin, 2001a). It is the state through coercion—by tying funding to programs for example—that is the premier institutional agent for change in the community college. The state responds to and interprets global forces (Robertson, 1992; Teeple, 1995).

The main body of scholarship on globalization directed to the study of higher education indicates that the economic global marketplace is the primary driver of organizational change (Currie & Newson, 1998; Marginson & Considine, 2000; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). In this literature, one of the unsettling outcomes of economic global competition is that markets, not citizens, are the focus of higher education institutions. This includes pro-

gramming as well as research activities (Levin, 2001a; Marginson & Considine, 2001). Change in the purposes of colleges and universities in the past two decades are arguably a result of global competition and a marketplace orientation of higher education institutions. Research behaviors of universities are decidedly aimed at generating resources for units and the university (Leslie & Slaughter, 1997; Slaughter, 1997; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Centers, institutes, and research parks have emerged in the past 20 years to place units and institutions in a financially competitive position (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997).

Community colleges both adapt existing programs and establish new programs to prepare a workforce, serving state policy initiatives and employers' needs to compete and survive (Levin, 2001a). The demand from business and industry for highly trained and credentialed community college graduates (Carnavele & Desrochers, 1997) suggests that the community college baccalaureate degree may indeed be a consequence of economic pressures, including demand based upon global competition. These responses to global economic forces by both governments and institutions question whether community colleges can fulfill economic development goals and human development goals simultaneously. Although community colleges have responded for decades to the economic demands of their communities, they have done so through sub-baccalaureate programming. The new demands, not only from local communities, but also from governments, are distinctly different, as community colleges are expected to prepare a globally competitive workforce. In the United States, the new community college baccalaureate has a primarily applied and workplace focus, and thus is viewed as the vehicle by which to satisfy the demands of the political economy as well as the needs of the local community (Community College Baccalaureate Association, 2001; Walker, 2001).

Since the late 1980s, practitioners and government agencies have deliberated over the introduction of baccalaureate degree programming at community colleges. In the United States, a handful of states—Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Nevada, and Utah—clearly and unambiguously permit community colleges, or some community colleges within their jurisdiction, to offer baccalaureate programs. Hawaii and Texas, while formally announcing baccalaureate programs, had not changed their legislation as of the beginning of 2003 to permit this action. In Canada, baccalaureate-degree programming and baccalaureate-degree granting are legislatively permissible in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario. A U.S.-based association, the Community College Baccalaureate Association, was organized in the 1990s as a corporation to "communicate . . . the advantages of offering certain baccalaureate degrees through community colleges" (Community College Baccalaureate Association, 2001). This association includes both U.S. and Canadian colleges as members. Although the rhetoric surrounding the community col-

lege baccalaureate insists that a baccalaureate community college is still a community college, whose characteristics include open access and a primary focus upon teaching, there is little evidence to verify such claims.

Higher education scholars continue to view the community college as a facet of the educational pipeline to increased social and economic mobility (Brint & Karabel, 1989; Dougherty, 1994; Rhoads & Valadez, 1996). The identity of the community college, according to numerous scholars, continues to be associated with university transfer (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Townsend & Twombly, 2001). In this sense, the community college is conceived of as an institution that is part of the field of higher education as distinct from occupying its own separate field. With the institutionalization of the baccalaureate degree, however, that identity may be altering; and those community colleges where the baccalaureate degree has become institutionalized may have developed distinct identities from those that do not offer the baccalaureate degree. This development questions our understanding of institutional types: for example, research universities, liberal arts colleges, and particularly state colleges.

An organization's identity—that is, "its central, enduring, and distinctive character" (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991, p. 520)—both limits and directs its actions. The expansion of the scope of actions or a change to patterns of actions may reflect a change in organizational identity, or it may lead to an alteration of a distinctive character—its identity. Is the addition of baccalaureate-degree programming and baccalaureate-degree granting at a community college, then, a change in institutional identity?

Research

The focus of this research is on those community colleges that were legally permitted to offer baccalaureate degree programs and to grant baccalaureate degrees in the United States during 2001–2003 and in Canada during 1988–2002. I use the actions of Canadian community colleges in the 1990s—specifically those colleges in the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta—to indicate potential alterations for U.S. community colleges that have embarked on the baccalaureate path. First, I examine the Canadian experience through data from extensive field studies. Second, I introduce the emerging pattern in the United States through documentary evidence—state legislation. Finally, I suggest a number of implications from the Canadian context that are applicable to the United States.

I employed qualitative research methods in examining systems and colleges in Canadian provinces and all U.S. state systems (Burgess, 1984; Levin, 2001b; Mason, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Scott, 1990). For the step of data collection and analysis for U.S. community colleges, I analyzed the acts passed and many proposed by state legislatures in 2001, 2002, and 2003.

Four states—Arkansas, Idaho, Florida, and Utah—had legislative language that authorized community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. Nevada's legislature delegated authority to the state's board of regents and, in 1998, that board approved one community college—Great Basin Community College—to offer baccalaureate degrees (State of Nevada, 1998). I analyzed state legislation and official policy documents to determine the rationale and intent of baccalaureate-degree programming: if and to what extent economic competition contributes to programming; and if and to what extent the community college mission of access is a compelling factor.

For the Canadian context, field methods included interviews, document analysis, and observations at three institutions with baccalaureate-degree-granting authority. Interviews with approximately 180 people at these colleges included samples of board members, administrators, faculty, both full-time and part-time, support staff and students. In addition, I reviewed and analyzed government documents applicable to all community colleges from 1988 to 2001 in British Columbia and Alberta. These documents included government legislation, white papers, and plans developed by the government department responsible for postsecondary education. Observations at college, committee, and administrative meetings, as well as at informal separate gatherings of faculty and administrators, also served as a data collection strategy. Analytically, I used both neo-institutional theory—specifically, change to mission—and globalization theory to identify the rationales for baccalaureate-degree-granting and baccalaureate programming, the extent to which there is an alteration of the mission of the community college, and the implications of this mission change, including new identity formation. I coded the data, using analytical frameworks drawn from globalization theory (Appadurai, 1990; Held et al., 1999; Robertson, 1992; Waters, 1996), organization theory (Cameron, 1984; Levy & Merry, 1986; Martin & Meyerson, 1988), and community college literature on mission and history (Bogart, 1994; Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Frye, 1992, 1994; Levin & Dennison, 1989; Roueche & Baker, 1987). The data analysis addressed the legal foundations of baccalaureate-degree programming and baccalaureate-degree granting in both the United States and Canada, the actions of community college practitioners and government officials to extend community college programming to the baccalaureate level in Canada, and the outcomes of baccalaureate programs at Canadian community colleges.

The Canadian Context

For the background to this section, I rely upon my previous report (Levin, 2001b) on baccalaureate-degree granting in community colleges in Canada. It should be noted that in Canada, historically, the two-year credential was a diploma, not an associate's degree as in the United States. However, by the

beginning of the 1990s in British Columbia, the associate's degree had become a standard credential. Prior to that change in British Columbia and in the other nine provinces, the term "degree" was reserved for universities. In Canada, two-year or community colleges are referred to as "colleges" or "public colleges." There is no tradition in Canada of four-year colleges, public or private (Dennison & Gallagher, 1986; Levin 2001a). By 1989, the government of British Columbia had formulated a policy to enable selected community colleges to offer baccalaureate-degree programs; by the mid-1990s, the government of Alberta followed; and, by 2000 the government of Ontario permitted the non-baccalaureate sector of postsecondary education to offer baccalaureate-degree programs (Levin 2001b). The changes brought about by the introduction of baccalaureate-degree programming in the provinces of British Columbia and Alberta suggest that the purposes of these institutions altered as they implemented baccalaureate degree programming (Levin, 2001b). Organizational members viewed their institutions as serving a more economic function—particularly associated with job and career preparation—and as an institution providing four-year programming, that is, an undergraduate institution. I use pseudonyms for the three Canadian colleges—East Shoreline College, Rural Valley College, and North Mountain College—in accordance with a letter of agreement with their colleges' presidents.

> This is a free market organization: people are added or taken away . . . We have a market model—[we are] moving closer to [being] a business. (Faculty, vice-chair of governing council, East Shoreline College, British Columbia)
>
> In trying to deal with economic conditions, [the] college has taken on an entrepreneurial role. (Nursing faculty, East Shoreline College, British Columbia)
>
> [We are] no longer a two-year college which is a traditional community college. [We] are now a four-year college in the U.S. sense. (Faculty union president, North Mountain College, Alberta)

In both British Columbia and Alberta, where baccalaureate-degree programming had operated for at least five years, the colleges could be identified as baccalaureate as well as sub-baccalaureate institutions (Levin, 2001b; Levin, 2003). The change in institutional purpose resulted in both conflicting and ambiguous cultures. While conflict and ambiguity (Martin & Meyerson, 1988) may have been present previously, due to labor and management relations and distinct professional interests among diverse groups of faculty and administrators, the presence of baccalaureate-degree programming brought professional interests into sharp focus, both highlighting frictions and muddying institutional identity (Levin, 2001b). On the one hand, the colleges claimed to uphold former community college prin-

ciples such as a comprehensive curriculum, open access, and responsiveness to the community (Dennison & Levin, 1988). On the other hand, the colleges' allegiance was to higher-level programming, as can be noted in their resource allocations and curricular focus, which favored baccalaureate programs. While some lower-level programming was eliminated or starved in both Alberta and British Columbia, colleges with baccalaureate programming expanded (Levin 2001a). As the colleges pursued the higher credential, they also focused on higher levels of finances, student abilities, and institutional status.

After a decade of baccalaureate-degree-granting status, five community colleges in British Columbia with baccalaureate-degree-granting status separated themselves from the other 10 non-baccalaureate-degree-granting public colleges in the province and lobbied the government for separate legislation to put them on a par with provincial universities by recognizing them as universities. Such legislative recognition was intended to give these colleges not only university status but also university forms of funding, such as block grants. In Alberta, there was a serious effort to establish another provincial university, with one of the public colleges likely to be transformed from college to university. In Ontario, where baccalaureate degree programming received government approval in 2000, reshaping the postsecondary sector began with the addition of a baccalaureate-degree-granting institute and its placement on a college campus (Levin, 2001b).

Such changes suggest that public colleges (or community colleges) formerly classified as sub-baccalaureate institutions that now contain baccalaureate programming and the legislated authority to grant the higher credential—the baccalaureate degree—can be differentiated as institutions from their counterparts that do not grant the baccalaureate degree. Both organizational participants (e.g., board members, administrators, faculty, staff, and students), and organizational stakeholders (e.g., local communities, the public and the private sectors, the state, and the wider national and international communities), can be expected to view and respond to the baccalaureate-degree-granting community college as a different institution from that of the past.

Rural Valley College in British Columbia offers an example of a community college that was undergoing identity alteration with the establishment of baccalaureate programs. Interviews conducted in both 1997 and 1998 indicate organizational changes that flow from baccalaureate-degree programming and a change to baccalaureate-degree-granting status, which is reflected in the name change of the institution from Rural Valley College to Rural Valley University College.

There are obvious attitudinal and operational tensions between the community college as previously conceived at Rural Valley College and the newly established university college, legally named and authorized to offer baccalaureate degrees.

> There is a problem of equilibrium between the community college and the university college. (Program head, Criminology and Criminal Justice Department)

> There is a difference [in the change] from being a unionized community college to being a unionized university college. (Vice president of the faculty and staff union)

> [The] college has wrestled with the idea of "university college" and has personality and identity crises. (History faculty)

> Many people have questioned old and traditional patterns. (Dean of Finance and Administration)

> There is animosity against university college programs. (ESL Department head)

> There are divisions within the college, tensions between the university college and local needs. (Health Sciences Department head)

Indeed, there is evidence of the creation of subcultures as an outgrowth of these tensions.

> We have shifted from a community college to degree granting—this still affects the old guard, who have old expectations. . . . There are factions of new and old. (English Department head)

> Those who are not part of the university college feel less [than] themselves—there is the creation of sub-cultures. (Health Sciences Department head)

These groupings also include administrators and faculty, as noted by an economics faculty member: "Deans are now seen as managers and faculty are seen as experts." Within the faculty ranks, there are divisions based upon curricular focus and work orientation, as well as length of organizational affiliation:

> There is greater pressure from new faculty in degree programs to adopt a newer model like a university environment—they want research time. (English faculty)

> [There is] resistance to [baccalaureate-degree] status from [the] old guard. (Science laboratory instructor)

> There is tension between teaching and scholarship. (Vice-president of the faculty and staff union)

> There are factions of old and new. (English Department head)

These outcomes reflect the impact of institutional environments upon Rural Valley College. The institutions of both the community college and the university figure prominently in the behaviors of Rural Valley College. For this college, a new identity has emerged out of the provincial government's policy, funding, and eventually legislation for the establishment of baccalaureate-degree programming and degree-granting status for selected "two-year" or public colleges in the province.

> We have a new identity. (Vice president of the faculty and staff union)
>
> We are moving toward a university model. (College president)
>
> We are moving out of an older model, and this is supported by external [program and accrediting] reviewers. (English faculty)

With nearly a decade of experience as a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution, Rural Valley College provides a different perspective on the effects of institutional environment than U.S. community colleges newly embarking on the baccalaureate degree programming process.

The U.S. Context

In the U.S. context, I examined the legal and formal foundations of baccalaureate-degree institutionalization. State legislation and bills leading to legislation, as well as state agency and institutional policies, were the primary sources for this investigation. I examined these sources through the lenses of both globalization theory (for example, Held, McGrew, Goldblatt, & Perraton, 1999; Robertson, 1992; Waters, 1995) and neo-institutionalism, specifically the community college's mission of access to further education and training. In my document analysis, I surveyed legislation from all 50 states, and particularly from the five—Arkansas, Idaho, Florida, Nevada, and Utah—which authorized community colleges to grant their own baccalaureate degrees as a component of the community college mission during 2001–2003. This action is distinct from the practice of allowing four-year colleges or universities to offer a baccalaureate-degree program at a community college site; in such cases, conferring the degree remains within the authority of the four-year college or university, not with the community college. Such actions are permissible in a number of states including Arizona, California, and Oregon. These joint actions may be referred to as "concurrent-use campuses" (Windham, Perkins, & Rogers, 2001) and allow baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions to offer courses and programs of upper-division collegiate credit at community college sites (Martorana, 1994). Community colleges in these states, however, do not constitute self-standing baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions.

I analyzed bills and acts to identify the motivations and impetus for baccalaureate-degree programming at community colleges. The analytical framework incorporated the categories of economic development and access; economic opportunities, pressures, and competition are characteristics of economic development, while changing demographics and community pressures for advanced education are features of access. On the one hand, if rationales in legislative authorization for the community college baccalaureate were couched in language that referred to workforce needs, then part of the motivation can be viewed as economic development. On the other hand, if rationales refer to increasing access to populations that are underserved by baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions, then part of the motivation can be viewed as furthering access. Document analysis also led to a comparison between the legislative and policy language on baccalaureate-degree granting at community colleges and the language on the missions of community colleges. Such language indicated if, and the extent to which, community college missions were shifting or expanding by the introduction of the baccalaureate degree to these institutions.

Florida is one of the U.S. jurisdictions where state legislation authorizes community colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs; yet like Arkansas, Idaho, Nevada, and Utah, the institution must continue to offer programs synonymous with a community college and be deemed a community college as well as a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution. Its statute reads (bold and italic mine):

TITLE XLVIII: EDUCATION; CHAPTER 1004 PUBLIC POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

1004.65. Community colleges; definition, mission, and responsibilities.

. . . The community colleges shall provide high-quality, affordable education and training opportunities . . . to all while combining high standards with an open-door admission policy. . . .

The primary mission and responsibility of community colleges is responding to community needs for postsecondary academic education and technical degree education.

Community colleges are authorized to offer such programs and courses as are necessary to fulfill their mission and are authorized to grant associate in arts degrees, associate in science degrees, associate in applied science degrees, certificates, awards, and diplomas. Each community college is also authorized to make provisions for the General Educational Development test. Each community college may provide access to baccalaureate degrees in accordance with law.

TITLE XLVIII. EDUCATION; CHAPTER 1007 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

1007.33. Site-determined baccalaureate degree access

> A community college may not terminate its associate in arts or associate in science degree programs as a result of the authorization provided in subsection (3). The Legislature intends that the primary mission of a community college, including a community college that offers baccalaureate degree programs, continues to be the provision of associate degrees that provide access to a university. (State of Florida, 2003).

This legislation suggests that the institutional characteristics of the community college are maintained and amalgamated with some characteristics of a university. Beyond programming at the third- and fourth-year levels, however, these characteristics are not specified. Similarly, in Utah policy, the philosophy and mission of the community college are noted specifically while references to the university are silent on distinctive institutional characteristics (bold and italics mine):

UTAH SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM AND INSTITUTIONAL MISSION STATEMENTS AND ROLES

R311-4

4.1. . . . It is the intent of the Board to emphasize differing roles and missions of the nine USHE institutions, which provides greater choices for students . . .

4.2. . . . The Board of Regents, in consultation with institutional Boards of Trustees, will continually refine the missions and roles of each public college and university to respond to changing needs of students, businesses, and communities.

R311-5

5.5. Utah Valley State College . . . is a state college comprised of two interdependent divisions. The lower division embraces and preserves the philosophy and mission of a comprehensive community college, while the upper division consists of programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in areas of high community demand and student interest. . . .

5.6. Dixie State College . . . is a state college comprised of two interdependent divisions. The lower division embraces and preserves the philosophy and mission of a comprehensive community college, while the upper division consists of programs leading to baccalaureate degrees in areas of high community demand and student interest. (State of Utah, 2002)

St. Petersburg College in Florida provides a salient example of the complexity and problematic nature of institutional identity when a community college adds a baccalaureate-degree-granting function. For St. Petersburg, the legislative mandate is dualistic—that is, St. Petersburg is both a community college and a university.

> (4) . . . (a) . . . St. Petersburg College may offer selected baccalaureate degrees . . . in the following fields:
> 1. Bachelor of Science in Nursing . . . .
> 2. Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education.
> 3. Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education.
> 4. Bachelor of Applied Science in fields selected by the Board of Trustees of St. Petersburg College. The Board of Trustees shall base their selection on an analysis of workforce needs and opportunities.
> (2) . . . (a) St. Petersburg College shall maintain the mission and policies of a Florida community college, including the open-door admissions policy and the authority to offer all programs consistent with a public community college's authority. (State of Florida, 2001a)

Yet Florida's legislation also stipulates that academic policies for upper-division programs, that is, baccalaureate programs, must be consistent with university policies in the state. Furthermore, faculty are governed by a similar model: Upper-division faculty are eligible for continuing contracts while community college faculty are not. Financing the institution also reflects this differentiation: The community college is state-funded as both a community college and as a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution.

> (6) . . . (a) Employment at St. Petersburg College is governed by the same laws that govern community colleges, except that upper-division faculty are eligible for continuing contracts upon completion of the fifth year of teaching . . .
> (8) *State Funding* . . .
> (a) The Legislature intends to fund St. Petersburg College as a community college for its workforce development education programs and for its lower-division level college credit courses and programs.
> (b) The Legislature intends to fund St. Petersburg College as a baccalaureate degree level institution for its upper-division level courses and programs. (State of Florida, 2001b)

The findings from the example of St. Petersburg College indicate that the concepts of economic development and access pertain to the establishment of baccalaureate-degree granting at community colleges. Economic pressures from employers are cited as a motivation for the legislation. Furthermore, the reference to "an affordable price" suggests that access is also a financial issue. However, Florida's Title XVI of this statute underscores the significance of access generally: "It is the intent of the Legislature to further

expand access to baccalaureate degree programs through the use of community colleges."

SECTION 35 240.3836 SITE DETERMINED BACCALAUREATE DEGREE ACCESS

> Section 40 St. Petersburg College—
> . . . The legislature intends to create an innovative means to increase access to baccalaureate degree level education in populous counties that are underserved by public baccalaureate degree granting institutions. This education is intended to address the state's workforce needs, especially the need for teachers, nurses, and business managers in agencies and firms that require expertise in technology. (State of Florida, 2001b)

Nonetheless, in Florida legislation, the provision of baccalaureate degrees for community colleges is strongly founded upon economic development as well upon access.

TITLE XLVIII EDUCATION; CHAPTER 1007 POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

1007.33. Site-determined baccalaureate degree access

> The Legislature recognizes that public and private postsecondary educational institutions play essential roles in improving the quality of life and economic well-being of the state and its residents. The Legislature also recognizes that economic development needs and the educational needs of place-bound, nontraditional students have increased the demand for local access to baccalaureate degree programs. In some, but not all, geographic regions, baccalaureate degree programs are being delivered successfully at the local community college through agreements between the community college and 4-year postsecondary institutions within or outside of the state. It is therefore the intent of the Legislature to further expand access to baccalaureate degree programs through the use of community colleges. (State of Florida, 2003)

In the U.S. context, the baccalaureate degree at community colleges serves several purposes including expanding access to postsecondary education and responding to economic pressures from both state government and local business and industry. The establishment of baccalaureate-degree programs at community colleges conforms to the community college missions of both access and institutional responsiveness to community demands and to local markets. Furthermore, the addition of baccalaureate degrees at community colleges reflects the pressures of the state to use the community college as an instrument of economic policy (Levin, 2001a).

Organizational Identity

Both institutional theory and globalization theory frame the understanding of organizational actions and change vis-à-vis the baccalaureate degree at the community college. Institutional theory offers important contributions to our understanding of the establishment of baccalaureate-degree programs based upon access, one of the foundational tenets or principles of the community college in both the United States and Canada (Cohen & Brawer, 2003; Levin & Dennison, 1989). From an institutional perspective, moreover, the baccalaureate-degree-granting community college in the Canadian province of British Columbia, as reflected in Rural Valley College, is, arguably, a new institution, with or without a new name.

The president of Rural Valley College in 1997 provided a complex characterization of the changes engendered by baccalaureate-degree-granting status for his institution.

> I think you want to think about the transition from two-year to four-year. . . . There is a healthy appreciation of our roots . . . [which] causes us to reexamine the amount of money we are putting into [baccalaureate degree] programs. [These roots] will give us a flavor that will make us ultimately quite different from universities. What we are trying to do here is build a degree-granting institution on community college values and [that] will differentiate us quite a bit from universities. . . . [Our] primary objective is teaching, [with] some catering to clients that wouldn't be traditional university clients. [We are] here primarily to serve people in the region. . . . Typical faculty hiring [now] is somebody teaching in a university and finally they wanted a teaching environment rather than a research environment. . . . The vocational faculty are in a kind of holding pattern . . . moving forward marginally . . . haven't gone backwards.

By citing the values of community colleges—the importance of teaching, open access, and community responsiveness—the president thereby suggested that the new four-year college would be differentiated from a university. But the vocational faculty, he notes, do not seem to fit this model, likely because they are wedded to the concept of the two-year community college. Nonetheless, the movement forward to a baccalaureate-degree-granting institution was well underway, if not completed.

New regulations, norms, and cognitive systems (Scott, 1995) are a consequence of baccalaureate programming and of the degree's legal status. For example, in faculty hiring practices, the doctorate not the master's degree is the preferred, and in some cases the required, credential for instruction at the third- and fourth-year level—unlike accepted practice and traditions in the community college (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). Yet there is also the president's persistent qualification that the baccalaureate-degree community college is not a university and that it continues to uphold traditional

community college values. This perception of a dual identity—community college and university—at Rural Valley College signals acknowledgement of two values systems, two subcultures comprised of old and new faculty and both baccalaureate-degree programs and nonbaccalaureate programs.

Globalization theory, in some distinction to neo-institutionalism, provides another perspective of actions related to baccalaureate-degree programming at the community college. Clearly, these baccalaureate-degree-granting colleges are responsive to external demands for higher levels of education and training, particularly the demands of the economic marketplace. Workforce training demands, which are not the vocational demands of the 1970s and 1980s (Brint & Karabel, 1989), require programming for professional careers, such as nursing and teaching—areas where baccalaureate-degree programming at community colleges is the norm. This new programming shifts the mission of the community college to higher credentials, to programs that it views as more prestigious, and to a rising middle class in need of baccalaureate degrees. Additionally, as reflected in the baccalaureate-degree colleges of British Columbia, the institution itself engages in economic marketplace competition in its employment of professionals, including a more highly educated workforce and changed institutional expectations for work. These expectations for faculty include a research or scholarly function in addition to an instructional one, a practice most evident in the jurisdiction of British Columbia (Levin, 2003).

The baccalaureate-degree-granting community college possesses an identity that is obviously no longer simply a sub-baccalaureate institution, and possibly no longer a postsecondary institution that serves, as one of its main functions, marginalized and underserved groups as its primary client or customer. With the growth of baccalaureate-degree programming, as can be seen in Utah, these baccalaureate community colleges may rid themselves of their mantle of lower-status institutions because of their less credentialed faculty or their subordinate transfer function. Baccalaureate-degree-granting status for community colleges signifies an end to an identity as a two-year institution (Levin, 2001b; Walker, 2001).

Both institutional and global forces are reflected in this development. Global forces influence the community college's economically competitive orientation and higher-level programming to meet the needs of the "new economy"—workplace skills that prepare business and industry for favorable global positions. Institutional forces include state coercion that these institutions will not only offer baccalaureate degrees but will both maintain the characteristics of a community college and also model universities as baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions.

Although the overall number of community colleges in the United States offering baccalaureate degrees does not suggest a critical mass, the recent development in Florida, with its large community college system, signals

growth in the baccalaureate movement. Florida may become a model for other large state systems. Its baccalaureate degrees are intended to address worker shortages in nursing, teaching, and business technology management, conditions not unknown in other states. In contrast, approximately one third of Canada's community colleges now have baccalaureate-degree-granting authority. In British Columbia in 2002, government legislation permitted all public or community colleges in that jurisdiction to offer their own baccalaureate degrees, raising the number from five colleges to 14. Thus, in British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario, all public colleges in the three systems have baccalaureate-degree-granting authority. In the continued growth of baccalaureate-degree-granting status for community colleges, imitation based upon the need for legitimacy (Di Maggio & Powell, 1983) may play a more prevalent role as community colleges with baccalaureate-degree programs compete with universities and traditional four-year colleges in their pursuit of institutional legitimacy as four-year colleges, and simultaneously satisfy the requirements of accrediting bodies and national associations.

Recent developments in Hawaii, where the state's community colleges are components of the university system and hence are legally governed by the University of Hawaii Board of Regents, suggest that, despite the ongoing trend for a changing mission, differentiated approaches are more the norm than the exception. In Hawaii, the community colleges will be more closely aligned with the university, conceived of as additional campuses of the University of Hawaii with their own chief executive officers (Patton, 2003). In Utah, in the early part of the 1990s when Utah Valley State College was authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees, it changed its name from "community college" to "college." In 1997, when Westark Community College was authorized to grant baccalaureate degrees, it changed its name to Westark College, and by 2002, the institution was renamed The University of Arkansas at Fort Smith, even though as of 2003, legislation continues to refers to the college as Westark College, a "unique community college" (Arkansas Code, 2001; State of Arkansas, 2003.) These variations are connected to the historical development of higher education within each state as well as to the economic, political, and social context of the state's community colleges: for example, the economic development role of community colleges in Florida as well as the connectedness of Florida's public higher education system with state politics; the multi-campus nature of the University of Arkansas and the University of Hawaii; and the relative scarcity of private four-year colleges in the West, including in Utah and Nevada.

The institutionalizing of baccalaureate-degree programs at community colleges reflects not only the expanding mission of the community college but also the altering identity of the institution. Indeed, community college behaviors in embracing and adapting to changing environments reshape

the institution both to respond to external pressures and also to take advantage of opportunities where the institution can expand and fulfill its mission (Levin, 1998, 2001a). These actions, however, are attenuated by the institutional context—such factors as institutional history and culture as well as institutional norms for community colleges.

Notwithstanding the continuity with the past identity of community colleges involving access and responsiveness, baccalaureate-degree programming and baccalaureate-degree-granting status for community colleges have the potential to alter organizational culture and institutional identity. For example, university values such as merit, as opposed to equity, are in some distinction to community college values. The community college's relationship with such elements of its environment as universities and the marketplace has begun to alter because the community college's position in its environment is also changing. The reliance upon universities for four-year programs lessens, and the student market for baccalaureate degrees expands the community college's constituents as well as its influencers.

THE ROAD AHEAD FOR U.S. BACCALAUREATE COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Given the Canadian experience and the early developments in several states, some long-term implications for the baccalaureate community college in the United States may be predicted. First, the introduction of baccalaureate programs brings new student populations and new faculty to the institution. These changing demographics will alter the institutional culture (as it accommodates new students and sees new faculty subcultures) and will also increase the community college's alignment with external bodies, particularly with such professional bodies as nursing, teaching, and technology associations. In the case of students, not only do baccalaureate students have needs and requirements that are different from those of nonbaccalaureate students—such as library resources and access to research opportunities with faculty—but the addition of new students also exacerbates already strained resources for programs and services for students. Faculty who instruct baccalaureate students may distance themselves from those who work with subbaccalaureate and precollege students.

Second, the authority to grant baccalaureate degrees gives greater institutional autonomy on the one hand but also brings greater oversight—by government or accrediting agencies—on the other. A connected issue is governance. In the British Columbia case, the government mandated that all colleges establish a senate-type body where faculty would have a major voice in academic decisions (Levin, 2003). The current pattern in U.S. community colleges is governance that is heavily weighted toward administrators, particularly presidents, in decision-making, with faculty having at best an

advisory role (Cohen & Brawer, 2003). Governance, then, is one obvious area where baccalaureate community colleges may have to move closer to university norms, with faculty having greater responsibility for academic decision-making.

These conditions—changing institutional culture, realignment of professional associations, growing autonomy, increasing oversight, and university-style governance arrangements—may cause insoluble problems as long as the baccalaureate community college holds firmly to its traditional community college identity. This dual identity—community college and university—leads to the third implication: the baccalaureate community college as a new institution, if not a variant of a four-year college. As long as the baccalaureate community college offers programs and courses for those who cannot access four-year colleges and universities—such as special education programs for the mentally challenged, high school completion, and General Equivalency Diplomas (GED), and certificate vocational programs including welding, automotive, pipe-fitter, small appliance repair, and the like—then they will carry with them their traditional community college identity, which highlights open access and a comprehensive curriculum. For these colleges, resource stress will be considerable as college behaviors to fulfill an expanded mission lead to conflict over resource allocation. Institutions that initially offer baccalaureate-degree programs in two or three areas—such as education and nursing—but which begin to expand into program areas such as law enforcement, justice administration, environmental science, communications, business administration, and computer systems—will look and operate more and more like state four-year colleges and universities. The expansion of programming to the liberal arts and sciences is another small step in mission expansion. At this point, efforts to maintain the traditional community college mission will be severely challenged and could give way to the requirements of the higher credential as well as to higher aspirations.

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