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ABSTRACT

Designed to provide basic guidelines and examples that can be used by community colleges for organizing and conducting community impact studies, this booklet describes the experiences of Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), Eastfield College (EC), and Valencia Community College (VCC) in conducting their impact studies. Introductory material offers a rationale for assessing a college's economic (related to institutional expenditures, changes in income, standard of living, or job security), educational (related to the development of new skills and competencies), social (related to changes in family, recreational, and cultural activities), or technological (related to syntheses or reformulations of knowledge) impacts on the individuals, groups, and organizations in its community. In addition, this section describes the case study institutions, and presents a brief review of related research. The remainder of the booklet reports on the three studies, providing background information, describing methodology and survey populations, summarizing results, and explaining how the findings were used in improving community relations and promoting the colleges. A short bibliography is appended. (RO)

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*Assessing Community-College Impacts:
Three Case Studies*

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Assessing Community-College Impacts: Three Case Studies

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Contents

Preface	ix
Introduction	i
Case Study—Kalamazoo Valley Community College . . Dale B. Lake, President	9
Case Study—Eastfield College Byron McClenney, Former President of Eastfield College and President of Parkers- burg (West Virginia) Community College District	23
Case Study—Valencia Community College. James F. Gollattscheck, President	39
Bibliography	55

Figures

1. Survey Populations and Samples for Eastfield College	25
2. Comparison of Eastfield Faculty and Student Responses	27
3. Responses of Eastfield Service-Area Residents	29
4. Employer Responses for Eastfield Survey	31
5. Comparison of Responses of Teachers and Graduating Seniors at Eastfield Feeder Schools	33
6. Organization of Valencia Surveys	42
7. Timetable for Valencia Community-Impact Study	44
8. Demographic and Survey Information for Valencia Study	45

Preface

Assessing Community-College Impacts: Three Case Studies was produced as a part of the Targeted-Outcomes Field-Development Project, conducted by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) and funded by the National Institute of Education. To develop methods for assessing community-college impacts, staff from NCHEMS and three community colleges—Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Kalamazoo Michigan; Eastfield College in Mesquite, Texas (a Dallas suburb); and Valencia Community College in Orlando, Florida—devised data-collection tools and study procedures. These tools and procedures were then tested at the three colleges, and the results incorporated in *Conducting Community-Impact Studies: A Handbook for Community Colleges* (Armijo, Micek, and Cooper 1978).

The *Case Studies* describe the experiences of the three institutions in conducting their impact studies. They were developed on the respective campuses and reviewed by institutional staff. Community-college administrators will find them useful supplements to the *Handbook*. The purpose of

both documents is to provide basic guidelines and examples that can be used by community colleges for organizing and conducting community-impact studies.

Special thanks go to Richard Olivanti, Assistant to the President, Kalamazoo Valley Community College; Callie Struggs, Assistant to the President, Eastfield College; and William Michael Hooks, Dean of the Open Campus, Valencia Community College. Nathan Gans and William Johnston of NCHEMS provided valuable editorial assistance. Vicki Osgood typed the many drafts of the document, and Clara Roberts was responsible for its production. The case studies were reviewed by Oscar Lenning, NCHEMS Senior Staff Associate; Edward Cooper, former NCHEMS Research Associate and presently Assistant Director for Institutional Research at Metropolitan State College; and Philip Beal, a Visiting Scholar at NCHEMS.

Introduction

In postsecondary education, we knew the late fifties and sixties as the age of "growth." This era dissolved into the years of "unrest." In later years, the watchwords have been "financial crunch" and, more recently, "accountability." This rising demand for accountability stems from pressures that impact not postsecondary education alone: they cast a heavy burden on virtually all facets of our society. These pressures include:

- Continuing and apparently increasing rates of inflation
- Expanding commitments to the principles of consumerism
- A slow but steady increase in the average age of the population
- Demands by innumerable special-interest groups for equitable (and immediate) satisfaction of their wishes and needs
- A finite pool of public monies, constrained and controlled by an ever more forcefully expressed public will regarding the funding of a vast array of urgent public needs and services

In addition to these generally pervasive pressures, forces endemic to postsecondary education are generating demands for accountability. They include deteriorating levels of public confidence in the commitment and ability of postsecondary education to fulfill the public's expectations; the (likely false) suspicion that postsecondary education deliberately avoids responding accurately or completely to its inquisitors or critics; and growing reliance on the bargaining table to resolve issues involving faculty and staff.

Attempts by community colleges to satisfy demands for accountability must take into account this central fact: because of their mission to be community-based—*to be developed in the community and fitted to problems and resources within the community*—community colleges are influenced in unique ways by the principles of consumerism, student and special-interest-group expressions of need, and the values and political trends within the community. In trying to serve the needs of their whole constituency, community colleges are pulled in many directions. They attempt to serve many dissimilar sub-communities, or interest groups.

Generally, community colleges have brought postsecondary education to a large group that ordinarily would be excluded by geography and finances and whose previous educational experiences are different from those of the conventional college student. Those who work full time are prominent among the groups served by the community college.

The programs of community colleges reflect the diversity of the types of students they serve. Some want vocational/technical programs; others want traditional general-education programs that, upon completion, will allow them to continue their education. In addition, community-service programs are offered to meet the needs of special-interest groups, such as employers, professional organizations, and the handicapped. Opportunities to offer such programs continue to grow.

Faculty in community colleges are usually more pragmatic in their educational philosophy and are more interested in teaching and community service rather than research. Unionism continues to be a significant influence on community-college faculty, probably more so than among faculty

in other segments of higher education. Additionally, community colleges employ a large number of part-time faculty, who usually are professional people in the community.

Financing becomes more and more a problem as community colleges attempt to achieve their community-based mission. Funding for regular credit programs and courses usually comes from student tuition and federal, state, and local government. However, for noncredit programs and courses, which are a community service, government funds are not normally available. These programs must therefore be financed with resources provided within the community. Thus community colleges, which define as part of their mission the responsibility to develop and offer community-service programs, must more often than not first find community resources to support such programs. Attempts by community colleges to satisfy demands for accountability must recognize these financial realities.

To be effectively accountable, a community college requires accurate, timely information about the types of effects, or *impacts*, that it produces in its community. These impacts can be economic (related to institutional expenditures, changes in income, standard of living, or job security), educational (related to the development of new skills and competencies), social (related to changes in family, recreational, and cultural activities), or technological (related to syntheses or reformulations of knowledge). They can affect individuals or groups (students, former students, family and relatives, faculty, or staff); interest-based communities (businesses, social and civic groups, governmental units, or service organizations); or populations defined according to age, education, occupation, ethnic group, or sex. They can be direct or indirect. For example, an institution would impact its community directly through its own expenditures, indirectly through those of its employees.

Through conversations with students, faculty, and community members, institutional administrators have generally had some notion of the community impacts of their colleges. Until recently, this informal, sometimes intuitive method was sufficient. In the past few years, however, the combination of

inflation, static resources, fluctuating enrollments, and increased demands for accountability have created the need for comprehensive, precise impact information derived through a demonstrably systematic process. Moreover, in the next few years, growing pressure for limiting government expenditures and reducing taxes is likely to increase this need.

The effect of Proposition 13 on California's community colleges is a case in point. Before the passage of Proposition 13 in 1978, California's 104 community colleges received about half their revenues from local property taxes. Proposition 13 reduced that revenue by about 55 percent. As a result, Governor Brown called for a freeze on hiring and cancellation of raises for state employees, including community-college faculty and staff. William G. Craig, Chancellor of the California community colleges (which hitherto had not charged tuition), stated that "tuition appears to be the only answer to recovering those revenues [lost under Proposition 13]," and that all community-college districts would have to cut their operating budgets by 15 to 25 percent (*Chronicle of Higher Education* 19 June 1978, p.5). Though the diversion by the state of a substantial portion of the \$6 billion surplus temporarily mitigated the direst of these consequences, budgets for the state's community colleges were cut by 4 percent, and institutions laid off part-time faculty and cut back adult education and student and public services. The crisis created for community colleges in California by the passage of Proposition 13 is widely regarded as indicative of a national trend, lasting some years.

In view of these circumstances, community colleges must do their utmost to preserve their capacity to serve their communities. Conducting a community-impact study is one way of doing so. As the case studies in this book show, the findings of community-impact studies can be used to discover unmet community needs, improve financial and academic planning, clear up misconceptions about the role of community colleges, make faculty and staff aware of the importance of serving the community, and, perhaps most important of all, enhance the community's perception of the college. The case-study institutions have used or plan to use the findings of their studies in

other ways, too to maintain accreditation, increase the effectiveness of recruiting, evaluate institutional advertising, and establish baseline data for future studies.

CASE-STUDY INSTITUTIONS

The institutions selected to prepare case studies constitute a representative sample of community colleges, each of whose experiences should provide analogues for the expectations of many hundreds of institutions. Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC), located in Kalamazoo, Michigan, has a single campus and serves about 14,000 students annually in credit courses and about the same number in noncredit activities. Its service area, which has a population of about 210,000, experienced its greatest growth before the College was founded in 1966. NCHEMS staff felt that the experience of KVCC would be especially valuable for other single-campus institutions and for those institutions located in parts of the country where growth rates have leveled.

Located in the Dallas suburb of Mesquite, Eastfield is one of seven colleges in the Dallas Community College District. It has an enrollment of almost 8,000 students, with an additional 4,000 enrolled in community-service programs. The population of its service area, which includes most of suburban east Dallas County, increased from about 300,000 to 400,000 between 1970 and 1977. Institutions in other areas that have experienced rapid growth, together with those in multicollge districts or in large metropolitan areas, should benefit from its experience.

Valencia Community College, located in Orlando, Florida, is a multicampus institution with an enrollment of about 7,000 credit students and 15,000 noncredit. Its service area has a population of about 500,000. Because of the prominence of tourism, aerospace industries, and military bases in the local economy, this population is highly mobile. More so than most community colleges, Valencia especially emphasizes noncredit, community service courses and programs, which it administers from its Open Campus and teaches at more than

150 locations. Its experiences in conducting a community-impact study should be of particular interest to other institutions with extensive community-service programs.

In helping KVCC, Eastfield, and Valencia conduct their community-impact studies, NCHEMS had three objectives: to help them learn more about their effects on the communities they serve; to understand more fully the process of conducting community-impact studies; and to articulate that understanding for community colleges across the country. Though the experiences of these three institutions are not exhaustive, these case studies, taken together, provide different, sometimes conflicting perspectives on the problems of assessing institutional impacts.

RELATED RESEARCH

Most impact studies published thus far have focused on economic factors, such as the impact of college expenditures for local goods and services. These studies (Portland State College 1965; Miernyk et al. 1967; Merchant 1969; Kruekeberg and Vaughn 1970) indicate that, in most cases, college expenditures benefited the community. More recently, Caffrey and Isaacs (1971) provided guidelines for obtaining a variety of economic-impact information. A significant improvement over previous efforts, their work suggests procedures for searching institutional records to assess the total economic impact of a college on its community. It does not, however, suggest how to gather qualitative information, such as community attitudes toward an institution. Institutions that have implemented the Caffrey and Isaacs guidelines include the University of Wisconsin (Daellenbach 1976), the University of Pittsburgh (University of Pittsburgh 1972), and the Metropolitan Community Colleges of Kansas City, Missouri (Manning 1975).

Though useful, descriptions of economic impacts constitute only a part of the descriptive information needed by college administrators and planners. Consideration must also

be given to the other types of impacts listed above and documented in detail in the subsequent case studies. Community-impact studies conducted at Northwest Alabama State Junior College (Phillips and Owings 1974), in Hampden County and Amherst, Massachusetts (Watchel and Morehouse 1971), and the University of Colorado at Boulder (Rautenstrauss 1974) attempted to assess social and cultural as well as economic impacts. These studies found that colleges attract knowledge-based industries, such as data-processing or research companies, and that colleges provide local citizens with opportunities for professional development and a range of facilities and services, such as concerts, gymnasiums, and athletic fields.

Except for the work of Caffrey and Isaacs, little has been written heretofore about the methodology of community-impact studies. One exception, however, is the companion document to these case studies, *Conducting Community-Impact Studies: A Handbook for Community Colleges* (Armijo, Micek, and Cooper 1978), based on the experiences of the same three community colleges. The *Handbook* is a how-to-do-it manual developed to assist institutions plan and manage a community-impact study. It describes procedures to be followed in conducting such a study and provides sample task charts and survey instruments that an institution can use, with or without modification, in conducting its own study. Though both the *Case Studies* and the *Handbook* are complete in themselves, the authors feel that they will be most useful when used together.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College

Dale Lake

BACKGROUND

By vote of the electorate of greater Kalamazoo, Michigan, Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) was established on 1 August 1966. Two years later, the 1,500 members of the first class enrolled. The College now serves over 14,000 credit students annually in its \$13 million physical plant on a 187-acre campus.

KVCC currently offers over 55 instructional programs, mostly in vocational and technical education. It often joins the three other postsecondary institutions in the Kalamazoo area (Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo College, and Nazareth College) in sharing resources and offering programs to provide the best possible services for students, faculty, and the community.

Diverse industrial and commercial employers provide the economic base for the 210,000 residents of greater Kalamazoo. The largest employers include the Upjohn Company (whose international headquarters are in Kalamazoo), Fisher Body Division of General Motors, Brown Company, and

Eaton Corporation Transmission Division. About 400 other manufacturers and processors support the local economy.

In 1978, as KVCC approached its tenth anniversary, the need to evaluate its programs, policies, and services became apparent to its administrators. Specifically, they wanted to learn how well KVCC was achieving its stated goal of imparting the knowledge and skills necessary for career advancement, personal development, recreational enjoyment; to determine community awareness of and satisfaction with College programs and services; to identify unmet needs; and to develop an information base and procedures for measuring future changes in impact. In addition, other circumstances indicated the need for more comprehensive and accurate impact information:

- The failure of the electorate to approve an increase in the millage rate to support the College's operating fund
- Financial resources increasing less rapidly than the costs of goods and services
- A decline in state aid
- More comprehensive and detailed reporting requirements of state and federal agencies
- The negative effect of high unemployment on enrollment
- A leveling-off in enrollments after rapid increases in the College's early years, a decline in the proportion of full-time students from 50 to 25 percent, and a steady decrease in average credits per student
- The demand of local employers for more programs and services adapted to changing technologies and the increased expectation of employers that new employees demonstrate more job-related skills

Originally KVCC intended to fund the study as a College Outcomes Project under a Title III grant from the U.S. Office of Education. However, when the scope and complexities of the study became apparent, the College decided instead that the study should be conducted as a separate activity under the

same grant. The President and his cabinet provided full support for the study and played a major role in its design and implementation. The National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS), which had expressed interest in the project, especially in its measurement of educational outcomes, assisted in conducting the study.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE STUDY

The Program Development Office of KVCC assumed responsibility for the study. The Dean of Program Development Services and two research associates were the key personnel in implementing the study plan. Senior administrators recommended that an advisory group of community leaders be formed, and the Office of Program Development Services solicited suggestions from members of the President's cabinet and other College officials. A list was compiled of leaders from business, government, education, social agencies, and industry.

Ultimately the President and his cabinet selected 17 persons to serve on the Advisory Committee, including superintendents of local school districts, members of local school boards, the Executive Secretary of the Kalamazoo Foundation, bank officials, the mayors of the two largest cities in the College's service area, the President of the Downtown Kalamazoo Association, the Director of the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, and an attorney. This Committee provided advice for developing the questionnaires and sampling techniques and helped identify the civic-leader target population. With the Advisory Committee's help, KVCC and NCHEMS staff decided that the impact study would cover the 10 school districts constituting the KVCC service area and that the study would survey registered voters, employers, educators, social-agency directors, civic leaders, and KVCC faculty and staff. (Project staff also began a search of KVCC's own records to obtain additional impact information.)

Several procedures were used to survey the six populations. Some respondents participated in group interviews,

while all completed questionnaires specifically designed by project staff and the Advisory Committee for each population. Certain common questions were included on all questionnaires. Following is a discussion of the techniques used in surveying each population.

REGISTERED VOTERS

The population of service-area residents that could be surveyed was limited by the three available sources of names and addresses or of telephone numbers: the lists of registered voters and the telephone and city directories. The project team selected the lists of registered voters because:

- The population formed by the registration lists would conform to the College's service area, since both were defined by school districts
- Those persons who had voted on millage increases would constitute an especially useful target population for the survey
- The lists could provide a sample that would most accurately represent the total population

A stratified sample of 2,001 persons, or 1.6 percent of the population, was drawn proportionally from the 122,270 voters registered in the 10 school districts of the service area. The project team encountered two problems in its survey of registered voters. That the sample had to be taken by hand from 10 lists maintained in 10 different locations required considerable time. In addition, after the initial mailing, the Postal Service returned 446 of the questionnaires as undeliverable, so that the sample was reduced to 1,555. (The high proportion of undeliverables reflected the mobility of the local population. In a nonelection year, this proportion would have probably been even higher.)

KVCC staff felt that the high rate of undeliverables detracted from the value of this part of the survey. They also felt that in any future survey they would use a more efficient and effective method of sampling the general population. About

25 percent of those who received questionnaires, or slightly less than 400 registered voters, returned them. Following is a sample question used in this survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

How have you learned about the educational courses, programs, services, and facilities offered by KVCC?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
This questionnaire	10.7
KVCC faculty and staff	8.0
KVCC students and former students	21.6
Radio	5.6
Newspapers	20.1
Television	2.7
Newsletters	5.8
Friends and relatives	15.6
People you work with	10.0
Other	0.0

Note: Total responses = 1,001

These responses suggest that the College needs to use existing sources of information about KVCC more effectively, as well as to develop new sources. Consequently, the College is changing admissions and recruiting techniques by developing printed promotional materials for selected target populations, reviewing its media use (print fared much better than broadcast media in the impact study), and using the local newspaper to distribute promotional materials.

FACULTY AND STAFF

All 407 full- and part-time employees (except for student employees) at KVCC were surveyed. The Business Office furnished names and addresses. One hundred ninety-six questionnaires were returned for a return rate of 49 percent. (Seven employees had moved with no forwarding addresses.) Because of the need for confidentiality, this survey was

handled entirely by NCHEMS, which addressed the cover letter and return envelopes on its own stationery. Following is a sample question used in this survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

As a faculty or staff member of KVCC, have you given any of your time to community-service activities such as consulting, art exhibits, lectures, or seminars for the public?

1. _____ Yes
2. _____ No

Summary of Responses

That 103, or 53 percent, of the respondents indicated that they had given time to community-service activities helped demonstrate the extent of faculty and staff involvement in the community.

EMPLOYERS

This population was selected to measure the impact of KVCC's occupational programs. The project team conducted a pilot study of employers listed in the telephone-directory yellow pages. That the cover letters were addressed "Dear Employer" may have contributed to the low response rate (14 percent) of the pilot study.

For the actual survey, the population was defined as all employers listed in the Kalamazoo County Chamber of Commerce Membership Directory, Kalamazoo Area Directory of Manufacturers and Processors, and the KVCC Placement Office list of employers. These provided the name and title of the chief administrator of each organization or, in the case of KVCC's placement list, of an individual who had prior contact with the College. Cover letters were then addressed to each of these persons and signed by the College president. A return rate of 54.4 percent, or 193 of the 355 employers sampled, was obtained. Following is a sample question used in this survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

How would you rate the quality of training these employees received at KVCC?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Poor	1.2
Fair	6.1
Good	67.1
Excellent	25.6

These responses demonstrate KVCC's success in meeting the needs of area employers served by the College.

EDUCATORS

Educators employed by other area institutions were included as a target population, because of their knowledge about the general population and about the purposes, services, and impact of KVCC. This population was defined as all full-time professional staff employed by each school district and the three postsecondary institutions in the KVCC service area. From lists provided by the school districts and colleges, a 25 percent random sample was drawn. In addition, all superintendents, principals, presidents, vice-presidents, and deans were automatically included. Three hundred ninety-eight, or 42.6 percent of the 935 questionnaires mailed, were returned. Following is a sample question used in this survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

Could KVCC be more responsive in helping you?

1) Yes

2) No

If yes, in what ways? _____

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	20.0
No	80.0

The ways that educators indicated that KVCC could better help them in their work were summarized and used in refining college services.

SOCIAL-AGENCY DIRECTORS

The project team selected social-agency directors as a target population because the college had developed programs in cooperation with many of their agencies. Some of the directors also serve on advisory committees of the College.

The President's office obtained the names and addresses of directors of agencies such as the YMCA, Red Cross, and vocational-rehabilitation centers. The Program Development Services staff and the President then defined the target population. A sample of 25 was selected, and 16 usable questionnaires were returned. Respondents also were invited to participate in the group discussion at KVCC conducted by the President. Seven of those invited participated.

CIVIC LEADERS

The project team selected civic leaders as a target population because of their intimate knowledge of the community and the services provided by KVCC. From lists provided by the Chamber of Commerce and the Advisory Committee, the project team and college administrators selected representatives of local governments, labor organizations, religious groups, businesses, and community-service organizations for this sample. Forty-five, or 64.3 percent of those sampled, returned their questionnaires. As in the case of social-agency directors, civic leaders also were invited by the President to group discussions at the College. Thirty-five of the 45 respondents participated.

Originally the project team had intended to conduct one follow-up discussion at the college for all respondents in the social-agency director and the civic-leader populations. However, as the study progressed, the project team and NCHEMS personnel decided instead to hold a separate discussion for the social-agency directors and to conduct four small group interviews for the civic leaders, as well as one large discussion. Respondents were asked to bring their questionnaires as admission tickets to the discussions at the College. Those who could not attend were asked to return their questionnaire by mail. Besides enabling researchers to discover how some of the more influential citizens in the community perceived KVCC, the group discussions gave those citizens an opportunity to learn firsthand about the College and its programs. All comments were recorded and transcribed. After the discussions, the project team contacted some participants to explore their reactions in more detail.

COMMENTS ON PROCEDURES

After the KVCC project team had developed the initial drafts of the survey instruments, the President's cabinet, the Advisory Committee, and NCHEMS personnel reviewed and, in some cases, revised the instruments. However, the amount of time allotted for this process—18 months—proved to be too long to maintain the necessary enthusiasm, not only among project staff but also among the Advisory Committee and the general public. Moreover, during this period changes in personnel on both KVCC and NCHEMS staff made conducting the study more difficult. (There were three project leaders in the 18 months.) KVCC staff felt that the study would have been more cost-effective if conducted more intensively over six months instead.

Another problem involved the usefulness of some data. A list of variables was developed from a review of guidelines for conducting economic-impact studies described by Caffrey and Isaacs (1971). This list was then organized by impact area (for

example, education, recreation, economics), reduced to include only data that could be easily collected, and used to guide the search of the College's records. However, because the needs of users had not been clearly defined before the study began, the project team discovered that it had not produced certain needed information. Some of this information could have been obtained by tailoring the question about unmet needs for each population. In particular, KVCC staff felt that the instrument sent to employers should have been designed to elicit more specific information about unmet needs. The project team also discovered it should have developed procedures for a more extensive study of the sample of registered voters. Though valuable information was obtained from this population, researchers found a need for the kind of details that only personal or telephone interviews can provide.

FINDINGS

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ROLE FULFILLMENT

Three items were included on all questionnaires: two dealt with perceived College performance, the third with community educational needs.

Overall, respondents evaluated College performance very positively. Over 96 percent of 1,125 respondents believed the College was at least satisfactorily achieving its goals, while only 27, or 2.4 percent, believed the contrary, as responses to the following question indicate:

Question

The overall purpose of KVCC is to provide educational programs and services as needed by the residents of the Greater Kalamazoo Community beyond the high-school level. The education and training provided by KVCC are intended to help students obtain knowledge and skills needed for educational and occupational career advancement, personal development and recreational development.

Given this overall purpose of KVCC, how well do you feel KVCC is achieving this goal?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Very poor job	0
Less than satisfactory job	3.8
Satisfactory job	30.8
More than satisfactory job	46.6
Excellent job	18.8

These responses are being used to address accountability issues, improve public relations, and revitalize curriculum-advisory committees.

Over 96 percent of respondents were also at least satisfied with the way in which "KVCC is serving the greater Kalamazoo community." For both questions about college performance, civic leaders, social-agency directors, and KVCC faculty and staff gave KVCC the highest ratings. Educators, employers, and registered voters, though still quite satisfied with College performance, gave slightly lower ratings.

In response to the question "Are there educational needs in the greater Kalamazoo community that you feel KVCC should be attempting to meet, but is not meeting at the present time?" the majority of respondents in all populations answered no. However, KVCC faculty and staff and local educators were more likely than the other populations to respond affirmatively. The needs that each population cited generally reflected its own interests. KVCC faculty and staff mentioned most often new courses and programs and services for minorities, the disadvantaged, and the elderly.

IMPACT OF KVCC PROGRAMS

Since KVCC first offered classes in 1968, it has served over 60,000 persons. During the fiscal year ending 30 June 1977, headcount enrollment totaled 14,776 and registered credit hours 95,020. Thirty-seven percent of the respondents in the registered-voter survey indicated that they, or a member of their household, had enrolled in a program or course at the College during the past five years. Less than 2 percent were dissatisfied with their experience at the College.

Fifty-six percent of the employers indicated they presently employ persons who have taken courses at KVCC. Of these employers, over one-half stated that courses taken by their employees were related to their jobs.

Ninety-three percent of the employers rated the quality of training received by their employees at KVCC as either good or excellent. One-half of the social-agency directors who responded indicated their agency has used College courses for both their employees and clientele.

From these findings, the project team concluded that the impact of KVCC educational programs has been extensive and positive.

IMPACT OF KVCC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

During 1976, College facilities were used by over 17,400 persons for 180 community gatherings. Groups served included youth organizations, local governments, service organizations, local businesses, social clubs, and other educational institutions.

Respondents to the registered-voters survey were most likely to be aware of and use the cafeteria, library, and athletic facilities. Less than 10 percent were dissatisfied with College facilities and services.

Employers were most aware of and likely to use athletic facilities and job-placement services, and to participate in conferences, seminars, and workshops. They were quite satisfied with KVCC performance in these areas. The attitudes of social-agency directors were similar to those of employers.

Educators used KVCC consultant services most frequently and were satisfied 99 percent of the time. They also used and were satisfied with the cafeteria and meeting rooms. Many survey respondents from all populations expressed their satisfaction with KVCC services and facilities in written comments.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE COLLEGE

Since 1967, capital expenditures have totaled over \$12.5 million. Operating expenditures for the 1976-77 fiscal year exceeded \$6.7 million. Sources of College revenue include nearly

\$3 million in state funds that the College in turn injects into the local economy.

The survey of KVCC faculty and staff revealed that College employees spend \$3.6 million in the Kalamazoo community. Including salaries, College expenditures for local goods and services total nearly \$6 million annually. Revenues gained for the community far surpass the community's financial support of the College. The economic contribution of KVCC to the community has been substantial.

USE OF FINDINGS

KVCC administrators have used the written comments of respondents as well as the tabulated data in recruiting, program planning, and enhancing community relations. The findings of the study have been used to:

- Establish a college-wide marketing committee
- Tailor specific publications and promotional materials for different target groups
- Evaluate and track institutional advertising
- Eliminate promotional material from class schedules (the study found that such material had little or no effect)
- Make institutional staff more aware of different recruiting techniques

The institutional research office has used the findings to assess the effectiveness of academic programs, and a needs assessment is being considered to help target curriculum. Written comments of respondents have been used to determine what new counseling, placement, and financial services are needed, as well as to evaluate existing services. The study has at least indirectly affected most administrators, since its findings have been used in determining budgets and modifying facilities and services.

Finally, the findings have enabled KVCC personnel to determine how well the public understands the missions and goals of the College and to improve that understanding. Already the President and his staff have discussed the study with

over 30 civic clubs. Some of the findings have appeared in KVCC's *Ten-Year Report* and *Newsletter* and in the independently published *Encore* (a Kalamazoo fine arts magazine). Copies of the study have been sent to all Michigan state legislators and the governor.

KVCC administrators believe that their community-impact study has been extremely valuable. Through it, they have systematically examined community attitudes toward and use of the College. The information that the study has produced has enabled KVCC staff to assess the extent to which the College is meeting the educational needs of the community and to plan wisely. Equally as important, the study has enhanced the community's understanding of the College.

Eastfield College

Byron McClenney

BACKGROUND

Eastfield is one of seven colleges in the multicollege Dallas County (Texas) Community College District. The District was created in May 1965 by voter approval of a \$41.5 million bond issue. In 1966, El Centro, the first of the District's colleges, began operation. Located in the Dallas suburb of Mesquite, Eastfield opened in the fall of 1970 in a \$16.5 million facility on a 244-acre campus, with more than 3500 day and evening students and 1300 others enrolled in its community-service programs. The College now offers 53 instructional programs, 15 in occupational education.

Eastfield's mission is to provide an inexpensive, high-quality education within a short distance of homes in east Dallas County. The College maximizes alternative learning styles, ranging from personal contact with instructors to self-paced programs. In 1970, Eastfield's service area included about 300,000 persons spread over a seven-city area. Because of rapid residential development, by 1977 that figure had reached 400,000. At present, five four-year institutions, three branch campuses, one university, and seven community colleges are located in Dallas County.

Like every community college, Eastfield must meet, as effectively as possible, the educational needs of its service area. Thus since its inception, Eastfield has repeatedly surveyed its students to determine those needs. The results of these surveys, along with capacity enrollment, testify to Eastfield's success in serving its community.

In 1973, an institutional self-study was undertaken to determine, among other things, attitudes toward Eastfield of those in the community who had only indirect information. From May 18 through June 30, a random sample of Eastfield's service-area residents was conducted. Results were used in institutional planning over the next three years. In 1976, however, Eastfield's service area underwent massive changes generated by extensive residential and commercial construction. As a part of the follow-up to the self-study, staff decided that a new community assessment should be undertaken. At about the same time, the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) asked Eastfield to join Kalamazoo Valley Community College in Michigan and Valencia Community College in Florida in developing and documenting methods of conducting community-impact studies.

In conducting a community-impact study, Eastfield wanted to understand:

- The degree of community awareness of the College
- The degree of participation in College programs
- The level of satisfaction with the programs and facilities of the College
- Expected use of College facilities
- Unmet community needs

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE STUDY

The President of Eastfield first appointed five staff members (each with expertise in research, counseling, community involvement, or vocational and technical programming) to a community-impact-study Task Force. The Administrative Assistant to the President chaired the Task Force and coordinated the project.

The Task Force identified six populations as target groups for the study:

- Eastfield students
- Eastfield faculty
- Graduating seniors of feeder schools
- Teachers and counselors of feeder schools
- Selected employers throughout the county
- Residents of Eastfield's service area

Respondents completed a survey instrument designed for each particular population. Common questions on all instruments requested respondents' ethnic group, gross household income for 1977, and sex. The first two of these items evoked hostile responses from many participants. In retrospect, Eastfield staff felt that such hostility could have been avoided if the staff had explained, on the instruments, their motives for asking those particular questions.

Figure 1 lists the size and response rate of each sample. Following is a discussion of the techniques used in surveying the six populations.

FIGURE 1
SURVEY POPULATIONS AND SAMPLES FOR EASTFIELD COLLEGE

TARGET POPULATION	POP. SIZE	SAMPLE SIZE	% OF TOTAL POP.	USABLE QUESTIONNAIRES	
				Number	Percentage Returned
Eastfield faculty	537	108	20.0	67	62.6
Eastfield students	7,975	1,595	20.0	1,062	67.6
Service-area residents	148,850	2,937 ^(a)	2.0	267	9.1
Employers ^(b)	2,525	497 ^(a)	19.7	78	15.7
Feeder-school seniors	4,915	975	19.8	700 ^(c)	71.8
Feeder-school teachers and counselors	1,296	326	25.0	180 ^(c)	55.2

(a) Sample size reflects adjustments for survey instruments returned as undeliverable

(b) Population defined as those employers in Garland and Mesquite, Texas, and in the Pleasant Grove community of Dallas, Texas

(c) Three feeder schools chose not to participate in the study

FACULTY

Each division chairperson at Eastfield received survey instruments to distribute to 20 percent of the division's full-time faculty. Selection of the participants was left to the discretion of each chairperson. Part-time faculty members were surveyed, at random, by the Associate Dean of Continuing Education and the Assistant Dean of Community Services.

Following is a sample question used in the survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

What is your rating of the effectiveness of Eastfield in meeting the educational needs of the community?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Poor	0.0
Fair	10.9
Good	32.8
Excellent	56.3

STUDENTS

Selected faculty members received survey instruments to distribute to 20 percent of the student body. Each participating faculty member was asked to survey one or more common classes (Monday/Wednesday or Tuesday/Thursday 8:00 a.m.) to avoid duplication.

Following is a sample question used in the survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

What is your rating of the effectiveness of Eastfield in meeting the educational needs of the community?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Poor	1.6
Fair	12.3
Good	48.5
Excellent	37.6

Responses to this question indicate that 87 percent of the faculty and students feel that Eastfield is doing a good or excellent job in meeting the educational needs of the community.

Figure 2 compares the responses of faculty and students to six statements about the College.

FIGURE 2

COMPARISON OF EASTFIELD FACULTY AND STUDENT RESPONSES

	PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF FACULTY
The academic reputation of Eastfield College outside the institution is good or excellent.	64.8	56.0
The intellectual environment of Eastfield College is good or excellent.	67.0	52.4
Eastfield College administration's leadership is good or excellent.	67.2	87.7
Faculty-student relations are good or excellent.	83.9	95.4
Personal relations among faculty are good or excellent.	77.3	67.2
College rules are administered in a reasonable way.	95.0	95.6

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SERVICE-AREA RESIDENTS

A stratified sample of 2,913 persons, or 2.0 percent of the registered voters, was drawn proportionately from the 78 precincts within the college's service area. In addition, lists of buyers of newly constructed homes were secured from builders. These lists produced a sample of 225 persons, so that 3,138 residents received survey instruments. Of those, 201, or 6.4 percent, were returned as undeliverable, reducing the sample size to 2,937. Approximately 9.1 percent, or 267 of the survey instruments, were returned. Following is a sample question used in the survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

One of the goals of Eastfield College is to develop and maintain variety in program offerings and endeavor to respond to developing community needs. How well is Eastfield College achieving this goal?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
I don't know	18.9
Very poorly	0.0
Less than satisfactorily	5.0
Satisfactorily	35.1
More than satisfactorily	25.1
Excellently	15.8

Figure 3 reflects the responses of residents to statements about various aspects of the College.

FIGURE 3

RESPONSES OF EASTFIELD SERVICE-AREA RESIDENTS

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Are aware of university-transfer course offerings	76.0
Are aware of technical-occupational course offerings	80.9
Are aware of community-services course offerings	82.4
Desire continued expansion of off-campus offerings	87.3
Desire expansion of technical-occupational courses	63.0
Desire expansion of university-transfer courses	33.7
Desire expansion of community-services offerings	68.5
Have heard "some" or "a lot" about Eastfield (The majority had heard little or nothing about other colleges in the district)	92.9
Think university-transfer program is good or excellent (Twenty-one percent do not know)	63.3
Think technical-occupational program is good or excellent (Twenty-five percent do not know)	63.0
Think community-services program is good or excellent (Twenty-one percent do not know)	69.2
Have taken courses at Eastfield	45.0
Said that lack of a babysitter for children ages 0-3 years makes it difficult to attend Eastfield	13.0
Said that lack of time makes it difficult to attend Eastfield	52.8
Had gross household income of \$15,000 or more for calendar year 1977	70.6
Had gross household income of \$25,000 or more for calendar year 1977	30.2

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EMPLOYERS

From a list of employers in east Dallas County, a random sample of 20 percent, or 505, was drawn. Of that number, 8 survey instruments, or 1.6 percent, were returned as undeliverable, reducing the sample size to 497. Approximately 15.7 percent, or 78, were returned. Following are sample questions used in this survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

Do you feel Eastfield College has made an impact on business and industry in the community?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	96.1
No	3.9

Question

What is your rating of the quality of the courses taken by your employees at Eastfield College?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Poor	0.0
Fair	5.4
Good	54.1
Excellent	29.7
I don't know	10.8

These responses suggest that College programs are realistic and successful. In addition, 53.6 percent of respondents indicated that Eastfield could offer specific kinds of training needed by employees, and 14.5 percent that they would like Eastfield to conduct such programs at their facilities. Figure 4 reflects responses of employers to questions about awareness and quality of course offerings, employee participation in courses, and employers' overall impressions of the college.

FIGURE 4

EMPLOYER RESPONSES FOR EASTFIELD SURVEY

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Have had employees take courses at Eastfield	91.0
Courses were job related	84.7
Are aware of cooperative education program	75.0
Are aware of specific technical-occupational programs (including a welding program established fall, 1977)	85.0
Have good or outstanding impression of Eastfield	95.0

GRADUATING SENIORS OF FEEDER SCHOOLS

Eastfield College secured information regarding the number of twelfth-grade students at each of the feeder high schools. Survey instruments for 20 percent of each feeder school's twelfth-grade enrollment were distributed to each school's chief counselor. Counselors administered the survey instruments to one or more senior classes during their free period (time set aside for homeroom meetings). Though Eastfield staff considered conducting this survey by mail, a low return rate obtained in a pilot survey and difficulties in securing accurate mailing lists dissuaded them. Nine hundred seventy-five survey instruments, or 19.8 percent of those distributed, were collected at 11 feeder schools.

Following are sample questions used in the survey, together with a summary of responses.

Question

Would you attend a session held at your school concerning information about Eastfield College?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	75.1
No	24.9

Question

Has a representative from Eastfield College ever been to your school?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	57.6
No	42.4

FEEDER-SCHOOL TEACHERS AND COUNSELORS

About 325 survey instruments were distributed to 25 percent of teachers and counselors at 11 feeder schools, with the chief counselor at each school responsible for administering them.

Following are sample questions used in the survey, together with a summary of responses to them.

Question

How effective is Eastfield College in assisting students in making the transition from high school to college?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
I don't know	30.3
Poor	3.9
Fair	14.6
Good	38.2
Excellent	12.9

Question

What is your rating of Eastfield's intellectual environment?

Summary of Responses

RESPONSE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
I don't know	28.3
Poor	6.7
Fair	23.3
Good	31.4
Excellent	10.6

Figure 5 compares responses of teachers and students at feeder schools to questions addressed to both.

FIGURE 5

COMPARISON OF RESPONSES OF TEACHERS AND GRADUATING SENIORS AT EASTFIELD FEEDER SCHOOLS

	PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATING SENIORS	PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS
Have heard "some" or "a lot" about Eastfield College	85.0	70.0
Think that teachers at community colleges are as qualified as their counterparts at four-year colleges	81.5	78.7
Think that a four-year college is better than a community college	63.8	65.7
Think that community colleges turn out technicians who are not well-rounded people	18.7	19.5
Think that courses at four-year colleges are harder than similar courses at community colleges	69.6	60.9
Think that Eastfield is doing a good or excellent job in the following areas:		
Giving students knowledge (23.5 percent of faculty and 34 percent of students "don't know")	52.5	53.1
Motivating students to learn (30.7 percent of faculty and 36.7 percent of students "don't know")	38.9	40.8
Helping students become involved in community activities (39.1 percent of faculty and 43.4 percent of students "don't know")	29.1	34.1
Preparing students for jobs (31.3 percent of faculty and 32 percent of students "don't know")	52.2	49.2
Preparing students for transfer to four-year colleges and institutions (25 percent of faculty and 30 percent of students "don't know")	54.1	48.0

COMMENTS ON PROCEDURES

After the Task Force identified the populations to be surveyed, each Task-Force member accepted the responsibility of developing initial drafts of the survey instruments. The project coordinator, in individual meetings with each member, reviewed and suggested revisions to the instruments. An instructional-development consultant on the Eastfield staff next reviewed the instruments. Instruments were then presented to the President's staff for final approval.

Because of the limited time allowed for the survey itself (about six months) and because of the project coordinator's additional responsibilities, a method for tracking individual responses was not developed. Though the number of instruments mailed and responses received were recorded by voter precinct, no method was established for distinguishing respondents and nonrespondents at feeder schools and Eastfield. The employer survey instruments, however, did request the name of the company and title of the respondent, thus providing a built-in tracking system.

In retrospect, Eastfield staff felt that these two points might help their counterparts at other institutions considering similar studies:

- Timing deserves special attention. The Eastfield study began in September, a bad time, since the instruments were not ready for mailing until the height of the Christmas mail rush. In addition, severe winter weather (even in Dallas) may have lowered the response rate. January would have been the best time to begin planning and early May or early September the best time to mail.
- Institutional records should be searched before survey instruments are designed. After the study, Eastfield staff discovered that some of the information that it collected was already in its files.

FINDINGS

PERCEPTIONS OF COLLEGE ROLE FULFILLMENT

All populations perceived College performance positively. Over 89 percent of Eastfield's faculty rated its effectiveness in meeting the educational needs of the community as good or excellent, while only 11 percent rated it as fair. Similarly, over 86 percent of Eastfield's students rated its effectiveness as good or excellent, while only 12 percent rated it fair and 1 percent poor. In response to the question "What kind of job do you feel Eastfield College is doing in the following areas?" the following proportions of service-area residents rated Eastfield's efforts as good or excellent.

- Giving students knowledge 64.8 percent
(21.2 percent did not know)
- Motivating students to learn 46.4 percent
(27.8 percent did not know)
- Helping students become involved in community activities 34.8 percent
(41.6 percent did not know)
- Preparing students to go on to a four-year college 57.3 percent
(23.1 percent did not know)
- Preparing students for a job 55.9 percent
(30.7 percent did not know)

IMPACT OF COLLEGE PROGRAMS

Since Eastfield's opening in fall 1970, more than 90,000 students have enrolled in fall- and spring-semester courses. In fall 1977, registered credit hours totaled 66,105 and student count 7,975. Forty-five percent of service-area respondents surveyed indicated that they had taken a course at Eastfield.

Ninety-one percent of the employers surveyed stated that they employ persons who have taken courses at Eastfield. Of these employers, 85 percent stated that courses taken by their employees were related to their jobs. Eighty-four percent of the employers rated the quality of training received by their employees at Eastfield as either good or excellent.

From these findings, the Task Force concluded that the impact of Eastfield's educational programs has been extensive and positive.

IMPACT OF COLLEGE SERVICES AND FACILITIES

During 1977, over 8,000 persons used College facilities for community activities. Groups served included other educational institutions, federal and local government, youth organizations, service organizations, businesses, and social clubs.

Responses of service-area residents indicated that 16.5 percent had attended films, lectures, or concerts or had used Eastfield athletic facilities or meeting rooms. Forty-seven percent of the teachers at feeder schools had used College facilities, and over 75 percent were aware of the services and facilities available to the community. In short, the impact study revealed that all sections of the community have benefited from Eastfield.

USE OF FINDINGS

Eastfield has already used the results of the study to improve planning and enhance its public relations. For example, since the study revealed that transportation to and from Eastfield was a problem for only a very few persons, the College eliminated its request to the local transit authority for a feasibility

study to determine whether special bus routes to the College should be established. Also as a result of the study, Eastfield decided to:

- Offer more occupational-technical and community-service courses at off-campus locations requested by employers. (One course in management has already been conducted at a local public library. However, Eastfield has reduced the number of off-campus credit courses taught at local high schools, since the study revealed that many respondents prefer taking credit courses on campus.)
- Schedule meetings between Eastfield counselors and seniors at local high schools and provide information about Eastfield to juniors at those schools.
- Develop special courses in human services, transportation, law and public administration, business management, and health for students graduating from local schools.
- Refine its support services and evaluate the College's Learning Resources Center.
- Increase its public-relations budget by about 30 percent and concentrate on increasing awareness of the College in those precincts in which its visibility is relatively low.

COSTS

No specific budget was set aside for the study, nor were any costs projected before it began. At the end of the study, Eastfield staff estimated its costs:

Project coordinator (full-time 6 months)	\$ 9,000
Secretary (full-time 3 months)	2,100
Keypunch operator (full-time 2 weeks)	300
Printing	
Business-reply envelopes	75
Postcards for follow-up	25
Typesetting of survey instruments	756
Survey instrument production (including paper)	229
Postage	<u>235</u>
Total estimate of cost of study	<u><u>\$12,720</u></u>

Valencia Community College

James Gollattscheck

BACKGROUND

Established in 1967, Valencia Community College serves a two-county district in central Florida with a land area of over 2,470 square miles and a population of nearly 500,000. The district encompasses 14 incorporated municipalities (including Orlando) and eight unincorporated towns.

Valencia is a multicampus, public, two-year institution. Its East and West Campuses are located on 80-acre and 167-acre sites; its Open Campus occupies rented facilities in downtown Orlando. Over 30 associate-degree and university-parallel programs, with an enrollment of about 7,000 annual FTE, are offered at the East and West campuses. The Open Campus coordinates continuing-education and community-service programs and offers credit-related courses. It has an annual noncredit enrollment of about 15,000 at over 150 different locations. The College employs about 45 full-time employees and many part-time and adjunct staff. More than 80 percent of Valencia's students work part or full time.

Valencia's mission is to provide comprehensive post-secondary-education and lifelong learning opportunities that foster individual growth and community development. Its objectives are to:

- Provide a two-year, college-transfer degree program
- Prepare students for employment in the community upon completion of an Associate-in-Science degree
- Offer continuing-education courses, vocational-training programs, and cultural and recreational activities
- Upgrade professional skills as requested by the citizens of the college district
- Provide counseling and guidance for all students
- Provide basic and developmental programs to enhance students' chances of success
- Provide community-service and personal-improvement programs
- Provide educational leadership, especially by improving instruction and curriculum
- Serve as a cultural center for the community

As Valencia entered its second decade, its President and his staff felt that a community-impact study would help it fulfill its mission of community service. Though in the past the College had conducted several assessments, it had never comprehensively studied its impacts. In addition, an Advanced Institutional Development Program (AIDP) grant that it received required such a study.

PREPARING FOR AND CONDUCTING THE STUDY

The goals of the College in conducting the study were to:

- Design a model for assessing community impacts and needs that it could use in other surveys
- Design and administer survey instruments that would provide a data base for the College to assess its future impact

- Design and implement a survey that would meet the requirements of the AIDP grant
- Develop a pilot program to refine techniques for conducting similar studies at other institutions

Because of the extensive community involvement of the Open Campus, the President of Valencia chose its Dean as the administrator best qualified to accomplish these goals. (In retrospect, however, Valencia staff felt that a project as extensive as a community-impact study should be the sole, rather than an additional, responsibility of such an administrator.)

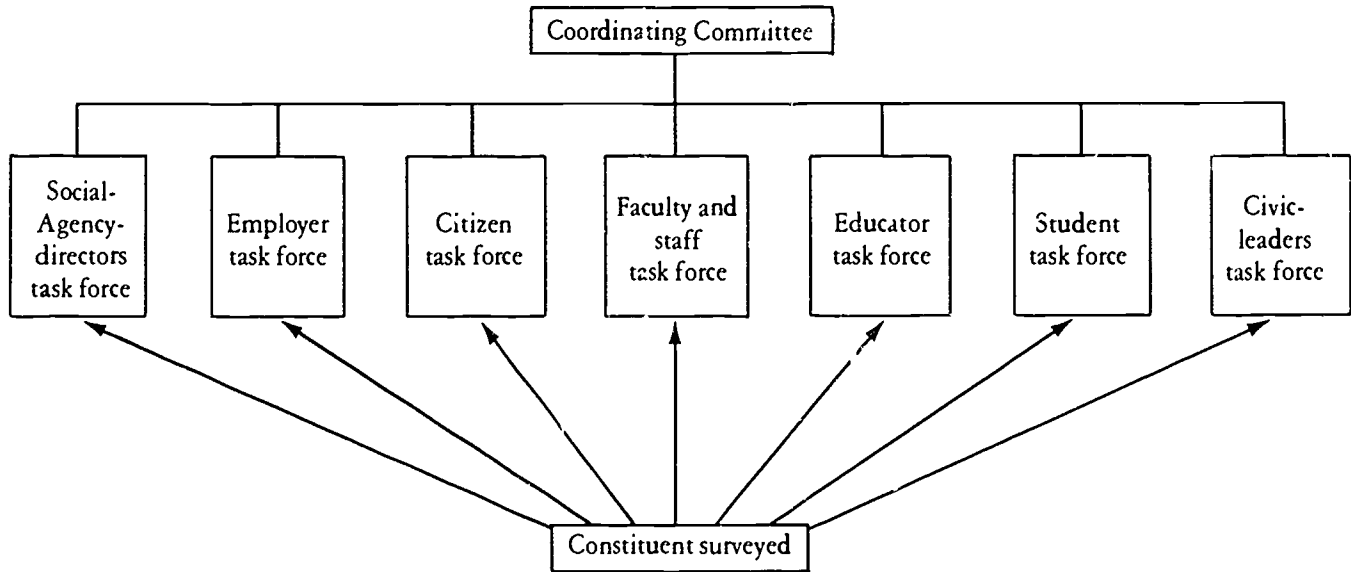
The Dean was instructed by the President to recommend a general structure for conducting the study and to formulate a set of objectives. After an initial meeting, the President, at the recommendation of the Dean, established a Coordinating Committee, composed of his staff members, to oversee the project. Its membership included the President himself; AIDP Coordinator; Dean of Open Campus (who served as Chairperson); Director of Communications; Director of Resource Development; Provosts of the East, West, and Open Campuses; Vice-President for Development and Facility Planning; and Vice-President for Institutional Services. (Though such a committee representative of the entire institution may be more unwieldy than a research staff, it is more likely to elicit wide participation and thus produce more useful data. To coordinate effectively the different phases of the study, such a committee should meet on a regular, rather than an ad hoc, basis.)

The chairperson of the Coordinating Committee scheduled its meetings so that the President could attend as many as possible. The Committee first established objectives for the study in these general areas:

- Economic factors
- Educational programs
- Community service
- Social and cultural factors
- Manpower and training
- Facilities

FIGURE 6

ORGANIZATION OF VALENCIA SURVEYS



In addition, the Committee decided to assess community needs for transportation to Valencia's different campuses and for child care. (After the completion of the study, Valencia staff felt that the findings might have been more useful if all these objectives had been more specific.)

After establishing its objectives, the Committee identified seven target groups to be surveyed: citizens, students, faculty and staff, educators, employers, social-agency directors, and civic leaders. To develop survey instruments, task forces chaired by Committee members were established for each target population (see figure 6). Each task force included representatives from the target group to be surveyed. The task forces then drafted survey instruments that they presented to the Committee for approval. The Coordinating Committee carefully reviewed each instrument, which, in many cases, was revised several times before being approved. The task forces functioned throughout the study.

The chairperson of the Committee, who oversaw all project activities, served as the liaison between the Committee and its task forces and between Valencia and NCHFMS. NCHEMS staff provided technical and data-processing services as well as moral support. The only difficulties with this assistance were a few logistical problems in mailing materials between Orlando and Boulder, Colorado.

The period for conducting the study and securing and analyzing the results was approximately one and a half years, about six months longer than expected (see figure 7). Throughout the study, the President helped the chairperson direct the project.

At the outset, the Committee decided whenever possible to survey an entire population instead of a sample; figure 8 summarizes the sample sizes and number of surveys distributed and returned for each population. Following is a discussion of the techniques used in surveying each population.

CITIZENS

Citizens were the most difficult population to survey. Since the mobility of the 500,000 inhabitants of the central Florida district is high, Valencia staff had difficulty procuring up-to-date

FIGURE 7

TIMETABLE FOR VALENCIA COMMUNITY-IMPACT STUDY

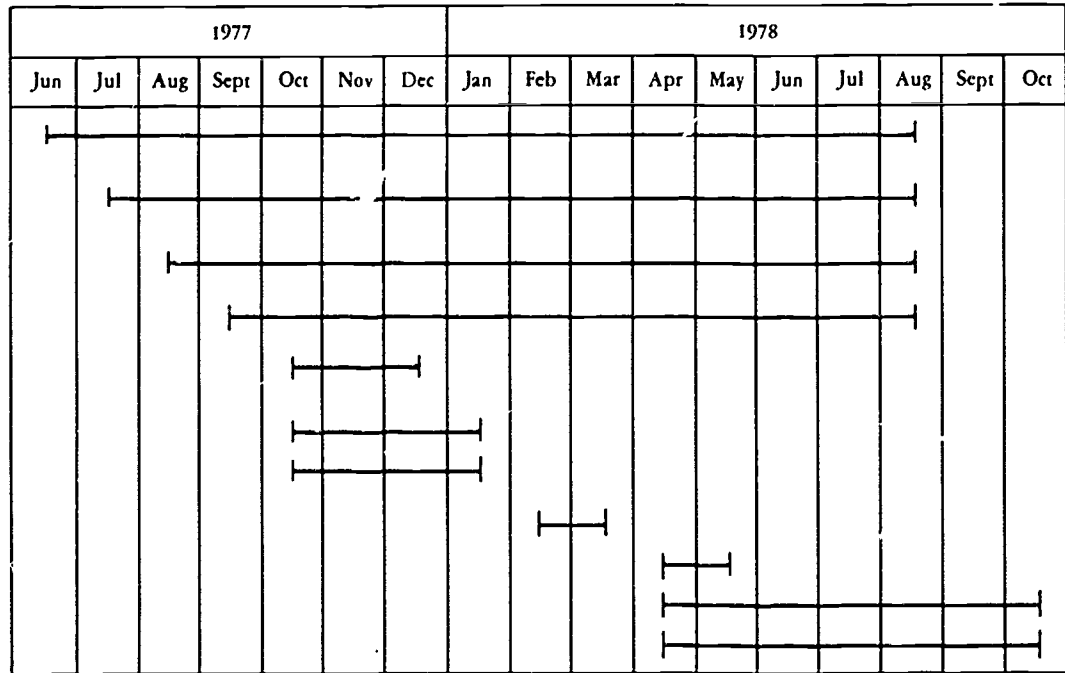


FIGURE 8

DEMOGRAPHIC AND SURVEY INFORMATION FOR VALENCIA SURVEY

	Educators	Employers	Faculty and Staff	Social-Agency Directors	Students	Citizens	Civic Leaders
Population Size	4,944	490	453	238	8,242	179,000	200
Percentage of Population Surveyed	100	100	100	100	36	23	100
Number Distributed	4,944	490	453	238	3,000	41,000	(?)
Number Completed and Returned	929	91	294	55	1,870	1,945	(?)
Rate of Return	18%	19%	65%	23%	62%	5%	(?)

NOTE Population categories were described as follows

Educators: Public-school faculty and administrators

Employers: Selected categories (large or small)

Faculty and Staff: Full-time Valencia employees

Social-Agency Directors: Agencies listed in information and referral directory of Orange County

Students: Credit students

Citizens: Residences in district

Civic Leaders: Selected individuals by category

mailing lists. Eventually, after investigating several methods, the task force decided to use a private mailing service. The Valencia Office of Institutional Research, supervised by the Vice-President for Institutional Services, determined the sampling procedures and worked with a mail-processing firm to distribute the surveys. About 11,000 (about 23 percent) of the households in the College's district were surveyed. A computerized list organized according to mail-courier routes was used, and about every fifth residential unit received the survey instrument, along with a letter from the President and a stamped return envelope. In a special contract with the mail-processing firm, the envelopes were labeled, stuffed, and bundled according to zip code. The College was able to use AIDP funds to cover additional survey costs in excess of an amount contracted with NCHEMS. The total number of surveys returned was 1,945, or 5 percent of those distributed.

Of the respondents to this survey,

- Sixty-eight percent were married
- Fifty-six percent were female
- Ninety-two percent were white
- Sixty-one percent made less than \$20,000 per year
- Fifty-six percent were between 25-49 years of age

Responses to a question about how participants learned about Valencia's educational courses, programs, services, and facilities are summarized below:

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
This questionnaire	745	38
Valencia faculty and staff	443	23
Valencia students and former students	960	49
Radio	324	17
Newspaper	946	38
Television	301	15
Friends and relatives	596	37
People you work with	719	28
Other	554	10

Note: Respondents checked as many items as were applicable.

Ninety-three percent of those expressing an opinion felt that Valencia was achieving its purpose. Fifty percent of the respondents (or a member of their households) had enrolled at the College during the past five years. The types of courses or programs in which they enrolled were:

TYPES OF COURSES OR PROGRAMS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Courses that can be transferred to a four-year college	579	30
Career and occupational courses leading to a degree	431	22
Continuing-education courses and programs to give skill training and professional upgrading	377	19
Academic courses for personal interest	341	18

Ninety-two percent of those who had taken courses at the College reported that they were satisfied or extremely satisfied with their educational experience.

FACULTY AND STAFF

To ensure anonymous responses, the task force decided to distribute these instruments from the NCHEMS office in Colorado. Before the instruments were sent, all full-time Valencia employees received a memorandum explaining the study. Survey instruments, with a letter and a stamped return envelope, were mailed to all 453 full-time staff. Two hundred ninety-five, or 65 percent of those surveyed, returned the instrument.

Ninety-eight percent of respondents felt that the College was serving the community adequately, more than adequately, or excellently. Eighty-eight percent said they liked being identified as a Valencia employee, while 12 percent reported indifference. Respondents also evaluated the effect of employment at Valencia on their sense of self-worth:

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Very positive impact	101	39
A positive impact	136	53
A negative impact	17	7
A very negative impact	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	257	100

Ninety-two percent reported a positive or very positive impact, results that corroborate the report of the 96 percent of respondents who said that they were glad that they worked at Valencia.

To assess part of the economic impact of the College, respondents were asked to indicate the approximate amount that they spent monthly for household expenses:

ITEM	MEAN EXPENDITURE
Housing (including utilities and homeowners insurance)	\$ 340
Food	216
Other retail purchases	158
Health care (including doctors, drugs, insurance)	63
Transportation (including automobile insurance)	137
Life insurance	57
Savings	197
Charitable contributions	<u>57</u>
Total	\$1225

The average total monthly expenditures, when multiplied by the total number of employees at the College (453), reflect the substantial economic contribution that Valencia makes to its community.

Fifty-two percent of respondents reported that they volunteer for community-service activities:

HOURS PER MONTH	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
1-4	61	21
5-10	51	17
11-16	30	10
Over 16	11	4
Total	153	52

Respondents reported volunteer activities in a variety of organizations, including civic and fraternal clubs, churches, and professional groups.

STUDENTS

The task force developing the student surveys decided to administer them to 3,000 day and evening credit students at all three Valencia campuses. The task force thus surveyed the classes that met on Wednesday morning at 10:00 a.m. and Tuesday evening at 7:00 p.m., since these enjoyed the largest enrollments. Advance notices were sent to the instructors informing them of the purpose of the study, along with surveys and instruction sheets. About 62 percent of the students surveyed completed the instruments.

Eighty-eight percent of student respondents were between 18-34 years of age, 54 percent were female, 82 percent white, 12 percent black, and 3 percent Hispanic.

Ninety-six percent reported the College had a positive or very positive impact on their sense of self-worth. Of those with an opinion, 93 percent indicated their satisfaction with instruction at Valencia, and 93 percent reported a positive learning experience. Seventy-four percent of the respondents said they worked.

HOURS PER WEEK	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
1-10	54	4
11-20	267	19
21-30	310	21
31-40	340	23
41 or more	471	33
Total	1442	100

That fifty-six percent of the respondents indicated that they worked more than 30 hours a week may be related to a recent increase in part-time students.

Eighty-eight percent reported that they used their own cars to get to campus.

EMPLOYERS

The employers task force obtained a mailing list of the 200 largest businesses in central Florida from the Greater Orlando Chamber of Commerce; a second list of about 200 smaller industrial firms from the Florida Industrial Guide, Department of Commerce; and a third of about 90 local personnel managers. Survey instruments were sent to 490 business firms in the district (whenever possible, to the president of each firm). Two weeks later, each employer received a follow-up card. Nineteen percent of those surveyed responded. Employers' responses indicated that the College was serving the needs of the community in an adequate to excellent manner. In their comments, several employers suggested additional needs that might be met. Eighty-two percent of respondents reported having Valencia-trained employees. A substantial majority rated the training adequate to excellent.

EDUCATORS

The President of Valencia contacted the public-school superintendents in each county in the Valencia district to secure their support for the study. In each county, educators received a cover letter signed jointly by the President of Valencia and the respective superintendent. The survey instruments, cover letter, and stamped return envelopes were stuffed by a local volunteer agency under the supervision of Valencia staff. The envelopes were then bundled according to school and county, delivered to the mail-distribution office in each county, and then distributed by the courier system of each public-school system. A return rate of 18 percent was obtained. Most of the respondents were teachers:

PRESENT POSITION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Teacher	753	83
Counselor	56	6
Administrator	48	5
Other	47	6
Total	904	100

Ninety percent of the responses were from Orange County and 10 percent from Osceola County, a proportion indicative of the relative size of the two school systems. Two-thirds of the respondents were female. One explanation for the higher proportion of women may be that 64 percent of the respondents taught in elementary or junior high school:

LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Elementary	370	41
Junior High School	205	23
High School	254	28
Other	75	8
Total	904	100

Seventy-three percent of respondents were between 25-49 years of age, and 91 percent had taught more than three years. Ninety-seven percent of those expressing an opinion evaluated Valencia's service to the community positively. When asked whether Valencia helped them, a majority answered affirmatively:

Does Valencia serve your students?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	451	64
No	250	36
	701	100

Does Valencia help you with your work responsibilities?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	365	53
No	319	47
	684	100

Does Valencia foster your professional growth?

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSES
Yes	407	57
No	309	43
	716	100

In addition, 97 percent indicated that they would refer students to Valencia.

SOCIAL-AGENCY DIRECTORS

The directors of all social-service agencies listed in the Information and Referral Directory of Social Services, Orange County Human-Services Planning Council, received a letter from the President, a survey instrument, and a stamped return envelope. Two weeks later, each director received a follow-up card. Twenty-three percent of the 238 directors responded. Thirty-nine social-service agencies reported employing persons who had taken courses at Valencia. Eighty-one percent of respondents rated the training these employees received at Valencia adequate to excellent. A large majority of the respondents indicated they felt that the College was satisfactorily serving the needs of the community.

CIVIC LEADERS

The civic-leaders task force decided to use the study to enhance Valencia's public relations. Once the results of the surveys of the other populations have been analyzed, 200 civic leaders will be invited to Valencia for a luncheon at which the results of the study will be presented. At the same time, the civic leaders will be given a tour of the College.

OTHER FINDINGS

Question 1 asked respondents in six populations to indicate how well they felt Valencia is achieving each of its objectives:

- 1 = Have no knowledge of
- 2 = Less than adequate
- 3 = Adequate
- 4 = More than adequate
- 5 = Excellent

Responses to this question were generally very positive among all populations, as illustrated by the attitudes of respondents toward the objective of providing a two-year, college-transfer-degree program:

	Educators		Citizens		Students		Faculty and Staff		Social-Agency Directors		Employers	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Have no knowledge of	207	23	439	25	165	9	4	2	9	15	17	19
Less than adequate	19	2	55	3	78	4	6	2	0	0	4	4
Adequate	262	29	491	28	804	43	76	30	14	24	25	28
More than adequate	237	26	420	24	495	26	77	31	20	34	31	34
Excellent	185	20	355	20	348	18	88	35	16	27	13	15
Total	910	100	1760	100	1890	100	251	100	59	100	90	100

One question for all populations except faculty, staff, and students concerned the awareness of the three main college locations. Most respondents were aware of the West Campus (the oldest and largest of the three).

COMMENTS ON PROCEDURES

After concluding their community-impact study, Valencia staff felt that the following points might be of use to persons at other institutions planning similar studies:

- The study should be worked on *daily*, and a specific timetable (more specific than that depicted in figure 7) should be developed early

- Outside consultants (such as NCHEMS) can be an immense help
- It is of crucial importance to involve representatives of target populations in the work of task forces, particularly in the design of instruments
- The sample sizes chosen by Valencia were too large, especially for the citizen survey; smaller samples with a higher response rate would have produced more useful data
- Data should be analyzed by a skilled research staff
- Any estimates of the cost-effectiveness of such a study should recognize that not all its benefits will be immediately apparent

USE OF FINDINGS

The Coordinating Committee will oversee use of the findings of the study. The Committee will first disseminate the findings to the faculty, staff, and governing board of the College and to the community at large. It will then conduct an all-day workshop with the President's staff and other administrators to develop strategies for further use. One of these will certainly involve enhancing Valencia's public relations; the findings have already proven helpful in presentations made by the President to various civic groups. The workshop will also consider the utility of conducting ongoing surveys for existing or new target populations. Moreover, as the only comprehensive assessment of Valencia's impact on its community, this study will provide an excellent data base for future studies and will also make institutional staff more cognizant of the importance of making positive impacts. Valencia staff felt that the results of the study could also be used as part of the self-study that an institution must perform every 10 years to maintain its accreditation. Finally, in a decade of increasing demands for accountability in postsecondary education, Valencia staff felt that such a study would more accurately reflect their impact on their community than would an assessment conducted by any government agency.

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