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ABSTRACT

Using as its premise that access and excellence are mutually interdependent goals for urban community colleges, this monograph considers the direction and nature of programmatic responses to the needs of the constituencies of urban two-year colleges and the direction and quality of the research efforts required to measure institutional impact on the community. Following introductory remarks on the work of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges' Urban Community Colleges Commission which culminated in the preparation of the monograph, the mission of the urban community college is examined, underscoring its primary roles as educational institution and community resource and facilitator. A discussion of the educational and social roles of urban community colleges is followed by a call for research into fundamental questions about the impact of the urban community college on its environment. The next section considers the importance of developing operational definitions of excellence and access in order to measure institutional effectiveness in these areas. Next, the monograph explores issues related to articulation and program linkages, the associate degree as the touchstone of educational excellence, and the influence of finance on the community college mission. The next sections consider the community college's role in economic and human resources development, personnel issues for urban institutions, questions related to organizational management and development, and curricular needs for currency and continuity. Finally, recommendations for further research and investigation are presented. (LAL)

CHALLENGES FOR THE URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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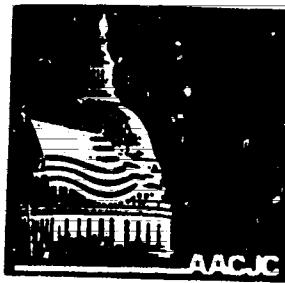
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CHALLENGES FOR THE URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

A Monograph Prepared by the
AACJC Urban Community Colleges Commission
FREDERICK E. STAHL, EDITOR

AACJC ISSUES SERIES NO. 4



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PREFACE

The urban community college is one of the most exciting places to be in American higher education. Born and bred in an environment where the only constant is change itself, our communities are often characterized by shifting demographics, chronic unemployment, a decreasing tax base, and a deteriorating primary and secondary school system. Yet it is precisely within this environment that the community college role can reach its full potential. For many we serve as a principal vehicle for social and economic enfranchisement. For others we become a critical element in the stabilization and revitalization of neighborhoods in transition, a potent force in economic growth and development. Finally, we are, in many settings, a principal port of entry through which the thousands of immigrants to our shores break the bonds of linguistic isolation, and armed with a new language and new skills, fulfill their dreams of true participation in our society.

This monograph, prepared by the AACJC Urban Community Colleges Commission, is first and foremost an affirmation of the unique mission of our urban community colleges.

At its core is the premise that access and excellence are mutually interdependent goals. Within this context the monograph considers the direction and nature of our programmatic responses to the needs of our varied constituencies and the direction and quality of the research efforts required to measure our impact on the communities we serve.

In short, the urban community college stands poised on the cutting edge of our nation's future. If it grapples with serious problems and faces what often appear to be insurmountable challenges, it is graced with even greater potential to serve as a major force in re-creating the future of urban America.

Special thanks is to be given to Dr. Paul Elsner (Chancellor, Maricopa County Community College District), for his leadership in initiating this project; to Dr. Sal Rotella (Chancellor, City Colleges of Chicago); Dr. Don Godbold (Chancellor, Peralta Community College); Dr. Rus Slicker (District Director, Milwaukee Area

Technical College), for their contribution to the preparation of this monograph; and to Dr. Fred Stahl (Maricopa County Community College District) for his valuable assistance in editing and shaping the final product.

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Colleges Commission

INTRODUCTION

Over the past five years, a series of blue-ribbon national reports dealing with the status of education at all levels and asserting the need for positive educational reform has focused public attention on the goals, policies, and practices of postsecondary educational institutions. During a period when the value of all publicly supported activities has come under ever-increasing scrutiny, there have been demands for such educational institutions to clearly define and articulate not only their specific missions but also the means by which they measure accountability and achieve institutional excellence.

Urban community colleges face problems and possibilities unique in American higher education. Many of them are charged with serving the educational needs of communities struggling with such critical issues as chronic unemployment, decreasing tax bases, a shifting economy, deteriorating common schools, high illiteracy rates, and a continuous influx of new immigrants who lack basic language and coping skills. To serve their constituencies, especially the educationally and economically disadvantaged whom other institutions of higher education have historically neglected, they embrace challenges, goals, and a spectrum of programs and services other institutions eschew.

Today, as never before, leaders of urban community colleges face substantive challenges both in dealing with the transitions taking place within their institutions and in anticipating and responding to simultaneous and ever-accelerating alterations in the urban environment. In an era marked by criticism, challenge, and change, urban community colleges and their leaders must seize the initiative and undertake new efforts to redefine their agendas and the criteria and policies by which their success will be judged.

Basic to success in meeting the challenge of dealing with these significant internal and external changes is the development and articulation of a conceptualization of the urban community college which emphasizes its unique characteristics. Such a conceptualization is needed to allow urban community college leaders to

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render decisions and develop strategies enabling their colleges to deal with the fundamental and frequently conflicting demands made upon them by diverse constituencies; to remain broadly accessible while upholding standards of value and excellence; and, most important, to adapt flexibly and in synchronization with changes in our cities. The development and articulation of such a conceptualization will provide urban community college leaders with a more comprehensive understanding of the environments in which their institutions operate and will equip them to reform, progress, and renew as they strive to accomplish their unique mission in the years to come.

Any conceptualization of the urban community college must begin with a restatement of its fundamental mission and purposes. Of equal importance to the development of such a conceptualization is the discussion of intertwined policy and research issues, especially those which have major ramifications for today's urban community colleges. From an analysis of these concerns, a series of recommendations for the future progress and development of the urban community college can be developed. The broad need to develop and discuss a conceptualization of the urban community college, along with related policy and research issues, problems, and challenges, was recognized implicitly in discussions preceding the establishment of the Commission for Urban Community Colleges during 1983. The initial *Charge of Duties* developed and distributed at the first commission meeting, conducted in Scottsdale, Arizona, under the direction of Maricopa Community College District Chancellor Paul Elsner, included a charge that "the commission studies the particular problems and challenges confronting the urban community colleges, develops concept papers, and suggests programs for the Association to meet these needs," in addition to charges "to advise and assist the Association's Board of Directors" and to direct special attention to any special federal legislation impacting urban community colleges.

Indeed, at the initial meeting of the commission, attended by eleven urban community college chancellors and presidents, issues relating to the definition of the urban community college were discussed, and Chairman Elsner requested that Salvatore Rotella develop a concept paper for the commission on the subject of access.

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Rotella, assisted by Flora Edwards and Charles Tildon, prepared an initial report, which was reviewed and broadened in informational scope at the April 2, 1985, meeting of the commission.

At the April 1984 meeting, Chairman Elsner appointed two additional committees: the first was to frame research questions and consisted of Rus Slicker, Robert McCabe, and Flora Edwards; the second was to deal with policy issues and consisted of Nolen Ellison, Don Godbold, Leslie Koltai, G. Owen Smith, and James Manilla.

Reports on the drafts of their papers were presented in October 1984.

In February 1984, with permission of the original committee chairpersons, Chairman Elsner utilized a Maricopa staff member, Frederick Stahl, to expand the final committee drafts and to present them in his stead at the April 1985 meeting of the commission.

Based upon feedback at the April 1985 meeting, Stahl was commissioned to combine the three papers into a lengthier position paper for further consideration by the commission. It was agreed that a committee consisting of Flora Edwards, Paul Elsner, Robert McCabe, and Nolen Ellison would draft a set of final recommendations after approval of the basic concept paper.

The initial committees had identified the following concerns for exploration during their initial discussions regarding mission, policy, and research issues impacting today's urban community colleges: the definition of the urban community college; the mission of the urban community college; the image and status of the urban community college; developing operational definitions of access and excellence; determining the urban profile of the community college student; assessing the impacts of instructional and student development systems on students; measuring academic progress toward the achievement of goals; the relationship between urban community college mission and finance; the relationship of urban community colleges to the private sector; articulation; "currency," particularly the relevance of occupational curricula; currency of facilities; continuing development of personnel; and organizational management and the urban community college.

It is to an exploration of these critical interlinked issues that the remainder of this monograph is addressed.

THE MISSION OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Transmitting and increasing the culture's store of knowledge is the mission of every postsecondary educational institution. Increasing individual access to our urban culture's store of knowledge, especially the information and skills necessary to function and adapt with a high degree of effectiveness in rapidly changing, continuously evolving urban technocracies, has become the increasingly specialized mission of the urban community college.

In seeking to fulfill this mission, the urban community college offers varied educational programs which are, in turn, supported by a wide spectrum of services to its students:

1. *General education for all students*, designed to assist them to perform multifaceted personal and professional roles more effectively and to enable them to exercise their obligations and privileges as citizens with intelligence and informed judgment.

2. *The first two years of baccalaureate education*, consisting of courses and degree programs in the liberal arts and sciences and preprofessional fields, designed to either (a) prepare students for transfer to baccalaureate-degree-granting colleges or universities or (b) meet the individual student's desire for knowledge.

3. *Career education*, including courses and/or certificate, diploma, and degree programs in occupational, vocational/technical, and semitechnical fields designed to provide job training, retraining, and/or upgrading of skills to meet individual and community manpower needs.

4. *Basic skills education*, including remedial and developmental instruction, adult basic education, and other educational programs designed to meet individual goals and to provide underprepared students with access to postsecondary education.

5. *Adult continuing education*, including credit and noncredit adult and continuing education classes, workshops, seminars,

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forums, and cultural programs, designed to provide opportunities for lifelong learning.

6. *Student support service programs*, emphasizing admissions, articulation with high schools and universities, financial assistance, educational testing and assessment, counseling, tutoring, library and learning resources, job placement, and special assistance for disabled and educationally disadvantaged students.

7. *Corporate service programs*, focusing upon creative linkages between urban community colleges, business and industry for planning, developing, and implementing unique instructional packages, education and training programs, and/or resource consortia to develop well-educated workforces to meet the growing and changing needs of urban marketplaces.

8. *Public service programs*, of an educational nature, intended for the enrichment of the community and to encourage the use of community college facilities for educational and cultural purposes, including workshops, seminars, forums, and community surveys and studies.

As these programs and services imply, today's urban community college functions in two primary roles within its community. Particularly in its role as an *educational institution*, the urban community college is committed to establishing publicly stated requirements and curricula appropriate to the credits, certificates, diplomas, and degrees it awards; to developing innovative approaches, programs, and instructional delivery systems; to providing the foundations of a general education throughout its programs of study; to conducting focused research designed to improve the quality of instruction; and to encouraging free inquiry, academic freedom, and the pursuit of excellence in all its academic endeavors.

In keeping with its role as a *community resource and facilitator*, the urban community college seeks to identify and respond to the changing needs of its community; to establish partnerships with local civic, social, and government agencies; to adapt its curricula to local manpower needs; to serve its community both as an educational and a cultural resource; to establish cooperative efforts with other educational institutions; and to participate in public policy and economic development for the benefit of the community.

PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL ROLES

The clarification and articulation of mission has long been identified as a crucial issue for the community college movement. It has been the subject of frequent exploration and exposition by both community college advocates and critics. More recently, access, opportunity, and excellence have also emerged as key issues.

Community colleges rightfully take great pride in the fact that they have made access to higher education in the United States a reality for millions of Americans. However, the urban community college commitment to provide meaningful educational experiences to a constituency with widely disparate needs and goals creates a series of obligations that have not yet been wholly understood or systematically addressed.

If community colleges are to maintain a broad-based mission and offer access, opportunity, and excellence, they must develop and articulate both a historical and national perspective on the breadth and depth of their educational and social roles. In particular, they must play a leading role in developing a new national consciousness regarding today's rapidly changing urban landscape, propounding broad policy statements dealing with the status of the urban community college and utilizing expanded research efforts to define its nature. They must also provide a clearer portrait of current and future urban potentialities and problems. Such a portrait can well serve as the backdrop for positive educational changes that will have major implications for our cities.

In order to structure an accurate, positive, and current portrait of the status of urban community colleges, these institutions must broaden their understanding of themselves and their interrelationships with other principal components of the complex and ever-changing environments in which they exist and function.

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Urban community colleges must also make broad recommendations concerning future directions and the relative importance of numerous individual projects and goals necessary to enhance accessibility and excellence. They must define and structure new strategies and models for educating diverse and formerly neglected student constituencies in a variety of ways, thereby enhancing the quality of life for their constituents and their communities.

They must continue to focus upon the concept of maximum accessibility, long inherent in such basic community college concepts as the "open door," "lifelong learning," and "community-based education." At the same time, such colleges must develop and emphasize ever more heavily the value-added concept of excellence in terms of the urban community colleges' broad and unique objectives: rigorous and challenging academic standards, the achievement of viable skills, and student achievement of reasoned personal goals.

A RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

Ultimately, urban community colleges must develop applied, operational research methodologies that will allow them to analyze and report significant measures of progress and success which relate directly to their unique missions and substantiate empirically that they are indeed translating theoretical mission statements into effective actions.

Unfortunately, little attention has been given to developing and defining the characteristics that make up the urban community college. Furthermore, no attention has been given to expanding such an operational definition into a more complex model, which would subcategorize urban institutions in accordance with the differing characteristics of the environments in which they operate. In an extensive analysis of the impact of the urban community college on its environment and various constituencies, and perhaps more importantly, in an analysis of the impact of the environment and various constituencies on the urban community college, such a model would prove both beneficial and practical.

Another area of important but neglected research concerns the relationships among urban community colleges and other public educational institutions, including secondary "feeder institutions," other community colleges, and baccalaureate-degree-granting colleges and universities. Even in areas of great concern, such as articulation and transfer between urban community colleges and universities, research has produced little substantive data in the context of a value-added concept of excellence that, in the case of urban community colleges, emphasizes the development of diverse potentialities, the enhancement of individual talents, and measurable progress in learning determined by comparing entry-level skills and capabilities with the competencies possessed by students upon exiting from such institutions. More research into fundamental questions dealing with the number of students who transfer and their relative degree of success must be undertaken.

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While some research has been done concerning the relationship between urban community colleges and state government, these studies have tended to focus on the relationship between a particular urban institution and its state. There is a lack of generic research concerning the relationship between state government and urban community colleges, and a dearth of research concerning the nature of the relationship between the urban community college and its local government. Both are necessary for increased understanding of the urban community college and would facilitate understanding of its operational problems and opportunities.

Additionally, there is a need for extensive research on the nature and ramifications of the relationship between urban community colleges and private business and industrial concerns, particularly in the area dealing with the implications of the numerous, sophisticated training requests now being placed upon urban community colleges by business and industrial concerns.

DEVELOPING OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF EXCELLENCE AND ACCESS

There is no more fundamental challenge facing today's urban community colleges than the need to develop and analyze data in order to substantiate that they can be both accessible and excellent. This issue becomes especially critical in light of significant questions by researchers such as Brenteman and Nelson, Knoell, Astin, and Richardson regarding the appropriateness of community colleges' continued commitment to a policy of opportunity with *excellence*" (author emphasis), particularly the commitment to community-based programs and services. Some of these researchers have gone so far as to suggest the need for rethinking, reprioritizing, and perhaps even reshaping major components of community college policy and practice. In light of such questions, especially concerns dealing with the efficacy of community college transfer and articulation functions, urban community colleges must articulate their own criteria of excellence and a rationale for offering the spectrum of programs and services they do—to both the public and the rest of the higher education community.

Urban community colleges have frequently been labeled as "unsuccessful" and compared unfavorably to other institutions of higher education by such researchers when narrowly objective standards such as number of completed degrees are utilized as primary criteria for determining success. Indeed, in their role as advocates for access *and* excellence community college practitioners such as Eaton have asserted that if urban community colleges allow themselves to be confined to narrow determinants of success such as acquisition of certificate/degrees or the measuring of transfer rates, they are certain to be found lacking. If urban community college leaders do not wish to be arbitrarily confined to such limited determinants of success as degree acquisition and

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transfer rates, and if they desire to focus on broader, value-added definitions of success that emphasize varied components such as the measurement of individual learning and growth and institutional responsiveness in the context of individual and community needs and goals, three critical issues must be further researched and discussed: the contextual measurement of student outcomes; entering and exit profiles of urban community college students; and the impact of urban community college instructional and student development models on students themselves.

Urban community colleges must conduct internal research that will provide information for analysis of such basic concerns as, What are the benchmarks of program quality? What is the relative quality (status) of urban community college programs? At what level are our program completers achieving course competencies? How many of our students transfer and how successful are these students in terms of achievement and program of study? How well do our vocational programs prepare students for acquiring positions and performing successfully at entry levels? What is the relationship between hours completed at the community college and senior college success, between associate degree completion and senior college success? What happens to our developmental (remedial) students? How many of our students achieve their self-expressed goal or intent before leaving our institutions? What happens to our students when they leave our colleges on both short- and long-term bases?

In essence, community colleges must develop criteria, define value-added standards, and substantiate information that will allow them to document what they accomplish. Only by attaining such data and studying the implications of the results in the context of students' entry-level skills and goals will urban community colleges be able to determine whether they are effectively translating statements of mission that emphasize access and excellence into action in an efficient manner. Based upon such substantiated analyses, urban community colleges can present their success to their various constituencies in a graphic and forceful manner.

Ultimately, informed decisions concerning excellence are intertwined with basic operational questions regarding the characteristics of urban community college entry-level students. Community

colleges routinely collect and analyze fundamental demographic data (i.e., age, race, economic status, family educational history, employment status/history). Many urban community colleges have also dealt successfully with some of the major implications of such demographics. However, most community colleges have not collected extensive data or conducted focused research that deals with the entry-level skills, academic achievements, motivations, value orientations, expectations, and goals of students, nor have community colleges researched and defined the relationships between these factors and their implications for educational process.

In an environment where excellence is increasingly being linked to entry-level standards, community colleges must develop and implement broader, more comprehensive and reliable student assessment procedures to determine the entry-level characteristics of their students and to structure baselines relating to both academic skills and value/goal orientations of students.

Gathering data, analyzing emergent profiles, and dealing with the implication of the composite entry-level skills, motivations, value orientations, expectations, and goals of students are an imperative first step if community colleges are to assure that the value-added approach of measuring excellence in terms of progress made by the student while attending college or student achievement of personally determined goals is utilized in determining community college excellence.

Additional data must also be generated through exploring what happens to students as they move through instructional and student services systems. Urban community colleges must research the effectiveness of their assessment/placement models by producing definitive answers to such representative operational questions as, Are our current entry-level assessment procedures adequate? What types of assessment instruments should be used, at entry, at our colleges? What instruments are currently being used for program admission and course placement? What is the predictive validity of those instruments?

Another important area of research concerns the synchronization of course/program goals, content, and delivery methods with students' motivations, values, and expectations. For example, urban community colleges need to explore fundamental questions relating to retention and successful completion of courses. There

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is, currently, limited research data to provide answers to such fundamental questions as, Why do students drop out of courses/programs? What are the current retention and completion rates for all our courses and programs? Do students have the prerequisite skills to succeed in the programs and courses in which they are placed? What strategies can be used to improve course/program retention? What is the correlation between program placement criteria and program success? What is the relative contribution of student support services to course and program success?

Finally, urban community colleges must research the particular impact of both their instructional and student support models on minority students and, based upon an analysis of the results, endeavor to develop more effective systems to support and enhance the progress of minorities toward academic and personal goals while enrolled in urban community colleges.

At the same time as urban community colleges systematically analyze the implications of their commitment to open admissions and meaningful access, they must continue to emphasize the determination of excellence by value-added, democratic means rather than elitist measures.

Urban community colleges must research, analyze, and define the extent to which individuals realize personal goals, the degree to which institutions provide supportive and instructional systems to meet student needs, and the ways in which urban community colleges meet the unique educational needs of the various constituencies and environments that make up their service areas.

This requires clearly defining the educational and societal objectives of courses, programs, and services, and then undertaking the research and evaluation necessary to demonstrate how successfully those objectives are being accomplished. It requires the urban community college's research program to include testing, assessment, and placement of entering students; longitudinal studies to track students' educational growth; economic impact studies; and community and business surveys and followup studies on the job placement, transfer rate, and performance of graduates as well as developing similar data on the performance and experience of the many students who do not complete a certificate or degree program.

The quality of an urban community college must be shown to lie in the knowledge and skills its students have gained by the time they *complete* a course or program, not by the knowledge and skills they have when they enter. It must be shown to lie in how well teachers teach and students learn; in how well the courses, programs, and services the college offers respond to the needs of its community; and in how well students achieve the goals for which they came to the college in the first place.

At the very least, assessing the quality of an urban community college must come to require a perspective that emphasizes outcomes rather than input measures such as the standardized test scores of entering students or selectivity or admission. The recent report *Involvement in Learning* (1984) calls for this value-added perspective as the basis for evaluating the quality of *any* institution of higher education, but it is especially critical to evaluating the urban community college.

“Excellence in higher education has traditionally been judged in terms of institutional resources,” *Involvement in Learning* observes, “using measures such as endowments and expenditures, the breadth and depth of curricular offerings, the intellectual attainments of faculty, the test scores of entering students, and selectivity in admissions. Both educators and the public at large have valued these institutional characteristics because they appear to facilitate educational growth . . .”

Involvement in Learning notes that there are two significant problems with these measures: they are all proxies for educational growth, and they are all inputs. None of them tells us what students actually learn and how much they grow as a result of higher education. None of them tells us about educational outcomes.

Measuring the quality of a course, program, or service must mean measuring its educational or societal outcomes. To assess the quality and impact of its programs and services, and to shatter the myth that access and excellence are mutually exclusive, urban community colleges must marshal the force of facts. Urban community colleges must research, analyze, and restructure, as necessary, their current posture towards open access in the light of current trends that allow for open admissions but which tie access to particular certificate and degree programs to predetermined criteria. From such research and analysis, new models may

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emerge that will allow urban community colleges to maintain and substantiate their roles as socially and educationally responsible institutions.

ARTICULATION AND PROGRAM LINKAGES

A pervasive issue for community colleges has always been the extent to which their courses are accepted by baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions. In the context of today's discussions relating to core curricula and general education, an equally critical issue is the relationship between community colleges and the primary and secondary feeder school systems from which they draw a significant component of their student body. The need for articulation at many levels and among many agencies has been heightened by the changing demographics of urban communities, producing an ever more disparate student body and an ever-growing influx of underprepared students.

Urban community colleges have already begun to develop responses that deal in a partial manner with some of the dilemmas that arise in part because of these circumstances and in part because of less than adequate coordination among the various components within the urban educational environment. These responses include better assessment systems; tracking; more comprehensive and cohesive articulation efforts with baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions; and increased communication and cooperation between community college administrators and their counterparts in urban inner-city school systems. Such efforts must be expanded and refined.

In one thrust, urban community colleges must take a leadership role in designing and implementing comprehensive models for articulation and uninterrupted program flow that accentuate access, articulation, and program linkage among the numerous agencies including secondary schools, sister community colleges, baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions, business and industrial corporations, and local, state, and federal government agencies.

And, in yet another more focused effort, community colleges must promote a program of research and analysis to answer the many critical questions relating specifically to the transfer function, including such fundamental questions as, Where do our stu-

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dents go? How well do they do in what they attempt? If students go into university-parallel programs, in what do they major? Is there a significant difference between community college graduates who obtain the baccalaureate degree and four-year, "native" university students who attain the degree?

THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE: TOUCHSTONE OF EXCELLENCE

The associate degree has long been a familiar component in the community college's mission statement. The associate degree is frequently viewed as a mirror of an institution's intellectual goals for its students. It serves as one vehicle through which an institution can guide students through a coherent series of educational experiences, develop and maintain program integrity, and bring about intellectual integration and congruence to the institution. The associate degree may also provide students with an initial vision of what it means to be an educated person and gives them the necessary academic currency to move toward a baccalaureate degree or the vocational competencies to obtain a job.

As community colleges emphasize quality, competence, and excellence, both as basic components of their educational processes and as characteristics possessed by their graduates, associate degree graduates will become the touchstones against which the accomplishment of these goals will be measured. The associate degree will play a pivotal role in validating the urban community college's emphasis on excellence.

In light of the associate degree's relative importance in symbolizing excellence and in the community colleges' renewed emphasis on high levels of educational competence, urban community colleges must explore and present answers to several critical questions to assure that they offer and achieve a meaningful and highly valued degree that meets the needs of urban society, students, employers, and baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions.

Among the unresolved issues surrounding the associate degree are those dealing with a common definition about what the degree represents to various constituencies; the absence of agreement about the general education components and competencies that should form the core of the degree; the degree's apparent invisibility to many potential and current community college students; and the varying levels of acceptability that the degree receives from

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both educational institutions and employers across the nation.

Detailed, applied research and more extensive discussions are needed to explore the answers to such vital questions as, How is the associate degree viewed and received by such disparate groups as potential students, currently enrolled full-time students, currently enrolled part-time students, community college graduates, community college and university faculty members, major employers desirous of filling mid-level technical and support positions, and baccalaureate-degree-granting institutions? How great are the areas of commonality and disparity in associate degrees nationwide and what steps can be taken to introduce greater similarities in requirements and foundational competencies? and What components appear central to the acceptance of associate degrees by baccalaureate-degree-granting educational institutions and major employers?

Answers to these questions, combined with the urban community colleges' awareness of and commitment to an associate degree that emphasizes accountability and excellence in the context of urban pluralism, will allow these institutions to produce a degree that effectively meets the needs of their diverse constituencies and serves as an operational statement of the colleges' urban vision.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION AND FINANCE

The issues of mission, access, opportunity, and excellence, the definition of the associate degree, and indeed the very definition of the urban community college are inextricably intertwined with concerns relating to funding. In a period of extreme financial exigency for most community colleges, urban community college educational leaders have continued to underline the basic fact that levels of financial support are generally unrelated to the stated missions of their colleges and to the complex environments in which they function. They have further emphasized that the usual methods of funding community colleges, utilizing such measures as average daily attendance and forty-fifth-day, full-time equated attendance, are inadequate to structure educational and support systems that fully meet student needs. The disparity between mission and funding is accentuated in urban districts where the high incidence of students from disadvantaged and low socioeconomic backgrounds makes the need for unique and innovative supportive and educational services particularly acute.

The present focus of fiscal research continues in such areas as support sources, cost analysis, and fund distributions even in the face of a relative dearth of research related to macroeconomic policies and their impact. In light of this fact, urban community colleges themselves must consider and analyze the critical questions relating to adequate funding and establish the relationship between their complex missions, urban economic conditions, and the financial support of urban institutions. Based upon their findings, they must structure a new paradigm that encompasses the complex and changing relationship between the New Federalism, state funding, tuition, and the availability/distribution of varying types of financial assistance. Ultimately, urban community colleges must participate fully in the development of policies to facilitate the implementation of such a paradigm.

ECONOMIC AND HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The role of community colleges as shapers and developers of human resources for the nation's workplace has long been recognized. Today, community colleges are also increasingly being recognized as a source of assistance to businesses and industries striving to improve their competitive, economic position in both national and international arenas, to increase their levels of productivity, and to enhance the quality of their products.

Urban community college vocational leaders have further realized that human resource development and economic resource development are indeed interdependent and that it is impossible to maintain healthy national and international economics without developing to the fullest extent all our human resources.

The quickening pace of global economic competition and the heightened demands for increased quality and higher levels of productivity point to newly developing and increasingly expanded roles in commerce, manufacturing, and trade for many of our cities. There is a parallel need for urban community colleges to assist actively in defining and developing better orchestrated public policies on human resource development and to assert concerted leadership in sharpening today's fragmented governmental investments in vocational education and training. Urban community colleges should be major partners in the endeavor to shape state-level strategies that respond to job training partnerships, small business revitalization, and grassroots neighborhood solutions to urban economic problems.

Urban community colleges must also assure that they play an activist role in developing new strategies for the implementation of federal policies and programs in industrial, economic, and human resources development. Indeed, urban community colleges should position themselves so as to become a part of the portfolio of change for 1988 election strategies. They must become integrally involved in the policy-shaping groups whose members will write the new industrial policy platforms for the 1988 presidential election. Such a role may best be achieved by continuing to forge new linkages and coalitions among urban community col-

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leges and such organizations as the League for Cities, the National Mayors' Council, the National Governors' Association, and the Northeast-Midwest Congressional Coalition.

Such urban community college involvement will assure that the future economic and industrial policy of the United States in such areas as plant modernization, capital formation for industrial development, and the refitting of older mainframe industries will be tied to new urban initiatives impacting both urban community colleges and their constituencies. Such programs will both preserve public resources and expand human resource development and job opportunities.

PERSONNEL IN THE URBAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Urban community colleges are labor intensive. Therefore, the current state of urban community college faculty, supportive staff, and administrators, along with the implications that such status has for these institutions, is yet another issue that must be addressed.

Faculty members play vital and visible roles in the operation of their institutions. It is a widely recognized fact that there have been significant changes in the lives of faculty members over the last decade. However, there is only modest research dealing with the demographics, assumptions, values, and expectations of urban community college faculty members. There has been virtually no exploration of the vital interrelationships between individual expectations; institutional reward systems; and the allocation of time between teaching, providing supportive academic services, and being involved in public-service endeavors.

It is generally acknowledged that the graduate school preparation and the scholarly environment of the sixties and seventies from which many current instructors first came to urban community colleges, with its emphasis on classical education and on publishable and independent research, produced expectations and some values fundamentally at odds with an environment that emphasizes classroom teaching, frequently linked with extensive academic support systems such as tutoring and academic advisement; public service and applied research projects in contrast to theoretical research for the advancement of knowledge; and technical and preprofessional programs as compared to the arts and sciences. However, there has been little research into the ramifications of this polarity in expectation and reality through examining such applied educational issues as how faculty members approach and attempt to resolve such matters for themselves (i.e., how do faculty members visualize the service area and its residents and then conceptualize their relationship and responsibility to it), how do faculty members categorize their students, and how do they then choose to modify or retain traditional approaches to the educational process.

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In addition to the potential frustrations produced by the dichotomy between perceived expectations and the social and educational realities of urban community colleges, there have been other significant changes in the lives of faculty members, frequently brought about by changes in the external environment over which they exercise little or no control. Such changes have included but are not limited to such phenomena as shortages in funds that have led to hiring freezes, a shortage of tenured positions, increased teaching and advisory responsibilities, less funds for instructional support, and decreased internal and external academic mobility. Additionally, there has been a perceived shift in both the quality and the attitudinal orientation of many students, away from the traditional liberal arts and sciences and into vocational areas. Finally, during the last decade, many excellent instructors have been lured away from the urban community college into corporate or individual entrepreneurial activities because of educational and economic restraints within the urban community college environment.

Over the past decade nonfaculty professionals have also come to play a more extensive role in urban community colleges. The greater involvement of these nonacademic professionals in basic academic activities, particularly as these activities relate to institutional decision making and its relationship to faculty, is yet another area where little substantive analysis of experience exists and no fundamental exploration of its ultimate ramifications has taken place.

Yet another group whose situation and needs must be explored is made up of the administrative members of the urban community college. As is the case with supportive personnel, one of the most serious issues facing the urban community college is that of attracting and retaining administrators in light of the wide range of problems and ambiguities facing such colleges and the lucrative alternative external opportunities that present themselves. The problem of properly developing and training department chairpersons, along with other middle-management administrators, remains an acute dilemma for urban community college leaders and staff development specialists. Moreover, serious questions still remain about the most effective forms of credentialing and training for urban administrators.

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Indeed, each employee group within the urban community college presents unique challenges that must be explored and resolved if urban community colleges are to remain successful and vibrant institutions. In this context, two concerns that pervade all employee areas must be addressed. The issue of burnout and its impact is particularly acute in the areas of instruction and administration. The impact of aging with its parallel shifts in adult development functions and perceived personal and social roles has been identified as a significant factor in the increase of this phenomenon. Further exploration of the issue with recommendations for urban community colleges in terms of the currency and continuity of their employee groups must be undertaken.

The other area of concern is the issue of unionization. More comprehensive, integrative research must be done concerning the impact of unions, particularly upon staff unionization as contrasted to faculty unionization, new credentialing procedures, and the changing concepts of employment rights and responsibilities that have developed in today's urban community colleges, if urban community colleges are to remain responsive to both their internal and external constituencies.

ORGANIZATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Another area with significant ramifications for urban community colleges where little substantive research has been conducted is the area of organizational management and development. The fundamental question facing urban community college administrators and leaders is, How does one successfully manage very large, complex institutions?

There are numerous questions relating to this fundamental issue. Such topics as finding an intelligent "point of coordination" for multiple, simultaneous activities; managing motivation and incentives for numerous, disparate groups; determining the relationship and balance between centralization and decentralization and between college-based and district-based activities; structuring organizational arrangements and strategies to relate effectively to diverse constituencies; and organizing to accommodate institutional needs in such differing areas as instruction, supportive student services, working with state legislatures, and conducting an ongoing program to solicit community support are among many issues that have not been thoroughly explored.

Additional research is also needed in the area of "intervention strategies." There is a dearth of research exploring the nature and characteristics of successful and proven intervention strategies for urban organizations including community colleges. The nature and use of intervention strategies involving finance, staff support, and interpersonal communications must be more strategically explored.

Finally, there is a need for research regarding optimal organizational arrangements in the context of the urban environment. Given the rapid changes in the demographics and economic bases of our cities, urban community colleges must research and analyze alternatives to altering historical and obsolescent organizational arrangements to better meet the needs of their constituencies.

CURRENCY AND CONTINUITY

In the past decade, community colleges have emphasized currency, particularly in the context of curriculum and lifelong learning, as an imperative for participating fully and productively in national life. Urban community colleges have come to realize that the forces of accelerated change which are so significant to the quality of individual existence (i.e., the transformation to an age of information, the shift to lateral as contrasted to vertical transfer of knowledge, and enhanced information processing and telecommunications capacities) also have significant ramifications for institutional life. New systems of telecommunications and an increasing diversity of equipment lend impetus to the development of new communications models, which increase the effectiveness and efficiency of operational systems for effective discourse with numerous, diverse constituencies. In particular, urban community colleges must consider the ramifications of part-time, commuting students and intellectually disparate and physically dispersed faculty as they implement such models.

Urban community colleges must continue to address curricular development and develop methods for retraining workers for business and industry, while initiating new programs in leadership training and professional development for the academic, governmental, and corporate environments in order to assure that they can provide skilled and talented individuals to meet the numerous, simultaneous, and interacting changes and shifting trends that make up today's urban environment.

Finally, given the age and extensive utilization of many urban community college facilities, it is also imperative that community colleges work to develop strategies for renewal of facilities within a context that emphasizes not only educational needs but the urban/service area infrastructure. Urban community colleges face peculiar conditions regarding physical plants. Old buildings, frequently located in neighborhoods of comparable age, have been laid out giving us much attention to concerns such as parking, access to public transportation, land costs, and security as to maximum educational utilization. Many are not suited or equipped to facilitate instruction in new and developing technological pro-

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grams; also, in a time of fiscal constraint, deferred maintenance has taken a heavy toll on many older facilities. These may need to be replaced with new construction as part of an overall effort toward enhancing urban environments. Urban community colleges must refine available data to define the status of their current facilities, determine needs for remodeling and new construction, and develop new models for facilities renovation in the context of the New Federalism and the unique conditions characterizing local environments.

Only in the context of a constantly revitalized curriculum delivered through state-of-the-art communication systems in modern, accessible, educationally efficient structures can our urban community colleges achieve their mission--to function in a continuous manner as a community resource and facilitator, and as a substantive educational institution serving the urban community.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Each of the issues discussed within this report has important ramifications for urban community colleges and, indeed, for the community college movement. Most require further research and elucidation in order to allow urban community colleges and their leaders to make meaningful decisions that will position these institutions for vital leadership roles within the urban community over the next decade. Therefore, the Urban Community Colleges Commission recommends:

1. The formation of a subcommittee composed of members of the urban community college commission to work with members of the AACJC executive staff to develop alternative models for funding, staffing, and implementing an urban community college research consortium whose major purpose would be to formulate and research issues of importance to the community college movement, particularly to urban community colleges.
2. The development of a national research agenda based upon issues identified as having significant ramifications for urban community colleges and complementing the goals of the AACJC.
3. The development of a national system for the centralized collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of research data and reports dealing with urban community colleges.
4. The active participation of each urban community college in defining, developing, and coordinating orchestrated policies and implementation strategies for the more effective use of urban industrial, economic, and human resources.
5. The development of a national inventory of urban institutions and organizations that share common interests and objectives with urban community colleges.
6. The initiation of new networks among kindred urban organizations for the purpose of shaping positive change within the urban environment.
7. The increased pursuit of articulation efforts with other urban educational institutions, particularly community schools.
8. The continued development, implementation, and evaluation

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tion of a systematic program of leadership and staff development for urban community college personnel designed to increase awareness of and sensitivity to the complexities found within the urban environment and to enable community college personnel to function with maximum effectiveness in the urban landscape.

Accomplishment of these recommendations or significant progress toward their achievement will assure that urban community colleges continue at the forefront as catalysts for positive individual change and the progressive enhancement of the urban community in the decades to come.

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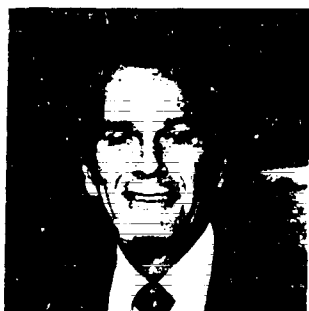


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