

# The Baccalaureate in the California Community College: *Current Challenges & Future Prospects*



**Patricia Gándara, UCLA and Marcela Cuellar, UC Davis**  
**July 2016**

**This research was made possible with support from The Ford Foundation.**



**The Civil Rights Project is grateful to The Ford Foundation for supporting this research.**

# **The Baccalaureate in the California Community College: Current Challenges & Future Prospects**

## **Executive Summary**

Concerns over the United States' global standing have spurred a national focus on improving postsecondary attainment. At the same time, many sectors of the economy find they have difficulty recruiting highly trained individuals to fill the good jobs that exist; jobs like nursing, respiratory care, dental hygiene, and various mid-level management positions. One response to these workforce needs has been to establish specific baccalaureate degree programs in community colleges across the nation. California has recently become the 22<sup>nd</sup> state to inaugurate the community college baccalaureate. It is currently preparing to launch the initiative in 15 colleges across the state by the 2017-18 academic year.

Gaining the political support to establish these programs in community colleges is typically a difficult juggling act, respecting the territory of four-year colleges and universities and offering programs only in disciplines and in geographical areas that do not compete with senior institutions. Not surprisingly, the political discourse has been around "meeting workforce needs," to stimulate economic activity, and create more jobs. A win-win for all involved, except that this framing risks missing a critical opportunity to increase equity in access to the baccalaureate degree.

In California, as across the nation, African Americans, Native Americans and Latinos are much less likely to complete a BA degree than either white or Asian students. In 2015, more than 58% of Asians and almost 45% of non-Hispanic whites in California had at least a Bachelor's Degree. For Latinos, this percentage was barely 13% and for African Americans, 27% (U.S. Census, 2015). Clearly, this creates an untenable situation for the economy of a state in which the majority of its high school graduates are African American and Latino. One prominent reason for this disparity is that California channels most of its postsecondary students of color, and low-income students, into two-year colleges where heretofore they are less likely to acquire a four-year degree. Given this fact, if the state had a goal of increasing the baccalaureate degree production among these groups of students it might make sense to target programs in places that these students have access to and in fields that are likely to attract them, and to consider recruitment procedures that would outreach to these groups. But that is not what California is doing, nor is it what other states we have examined are doing. This appears to be a great missed opportunity to make a dent in the inequitable rates of degree attainment among underrepresented students, and to spur the economy.

This report compares the California experience to date with that of other states that are demographically similar to California. It offers a set of recommendations that could help the state achieve both workforce readiness and greater equity of opportunity to complete a baccalaureate degree for underrepresented students.

# **The Baccalaureate in the California Community College: Current Challenges & Future Prospects**

Patricia Gándara, UCLA and Marcela Cuellar, UC Davis

Concerns over the United States' global standing have spurred a national focus on improving postsecondary attainment. In 2009, President Barack Obama promoted an ambitious goal of increasing the proportion of college graduates in an effort to regain the nation's position as the world leader in degree production (Mullin, 2010). The President also highlighted the instrumental role of community colleges in meeting this national objective. An increasingly popular strategy championed by the Obama administration is to make community colleges cost free to encourage individuals to seek a community college education. However, this strategy runs certain risks. If it diverts some people, especially under-represented minorities (URM)<sup>1</sup>, away from four-year colleges, where they have a much better chance of actually completing a bachelor's degree (Gándara et al., 2012), it could be a counterproductive strategy. Community colleges have, however, developed success initiatives that aim to increase completion of courses, certificates, and degrees in an effort to support the American completion agenda. The community college baccalaureate is one such initiative, as it provides the opportunity to complete the four-year degree in a seamless fashion without the necessity of transferring to another campus.

The steady expansion of community college baccalaureates in the United States complements the national agenda to increase college degree production. The growth of these degrees stems from an increased demand for education in certain geographic areas, such as rural communities, in high demand occupational arenas, such as education, business, nursing and technical disciplines (Floyd & Walker, 2008; Russell, 2010), as well as a desire to increase access to higher education for groups seriously underrepresented in degree completion.

Currently, 22 states allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees in select programs, which generally require legislative approval or permission from a system-wide governing body (Russell, 2013). The conferral of these degrees is expected to grow as more states seek the necessary approval to grant these degrees. In 2014, California became the most recent state to approve a pilot community college baccalaureate program. The community college baccalaureate may provide many prospects for the state, given California's changing demographics and current educational and economic challenges.

---

<sup>1</sup> Although Native Americans are also URMs, their representation in community college baccalaureate programs was low overall, which made it difficult to compare these figures across colleges and states. Thus, we only include African-Americans and Latina/os in this report.

## California's Higher Education Context

California established the Master Plan for Higher Education in 1960 to organize the state's postsecondary education system and to provide broad access to a college education for the state's students. Although applauded at the time as a forward thinking plan that would make a quality college education available to all, it has actually resulted in a system that is arguably the most inequitable in the nation. Under the Master Plan, the University of California (UC), with its 10 campuses, is to receive the top 12.5% of the state's high school graduates (based on several measures of achievement); the California State University system (CSU), with its 23 campuses, is charged with admitting the top third of the state's graduates; and the Community College (CC) system, with 113 campuses, is slated to accept all the rest. As in most states, the community college in California is an open access institution. This system presently serves more than 2 million students, who are disproportionately lower income and students of color when compared with the more selective public institutions.

Each segment of the higher education system is also supposed to be dedicated to a core activity that differentiates it from the rest. The UC system is the research arm of the system; the CSU is charged with preparing a college-educated workforce in areas such as teaching, nursing, and engineering. The community colleges are supposed to provide broad access to higher degrees through its transfer function as well as prepare students for occupations that require some form of vocational certification. Most CCs also provide citizenship, language classes and lifelong learning programs. Thus, their mission is broad and complex. It is also worthy of note that they are funded at a level considerably lower than what the state's high schools receive to educate each of the students that it takes in. In 2014, the average per student cost of educating a high school student in California was approximately \$9500 compared to the approximate \$5,000 per full time community college student (California Community Colleges [CCC], 2015; California Department of Education [CDE], 2015). The cost to a student is \$46 per unit, resulting in an annual tuition or fee of under \$1400, which is the lowest in the nation (College Board, 2016).

More than any other state in the nation, California sends a substantial proportion of its high school graduates to two-year colleges, where impediments to earning a bachelor's degree are great (Geiser & Atkinson, 2013). This is especially true for Latino students. More than two-thirds enroll in community colleges rather than four-year universities, even when they are fully qualified to attend baccalaureate-granting institutions (Campaign for College Opportunity, 2015). The impediments to transfer at the community college level have been widely reported (Gándara et al., 2012; Moore & Shulock, 2010). The great majority of CC students must take remedial courses before they can even begin to earn college credits, most work full or part-time, and many have significant home and child care responsibilities. These conditions present barriers for individual students successfully transferring, and they also contribute to a climate in which many students are likely to not even know anyone else who is truly on a path to transfer. Thus, in spite of its dynamic economy and status as the most populous state in the nation, California ranks in the bottom 10 states with respect to BA production per 1000 students (Geiser & Atkinson, 2013), as well as production of BA degrees for underrepresented minorities (URM).

Shifting demographics in the state have complicated the picture. Today, more than half of all students in the K-12 education system in California are Latino and are the least likely to actually achieve a college degree of any racial/ethnic subgroup in the state (Campaign for College Opportunity, 2015; Gándara & Contreras, 2009). This change in the composition of the emerging workforce is threatening a decline in the average education level in the state, just as more jobs are requiring increased educational preparation (Johnson & Sengupta, 2009). Additional challenges brought about by policy initiatives in the state have exacerbated the problem. In 1996, Californians voted to ban affirmative action in college admissions. In spite of millions of dollars invested in special college preparatory programs to increase the numbers of successful URM applicants to the university, the University of California has never recovered pre-1996 admission levels for those affected groups (Kidder & Gándara, 2015). Rising costs of higher education have also taken a particular toll on the ability of Latino and African American students to afford a college education. Finally, until very recently, undocumented students, of which California has more than any other state, have not qualified for most forms of financial aid, putting higher education costs out of their reach.

In 2015, more than 58% of Asians<sup>2</sup> and almost 45% of non-Hispanic Whites in California had at least a Bachelor's Degree. For Latinos, this percentage was barely 13% and for African Americans, 27% (U.S. Census, 2015). Clearly, this creates an untenable situation for the economy of the state. In 2005, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education projected that, "if California's current educational gaps among racial/ethnic groups remain, then . . . California's personal income per capita is projected to drop in 2020 . . . [by] a decline of 11%" (p. 2). More recently, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) sounded a similar alarm. PPIC projected that by 2025 California would be one million college degrees short of its labor force needs unless the state made immediate and dramatic gains in its degree production (Johnson & Sengupta, 2009). This same report, however, was silent on the issue of racial/ethnic disparities, which for many is the "elephant in the room." It is, in fact, racial and ethnic minority youth who are failing to gain sufficient numbers of degrees in the state, and it would appear that it is here that the most targeted efforts need to be applied.

The capacity limits embedded within the state's system of higher education are a major contributor to the baccalaureate completion problem (Geiser & Atkinson, 2013). It has been argued that restructuring California's system of higher education is thus the only way to solve this problem, and permitting California's community colleges to offer baccalaureates is one possible solution.

---

<sup>2</sup> We acknowledge that the Asian population in California is diverse and that there are subpopulations in parts of the state that are identified as "Asian" but struggle in school due to disadvantages similar to those of other URMs. However, separate data are not routinely collected for those groups, and when all subgroups of Asians are combined, the percent receiving college degrees is nonetheless high. Equity policies need to consider struggling Asian groups within the category of URM.

## **Legislative Efforts**

There have been several reviews of the Master Plan by committees of the legislature over the years stimulated by concerns about whether the Plan still meets the state's present needs after so many years and so much change, especially with respect to its demographics. The last such review in 2002 culminated in a series of recommendations that focused largely on the need to better connect the various segments of K-12 and higher education in California to promote a more seamless pathway to postsecondary education (Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education, 2002). However, none of the reviews seriously challenged the notion of the separation of functions or the sacrosanct territory held by the four-year institutions. Over time, the UC and CSU have lobbied strenuously to maintain their exclusive hold on bachelors and graduate degrees. Since 2004, however, there have been various attempts to introduce the community college baccalaureate to California without attempting to invoke changes in the Master Plan (see Appendix A for an historical overview). One legislator, who in a previous career was a state college professor and administrator, and a community college trustee in San Diego, crafted legislation to introduce the BA at the community colleges several times, noting that California needed to make better use of its community colleges to spur baccalaureate production. Each time it was unsuccessful, until in September of 2014 the legislation was passed and signed by Governor Jerry Brown. Senator Marty Block was the primary author of Senate Bill 850 (see Appendix B for the Authorizing Legislation), which instituted a pilot program, allowing up to 15 community colleges to offer one applied BA program by 2017-18. One critical stipulation was that they could not offer a degree in any area in which either the CSU or UC offered that degree. Selection of the 15 campuses was to begin in 2015.

## **Background to this Study**

This study began early in 2014 as an effort to investigate the pros and cons of inaugurating a bachelor's degree in the community colleges of California. The Principal Investigator for the study had long studied the increasing Latino population and the failure of the state to make significant progress in increasing the rate at which this population, in particular, was achieving college degrees. In 2009, Gándara and Contreras published a book showing that, in fact, there had been almost no overall progress in degree completion for Latinos between 1975 and 2000 nationally, and only slow and incremental increase thereafter, certainly not sufficient to catch up with the rest of the population. It appeared that the community college baccalaureate might hold the possibility of providing a new avenue to degree completion, especially for underserved populations. (The Principal Investigator talked with both Senator Block and his staff about her interest in examining that possibility. Both were very supportive.)

However, shortly after the study was approved, SB 850 was passed and signed into law. Now it was not a question of studying whether it made sense to engage in such an endeavor, rather the greater value would be studying how other states, confronting similar demographic challenges, implemented the community college baccalaureate and to what degree they had attended to the elephant in the room--that is, the enormous gaps in degree completion between White/Asian and Latino/Black students. Was this a named problem?

Was it a serious concern? Were there any policies or procedures put into place to ensure that these underrepresented populations would be able to successfully take advantage of this new avenue to a college degree?

SB 850 was framed as a pilot project to test its ability to meet workforce needs. The language of the law reads that it “will meet a growing demand for a skilled workforce.” That is, it gained support by demonstrating that there were workforce needs that were not being met by the existing higher education institutions, and that these needs could be addressed by certain community colleges without stepping on the territory of the four-year institutions. The community colleges could provide training and education in areas that were not being offered by the CSU or the UC, and often in areas where these baccalaureate-granting institutions were inaccessible to working or low-income students. From a political standpoint this is perfectly understandable. The effort to introduce a community college bachelor’s degree had been stymied again and again by the UC’s and CSU’s insistence on adherence to the Master Plan (although the CSU had already waded into the area of granting some doctoral degrees in select areas many years earlier), and the supporters’ greatest concern was demonstrating that there was a great unmet--and unmeetable--need for these degrees. Moreover, there was political pressure against the legislation from within the community college system. Strong supporters of the notion that the community colleges were already being asked to do too much felt that SB 850 would only add to an unwieldy agenda and potentially undermine their effectiveness in their core missions. Hence, a focus was on providing programs only in places that were already highly motivated to take on the challenge and that had the infrastructure in place to do this at minimal additional cost. There may have also been pressure to tread lightly in adding additional requirements that could be perceived as making it more difficult for campuses to implement the degree programs.

The law did not mention the gaps in degree attainment, nor did it overtly privilege colleges that were focused on these gaps. Although an interim evaluation will be conducted by the Legislative Analyst’s Office (LAO) and submitted by July of 2018, and a final evaluation will be due in 2022--both mandated by the law--there was no mention of needing to track the extent to which colleges focused on issues of equity in access and completion within the BA programs, or whether URM students were incorporated, supported in, or were able to complete these BA degrees. Nor was there any requirement that the colleges propose bachelor level programs that might be more likely to attract URM students. In fairness, there is language in the bill that requires the Legislative Analyst to provide “information on the impact of the baccalaureate degree program on underserved and underprepared students,” but impact is not defined, “underserved” is not defined, and monitoring is not mentioned. In short, *while the state’s biggest challenge lay in increasing degree completion among URM students, there was no mention of this issue as a goal of the bachelor degree programs.*

We brought this issue to the attention of the legislative staff that had shepherded the bill through the legislature. Their first response appeared to be surprise that this issue was not named in the legislation, followed by an immediate reply that they might consider running new legislation if it appeared that this problem would not be addressed. We also brought this to the attention of the Legislative Analyst that would be undertaking the study



of the pilot project. The analyst also agreed that this was an important issue and expressed her interest in receiving a report from us on this topic. Finally, we brought this issue before the panel of administrators at the Chancellor's Office of the Community College that was charged with overseeing the implementation of the pilot, and in selecting the colleges that would participate. Again, we were met with some surprise, but also a deep concern that this not be overlooked. In sum, it was clear that although all persons involved were committed to equity and understood that there were potentially important equity issues that needed to be addressed, somehow the issue had not made it onto the radar screen.

It should be noted that the bill was signed September 21, 2014, and the Chancellor's office had made the tentative selections of proposals by January 20, 2015—a short amount of time to mount a proposal process, receive and review applications, and make decisions. Thus we began what would become the new focus of this study after the campuses had been selected.

### **The Pilot Campuses**

Given that underrepresented students are by definition less likely to get a degree at the state's four-year institutions than either White or Asian students, and that the community college disproportionately enrolls URMs, the demographics across the selected colleges is important to note. The colleges and approved BA programs, along with their enrolled student demographic profiles, are listed in the table below. Almost half of the campuses selected to be pilots are disproportionately White and Asian (over 50%) as compared with the population demographics of the state, the community colleges as a whole, and the demographics of California's youth population. Only about 33% of high school graduates in 2014 were White and Asian; almost 60% were Black and Latino (DataQuest, 2015). However, almost one-third of community college students are 30 years old or older and these individuals are less likely to be Latino and Black. Hence across the state, the colleges enroll about 46% Black and Latino students, and less than 1 percent American Indian versus about 45% White and Asian (including Filipino) students (California Community Colleges, 2015). Nonetheless, among the 15 campuses selected to participate in the pilot, seven have relatively low percentages of URM students (less than 50%). Since one major criterion for selection was geographic representation, some of the skew can be explained by the selection of campuses in farther reaches of the state where the population is predominantly White, such as Shasta Community College or Feather River Community College.

A second consideration, though, is the selection of programs. We think it will be important to know if the programs selected tend to attract URM, or if they are the kinds of programs that these students tend to shy away from. In the latter case, is anything done at the campuses to encourage more URM to apply to these programs?

## California Community College Baccalaureate Pilot Programs

College	Program	Campus Demographics*
<b>Antelope Valley</b>	Airframe Manufacturing Technology	Majority URM
<b>Bakersfield</b>	Industrial Automation	Majority URM
<b>Cypress</b>	Mortuary Science	Majority URM
<b>Feather River</b>	Equine and Ranch Management	Majority White/Asian
<b>Foothill</b>	Dental Hygiene	Majority White/Asian
<b>Mira Costa</b>	Biomanufacturing	Majority White/Asian
<b>Modesto</b>	Respiratory Care	Majority URM
<b>Rio Hondo</b>	Automotive Technology	Majority URM
<b>San Diego Mesa</b>	Health Information Management	Majority White/Asian
<b>Santa Ana</b>	Occupational Studies	Majority URM
<b>Santa Monica</b>	Interaction Design	About 50/50
<b>Shasta</b>	Health Information Management	Majority White/Asian
<b>Skyline</b>	Respiratory Therapy	Majority White/Asian
<b>Solano</b>	Biomanufacturing	Majority White/Asian
<b>West Los Angeles</b>	Dental Hygiene	Majority URM

\*2012-14 enrollment profiles (varies by campus)

### Potential Impact for the State

Community college baccalaureate programs in California could enhance the mission of these institutions by expanding access to students who may not otherwise have access to a four-year degree, especially those from the most underserved populations and most underserved areas. Latina/os, for example, are overrepresented in California's community colleges but are seriously underrepresented among baccalaureate degree holders. With the largest Latina/o population in the nation, California must consider ways of expanding degree completion for this group. In 2011, the five institutions with the most Latina/o enrollment in California were all community colleges, which were also the top five producers of associate degrees conferred to Latina/os (*Excelencia* in Education, 2014). The incorporation of baccalaureate degrees in these community colleges could increase four-year degree attainment for many Latina/os and the whole state if they were targeted for these opportunities. In addition, if baccalaureate degrees were implemented in all of the state's community colleges, then 88.8% of Californians would live within 10 miles of a baccalaureate-granting institution (Department of Finance, 2003; Perez, 2010). These programs could thus expand access enormously and present a significant answer to the current shortage of college degrees being produced in the state.

One test of the pilot programs will be their economic viability. SB 850 sets a per unit ceiling charge to students of \$84 for the baccalaureate program, and given that the state did not provide additional funding in the bill, colleges must find ways to support the cost of the program. As the year came to a close in 2015, Senator Block announced that he had secured \$6 million in the budget process to fund the start-up costs of the 15 programs. Thus, each campus was to receive a check for \$350,000, and the Chancellor's office would

receive the balance to cover its administrative costs to get the programs started, but no ongoing funding has been appropriated.

### **Issues and Concerns about Community College Baccalaureates**

To understand the impact of the community college baccalaureates in other states (see Appendix C for examples of states who offer these degrees), we began our exploration with a literature review. The majority of the empirical evidence on these degrees is primarily represented through dissertations, with a small but growing body of literature in journals. In addition, much of the research represents the case of Florida, given the longer existence and extensive representation of these degrees in that state's community colleges.

As more states consider joining the growing list of current ones that confer community college baccalaureates, a lively debate emerges. Proponents of these degrees point to other states as examples in which the community college mission is enhanced, while opponents question how the traditional mission of the community college can remain intact. Several arguments exist on both sides of the issue. We have structured the following section according to the arguments for and against the community college baccalaureate and the evidence presently available that supports or refutes these arguments.

### **Arguments Promoting the Community College Baccalaureate**

Arguments supporting the development of community college baccalaureates center on meeting workforce needs, improving access to the baccalaureate, increasing baccalaureate attainment, and reducing taxpayer and student costs (Russell, 2010). A review of existing programs provides evidence on their effectiveness to meet each of these goals.

#### **Meeting Workforce Needs**

The major argument supporting community college baccalaureates is their ability to meet workforce needs, many of which require the expansion of specialized applied and technical knowledge, especially at the local level. Examining employer perceptions demonstrates that these programs are fulfilling this workforce objective. Employers of community college baccalaureate alumni in Texas and Nevada report improved skills among employees with these degrees, indicating that community college graduates met or exceeded employer expectations (Grothe, 2009). In fact, local employers are often highly involved in the development of baccalaureate programs in the community college, which further reinforces these programs' goals of meeting local workforce demands. For example, in Arkansas, a local industry association worked collaboratively with the community college to develop a manufacturing baccalaureate that would provide the necessary leadership skills for employees and develop the local workforce (McKee, 2001). As such, these programs have been credited with increasing educational levels, keeping people in town, and providing a local talent pool from which employers can hire (Grothe, 2009), thus benefiting the communities in which these programs are located. Employer involvement and community support are thus integral to the development of these

programs and their subsequent success in meeting the needs of the local workforce (McKee, 2001), which further enhance this traditional function of the community college.

High employment rates of community college baccalaureate graduates further suggest high levels of success in meeting local workforce needs. Approximately 90% of Florida's community college baccalaureate graduates are employed full-time the year following graduation (The Florida College System, 2014). Also, these graduates' annual earnings generally increase with every passing year since graduation (The Florida College System, 2014). The benefits of a community college baccalaureate may also exceed those of some traditional four-year institutions. For example, among Miami Dade College's 2010 baccalaureate graduates, 86% found work after graduation compared to 61% from the State University System (Miami Dade College Forum, 2012), confirming similar findings from a study that includes Miami Dade and two other colleges (Hrabak, 2013). Miami Dade College graduates also earned a higher annual salary of \$43,353 vs. \$36,412 for those from the State University System (Miami Dade College Forum, 2012). Overall, employment rates and levels of satisfaction indicate that these programs are very effective in meeting local workforce demands.

### **Increased Baccalaureate Attainment Rates**

Another central argument supporting community college baccalaureate programs is increasing baccalaureate attainment rates. Current programs are shown to be effective in retaining and graduating students. For instance, more than 5,000 community college baccalaureates were granted throughout Florida in 2012-13, which represented a 25% increase from the previous year (The Florida College System, 2014). However, retention rates differ greatly based on enrollment status, which is commonly observed across all community college students. Among full-time community college baccalaureate students, 82% percent were retained in the 2009-10 cohort while only 55% part-time students were retained (The Florida College System, 2014). These trends are also evident in graduation rates. Graduation rates for full-time students were 71% and were much lower at 33% for part-time students (The Florida College System, 2014). Despite the challenges that part-time students face in these programs, Florida's programs collectively yield a high number of graduates in the state.

Empirical studies on the effectiveness of community college baccalaureate policies in degree production are also beginning to emerge. Two studies examining the impact of states' adoption of community college baccalaureate policies on nursing degree production have not been conclusive. In a recent conference paper examining nursing baccalaureate degree production across the United States and within Florida, the implementation of a community college baccalaureate policy shows no effect on producing nursing baccalaureates in a state (Porter, Cominole, & Jaquette, 2014). In contrast, another study also examining nursing degree production and community college baccalaureate policies shows a positive effect on nursing degree production after controlling for population growth (Daun-Barnett, 2011). However, when accounting for the percentage of Latino and African Americans in a state, the positive effect of the policy disappears. Since Latina/os are overrepresented in community colleges and are driving the population growth in most states, particularly in Florida where these programs are most concentrated, any positive

effect of the policy may be masked by these demographic factors or larger systemic capacity issues (Daun-Barnett, 2011). Additional research indicates that the policy in Florida has not produced more baccalaureates specifically in nursing and teacher education (Daun-Barnett & Escalante, 2014). However, the fact that so few baccalaureates are completed in community colleges relative to four-year institutions in a state may impede any discernible impact on degree production across states (Porter et al., 2014). More research is thus necessary to determine the extent to which these degrees increase baccalaureate attainment in a state across different programs, particularly for URMs.

### **Improved Access to the Baccalaureate**

Another leading argument for the expansion of community college baccalaureates relates to improving access to the baccalaureate. Enrollment rates in these community college baccalaureate programs show the expansive educational access they provide to students within a state. Florida boasts the largest enrollments in community college baccalaureate programs. There were more than 30,000 students enrolled in the 170 baccalaureate programs offered at 24 of the 28 Florida community colleges in 2014, which represented a 20% increase from the previous year (The Florida College System, 2014). The sheer growth of these programs within the state of Florida and across the nation shows that these programs are successfully increasing access to the baccalaureate.

In addition, improving access to the baccalaureate at the community college is especially critical for students who may otherwise not have access, especially underrepresented students. The background characteristics of currently enrolled students and alumni indicate that these baccalaureate programs are providing tremendous access to a bachelor's degree to a more diverse student body. In 2012-13 enrollments, for example, the racial composition of Florida's community college baccalaureate programs was approximately: 53% White, 19% Black, 18% Latino, and 3% Other. The percentage of White students has steadily decreased between 2008 and 2012 (The Florida College System, 2014), with concurrent increases in URM students, which may indicate improved access for URMs. It may also at least partially reflect the changing demographics of the state, which have seen a decline in the non-Hispanic White population and an increase in both Latinos and Blacks. Also, there are clear differences in other characteristics, between Florida's teacher education alumni from a community college baccalaureate program, as compared to the teacher education alumni from the nearest four-year institution (Shah, 2010). The community college baccalaureate alumni are generally older and more place-bound than the four-year institution's alumni (Shah, 2010). Similarly, community college baccalaureate programs in Nevada and Texas also provide access for students who cannot relocate, need to maintain full-time employment, and fulfill family commitments while pursuing a bachelor's degree (Grothe, 2009). The majority of these students would not apply to other baccalaureate programs (Shah, 2010), suggesting that these programs are the first and only choice for many. Further, another study found that 20% of students in a teacher education program at a community college in Florida would have either changed their major or not pursued a bachelor's degree if the program did not exist locally (Manias, 2007). Altogether, these findings suggest that these baccalaureate programs may provide much needed access to students from diverse backgrounds, particularly those that are place-bound.

Moreover, expanding access can extend beyond the baccalaureate. Community college baccalaureate alumni can obtain the necessary credentials to pursue a graduate level degree. In one study, half of the alumni in community college baccalaureate programs aspired to obtain a master's degree in the future and a third had already been accepted to a graduate program (Grothe, 2009). Some of these students may pursue a graduate degree in a field related to the baccalaureate or other professional degrees. For instance, an alumnus obtained a law degree and passed the bar exam after completing a community college baccalaureate program (Grothe, 2009). As such, increasing access to the baccalaureate through these community college programs can expand access to the entire higher education pipeline. More research is necessary, however, to determine if such access is equitable for URM populations.

### **Reducing Taxpayer and Student Costs**

A fundamental argument in creating community college baccalaureate programs stems from cost savings for taxpayers and students. In a dissertation study, Bommel (2008) found evidence for the cost-effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate model in Florida as compared to a traditional four-year model. While cost effectiveness of the community college programs was not evident in the early years due to start-up costs, over time, the cost for the community baccalaureate degree decreased, showing lower costs for the state and students. Part of the cost differential is due to the fact that faculty at community colleges do not have research assignments in their workload and thus have higher teaching loads (Bommel, 2008). Also, community colleges in Florida received 85% of the funding received by universities. Moreover, in this study, student graduation rates and passing rates on licensing exams were comparable at both types of institutions, suggesting that program quality was not compromised. The findings of this study are limited to two institutions in Florida. However, others have argued against the cost-effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate. For example, Geiser and Atkinson (2013) modeled the costs for implementing the baccalaureate in California community colleges and concluded that other arrangements, such as "hybrid" models that bring two- and four-year institutions in closer contact, are more cost effective. Such examples are "two-year branch campuses" of the four-year institutions that allow students to complete all coursework at the same site, or four-year institutions providing upper division coursework at the community college campuses. Of course, it remains an open question whether such models would, in reality, be more cost effective. The legislation authorizing the applied baccalaureate in California community colleges did not include additional funding, so this will surely test the question of cost effectiveness.

### **Arguments Against the Community College Baccalaureate**

Common arguments against baccalaureate degrees in community colleges relate to concerns over mission creep, program duplication with four-year institutions and online programs, faculty issues, and concerns about quality, (Russell, 2010). While some of these concerns are valid, there is evidence that supports and counters each of these points.

## **Mission Creep**

A major concern over allowing community colleges to confer baccalaureates is the possible abandonment or distraction from meeting their multiple missions (Russell, 2010). This phenomenon, also known as mission creep, has occurred in a few instances. Community colleges in Arkansas, Utah, Louisiana, and West Virginia became four-year institutions after beginning to offer baccalaureates; however, it is important to underscore that extending these programs beyond one or a few colleges was not the intention (Russell, 2013) and perhaps reflects these states' need for more four-year granting institutions. Geiser and Atkinson (2013) have suggested that such may also be the case for California. Nonetheless, similar concerns over mission creep are still evident and remain a contentious point in the debate. More recently, Florida has seen renewed efforts to stem the growth of the baccalaureate in its two-year colleges, citing primarily the concern over mission creep (Mitchell, 2014), and the Texas legislature failed to approve any increase in the number of community colleges offering the baccalaureate. As other states consider permitting these degrees, this argument will likely persist given the valued, historical missions of the community colleges.

On the other hand, enrollment trends suggest that the incorporation of community college baccalaureates may not detract from their traditional functions but instead enhance them. Enrollments increased in developmental education and university transfer programs across fourteen community colleges in eight states that began offering the baccalaureate (Rice, 2013). However, slight decreases in enrollment were observed in Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, possibly as a result of content overlap with technical and applied baccalaureate programs. In addition, the leadership at these institutions echoed the importance of maintaining a strong commitment to the traditional community college mission (Rice, 2013). This limited evidence suggests that the adoption of baccalaureate degrees does not necessarily compromise the central functions of these institutions.

### **Program Duplication with Four-Year Institutions, For-Profit Colleges and Online Programs**

Another argument against the expansion of community college baccalaureates is the potential duplication of efforts with four-year institutions, non-profit and for-profit, and online programs, as well as push back from for-profit colleges with high price tags that fear losing market share. Some worries over duplication point to a lack of cost-efficiency relative to workforce needs. In Texas, for example, an evaluation study conducted in 2009 cautioned against the expansion of community college baccalaureate programs (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, 2010). An extensive review of the workforce needs in the state indicated that baccalaureates were only needed in a handful of areas. In particular, the greatest need is in education; however, there are no Education baccalaureate programs in the state that allow for direct entry into this field. As such, the recommendation is for a closer examination of capacity at the current four-year institutions to meet this need. In addition, Texas has alternative models, such as multi-institutional teaching centers and online programs, offering baccalaureates. The report suggested that online programs could possibly fulfill the needs in other high need areas, such as Computer Science and Business/Accounting. Based on the report, it appears that

the issue of capacity is less concerning within Texas, and alternative models could be expanded to meet the educational needs of more residents in a more cost-effective manner. The evaluation study team concluded that the community college baccalaureate programs should only be expanded when all other options have been exhausted. The viability of the programs is thus contingent on a state's need.

### **Faculty Concerns**

A recurring theme concerns ensuring that faculty are adequately trained to meet program needs and that the institution has the necessary infrastructure to support the faculty. The incorporation of baccalaureates at the community college indeed requires resources allotted to faculty members, such as expanding library holdings, improving technology, and providing access to professional development (Ross, 2007). Faculty in these programs may need additional education in the content area and professional activities to support their teaching in baccalaureate level courses (Ross, 2007). While these changes require financial resources at the outset, the community colleges also benefit tremendously from the expertise that the faculty brings to these programs. Many of the faculty in baccalaureate programs may already have formal academic training and application outside of academic settings within industry (Nasse, 2013). The faculty thus brings rich experience into the classroom that connects classroom learning to the current demands of the field.

Another concern over faculty stems from the possible changing role of faculty, especially as it relates to teaching. In particular, the concern is that faculty may decrease teaching loads to comparable levels of their four-year counterparts. Community college faculty members, however, are largely drawn to the teaching emphasis at these institutions (Townsend & Twombly, 2007). Indeed, faculty at community colleges are more highly engaged in teaching and much less engaged in research than their university counterparts. In an exploration of faculty in community college baccalaureate programs in Florida, the faculty remained highly committed to teaching (Nasse, 2013). The faculty incorporated pedagogy that connected students to practice whether they were pursuing applied or professionally-oriented baccalaureate degrees (Nasse, 2013). Faculty also reported that upper division courses were more demanding and were held to a higher standard with regard to higher expectations for students than in lower division courses (Nasse, 2013), pointing to the high quality instruction being provided in these programs. Thus, community college faculty in baccalaureate programs remain committed to teaching as the primary focus of their professional identity and engage students in applying their knowledge to their academic and professional goals.

In addition to faculty electing to decrease their teaching loads, another critique of community college baccalaureates is the potentially evolving demands *on* faculty by the institution to engage more in research and other professional activities that may pull them away from teaching. Although half of the faculty possessed a PhD across five baccalaureate programs in a Florida college, the majority indicated that research was not an emphasis at their institution (Nasse, 2013), which also limits costs associated with research. Also, not all faculty at four-year institutions are required to do research, as in the case of liberal arts colleges and public comprehensive universities, so there may be no real cause for concern.



Moreover, faculty in applied fields may not need to do extensive research; yet, distinctions may emerge according to academic discipline. For example, faculty in the Bachelor of Science Nursing program at a Florida college emphasized the importance of research and publishing in their field (Nasse, 2013). Faculty also noted that these options would require lower teaching loads for course preparation, research planning by the institution, availability of student support and support for new research startup (Ross, 2007). These potential changes to the identity of baccalaureate faculty within community colleges suggest that a tiered system may emerge where there are differences between faculty who teach in upper division programs and those who do not (Levin, 2004). More research is necessarily, especially as it relates to faculty of color in these programs.

The development of upper division curricula in the adoption of the community college baccalaureate requires the support of the program's faculty. Within three of Florida colleges offering baccalaureates, the overwhelming majority of faculty at these institutions had a positive view of the programs while only 9% had a negative view (Davis, 2012). In addition, more than half of faculty at two Florida colleges transitioning to offer bachelor's degrees strongly disagreed that offering the bachelor's degree compromised the mission of the community colleges compared to 25% who strongly agreed that it did (Kielty, 2010). The generally positive support of the faculty for bachelor's degrees in Florida's community colleges stemmed from a variety of benefits. The most common benefit associated with the baccalaureate was the opportunities these programs create for students, especially those that are regionally bound, as well as the affordability of the degree (Davis, 2012; Kielty, 2010). Faculty also felt that the graduates of these programs helped the local economy and benefitted local employers, which bolstered their support for these degrees (Davis, 2012).

### **Concerns over Program Quality**

Lastly, a major concern deals with the program quality and the comparability of a baccalaureate from a community college and a four-year institution. However, as aforementioned, educational and employment outcomes show that these degrees are fairly comparable. Furthermore, students' satisfaction with their experiences in community college baccalaureates counter concerns over these programs' educational quality. Community college baccalaureate alumni report several positive employment and educational outcomes. Alumni of baccalaureate programs in Texas and Nevada felt that their programs had either prepared them for their first professional job or a better job, upgraded their skills for their current job, or led to a promotion at their current job (Grothe, 2009). Several differences also emerged when comparing community college baccalaureate alumni with those attending a four-year institution. Within Florida, community college baccalaureate alumni were more satisfied with their enrollment decision in teacher education as compared to alumni at a four-year institution (Shah, 2010). Further, the community college graduates reported significantly more positive ratings of field-based experience, advising received from their academic advisor, and mentoring (Shah, 2010). Overall, these workforce and educational outcomes in conjunction with students' satisfaction demonstrate the high quality experience that community college baccalaureates offer.

Taking these various arguments into account, the case must be made for why these community college baccalaureate degrees are necessary to meet a state's interests. The process to approve these degrees is often highly political and thus requires a tremendous amount of negotiation between external and internal stakeholders. Externally, key players include state legislators, employers, the other colleges and universities in the region and state, and more broadly, the community in which a college is situated. In virtually all cases, the upper level higher education institutions have a strong say in whether the degree programs come into being, and lobby hard against what they perceive to be direct competitors. They are typically concerned with encroachment on their degree granting authority, which is framed as "maintaining academic standards," shifts in funding to the lower institutions, and competition for the same students, many of whom might choose the lower cost and closer to home institution. These concerns are typically addressed by limiting degrees to areas that are not offered by the upper institutions, by reframing the degrees as "applied" in nature, or by demonstrating that the other institutions lack the capacity or interest in providing needed degrees, such as in nursing. The literature does not reveal, however, attempts to argue that URMs lack access to the bachelor degree and could thereby increase their ranks of degree recipients.

It is notable that in virtually all cases the argument for authorizing the degree programs at the community colleges is made on the basis of workforce needs. Studies are conducted to determine workforce needs for a region, and programs are proposed that can meet those particular needs or perceived opportunities. In spite of great disparities in access to degree programs by underrepresented and low-income students, this reason is often secondary or not mentioned at all in siting of bachelor degree programs at the community colleges. Some mention is made of the greater likelihood that students who are unable to travel to distant campuses get access to the degree via the community college baccalaureate, but this is not put forth as a primary argument, nor do legislators or advocates tend to stipulate that colleges should track who gains access to these programs, especially as it relates to focusing on URMs.

## **Types of Community College Baccalaureate Models**

Several terms are used interchangeably when discussing different approaches to offering baccalaureates that involve community colleges (Floyd & Walker, 2008). As such, a discussion on the various types of baccalaureate models that involve community colleges is necessary to discern between them in practice.

**Community College Baccalaureate** models refer to institutions that are approved to offer associate degrees with the addition of bachelor's degrees in a limited number of specialized fields. The degree-conferring institution is the community college. Some of these baccalaureates may require the same general education requirements as university-granted degrees but not necessarily so. Although inaccurate and confusing, the community college baccalaureate term is often conflated to describe both partnership degrees, such as university center and concurrent use baccalaureate models (see discussion below), granted in collaboration with four-year colleges and universities, and baccalaureate degrees awarded by community colleges directly.

**Articulation Baccalaureate** models describe the most common connection between community colleges and four-year institutions in the attainment of baccalaureate degrees. These degrees result from a 2+2 partnership between a community college and four-year institution. Students complete at least two years of study at the community college before transferring to the four-year institution where the baccalaureate degree is granted.

**University Center and Concurrent Use Baccalaureate** models refer to partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions, which are frequently an extension of the articulation model. These models bring upper division courses directly to where students live or work. University Centers are often located at the community college. Although students may complete these courses at the community college, the four-year institution grants the baccalaureate.

**Workforce Baccalaureates** are traditional four-year degrees in areas such as education, allied health, law enforcement, and public service. The general education requirements for these degrees may vary. Four-year institutions can award workforce baccalaureates as well as community colleges that have authorization. Nursing and Education are the most common workforce baccalaureates in community colleges.

**Applied Baccalaureates** refer to degrees offered in specialized fields of study, such as technology management, business management, certain health fields, and information technology. These baccalaureates generally articulate with an associate degree program. Common names for these include: Bachelor of Technology, Bachelor of Applied Technology, or Bachelor of Applied Science. The terms “workforce” and “applied” baccalaureates are often used synonymously. Four-year institutions confer applied baccalaureates as well as community colleges that have the appropriate authorization. However, these are the most typical types of baccalaureates offered in the community colleges and these are largely the ones we found in the states that we studied.

Based on these definitions, developing a list of community colleges that offer bachelor’s degrees will likely yield different results. Consequently, there may be discrepancies in lists published by different organizations depending on the definition that is being used. In addition, an accurate account is difficult to obtain due to differences in language in state policy and governance structures (Floyd & Walker, 2008). For example, some states like Georgia and Oklahoma do not have an explicitly stated community college mission in the legislature, so some have argued that these states should not be included in community college baccalaureate lists. Moreover, the list is ever changing based on the growing number of states permitting community college baccalaureates.

## Study Methods

As noted, this study began with a different set of questions. When we proposed the study to The Ford Foundation, we were interested in exploring structural modifications in California’s higher education system that might make it possible for more URMs to gain BA degrees or higher in California, such as allowing the community colleges to confer BA

degrees. But this was not the only alternative structural arrangement that we considered. Others included siting two-year colleges on the campuses of four-year universities or vice versa, as well as converting some community colleges into branch campuses of four-year universities. Certainly, others (e.g., Geiser & Atkinson, 2013) had suggested that, while offering a BA at the community colleges was an interesting idea, the costs associated might make it an impractical solution to the low BA production problem. Another major concern is that it might actually reduce the effectiveness of the community colleges in their core mission of preparing students with technical degrees and certifications and might further fragment the services provided by the colleges (Russell, 2010). While these were cogent arguments, it seemed that given California's status as a state with very limited access to four-year public institutions, the question remained open and worth exploring in greater depth.

After commencing the background work for the study, however, the politics of the community college BA changed, and Senate Bill 850 was passed, allowing up to 15 community colleges to pilot the BA in one area each. The process began in 2015 with the Board of Governors' selection of the colleges that would participate in the pilot with programs to be launched in 2017-18. Thirty-four (34) campuses applied, and 15 were selected. The California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) announced that the 15 were selected on the strength of their proposal to meet workforce needs and to represent "geographical, institutional, and subject diversity" (Koseff, 2015). It is also notable that the legislation was passed without funding. Thus, colleges would need to come up with the resources to implement the programs on their own, at least for the time being. This no doubt affected the decisions of many campuses about whether to submit a proposal.

At this point, we had already undertaken the major portion of the literature review to understand the issues that had been raised in other states with respect to adopting the BA at the community colleges. Twenty-one states had already undergone this process, so there was considerable knowledge available about the pros and cons in different contexts and how these had been addressed. It was also clear that establishing these BA programs constituted a political minefield and certain compromises were almost always necessary. With this background understanding, we re-thought the way in which this study could be most useful to the field. After talking with most of the major figures in the experiment that was being launched in California, it became clear that there was a need to examine the equity issues involved in the offering of the applied BA.

After conducting an extensive general literature review, we began looking for evidence that equity in higher education access was at the center of any of these initiatives. Apart from a general nod to the idea that low income students and those who were working long hours could have better access to BA programs located more nearby, relatively little was mentioned about attempting to close the gaps in access for URM students. Meeting workforce needs and increasing the number of persons who could complete a BA degree, especially in a specialized field with high need, were the central themes in promoting these programs. We did not find a single study that framed the issuing of BA degrees at the community college level as a central strategy to close the racial and ethnic gaps in access to college degrees.

To inform the thinking in California, early on we had decided that the three states we wanted to study were Washington, Texas, and Florida. We surmised that each had political and/or demographic features similar enough to California to serve as good comparisons, and each had begun offering BA degrees at their community colleges. Moreover, each had significant gaps in production of bachelor degrees for URM students in the state and each had a significant Latino population, which tended to be the least likely to garner the BA. Thus, even with the change in focus of the study, these three states remained our targets for study. We set about to inform ourselves of the history and context of the BA programs in these states. Borrowing from the literature (limited as it was with respect to our central issue) and knowledge of these states, we developed protocols for interviewing key policymakers and administrators in these programs. Our basic interview protocol is attached as Appendix D. While these questions guided our interviews, they were also used as springboards to enter into a larger conversation about how the interviewee saw these programs and the purposes they served. We were especially interested in the answers to four key questions:

- Had they thought about using the BA program as a way to help close the gaps in access to the BA for URM students?
- Did they have an equity plan in place when they launched the programs?
- How did they help ensure that they would get URM students into and successfully through the BA program? Did they advertise? Did they counsel these students into the programs? Did they provide any special support services for URM?
- To what extent were URM students enrolling in and completing the BA compared to other non-URM students?

Within each state we interviewed the institutional head for the BA program in that state or region as well as the persons charged with implementing the programs at the community college campus level. In Washington and Florida (Dade County) we met in person with interviewees and toured campuses. We examined data. We read scholarly reports as well as what the popular press was saying about these programs and we explored the political issues associated with their implementation. Finally, we synthesized what we had learned across the states and the various sites to draw overall conclusions that might serve as helpful guideposts as the California Community Colleges embark on this very high stakes--and potentially promising--innovation.

## **The Findings**

### **FLORIDA**

Florida, like California, Texas, and Washington State, has a huge college degree gap between non-Hispanic Whites and African American, Latino, and Native American residents. Whereas more than 51% of Whites and 35% of Asians hold a BA degree or higher, only 27% of Latinos and 22% of Blacks between 25 and 64 have these degrees (U.S. Census, 2015). It is notable, however, that Florida, with a Latino population that is somewhat advantaged relative to Latinos in other states, is the only state that posts higher

college completion among Latinos than African Americans. All other states in the study, including California, show Latinos garnering a smaller percentage of degrees than their Black counterparts. Also like these other states, Florida has faced a ban on affirmative action that has hobbled its higher education institutions in admitting members of these groups to its four-year campuses. Moreover, with a large two-year system, Florida's URM students are prone to going to colleges where it can be difficult to transfer successfully and complete a bachelor's degree. In 1999, then Governor Jeb Bush, in what he characterized as getting out ahead of the anti-affirmative action juggernaut, established the One Florida program, a percentage plan that would allow the top 20% of students from the state's high schools to enroll in one of the state's 10 public universities. As in other states without affirmative action, this failed to solve the problem of an admissions policy that worked against admitting minority applicants. Thus the community college baccalaureate could represent an opportunity to help close the persistent gap, especially if these programs are more accessible to URM and they are more easily able to complete a bachelor's degree without having to transfer to another campus that may be distant from home. At least, one might consider this an attractive possibility.

We decided to go into Florida, and specifically to Miami Dade College (MDC), before the passage of California's SB 850, largely because Florida's system of BA granting community colleges is the largest in the nation and, some would argue, the most successful. The MDC is certainly very high profile, with its 7 campuses, 2 centers and over 160,000 students. The President of MDC is also a very high profile individual who by force of personality has created a strong impression of a highly successful institution. Florida is a state with significant Latino and Black populations (about 40% combined), especially in the Dade County area where Blacks and Hispanics comprise about 85% of the population. While historically the Latino population in Dade County was overwhelmingly Cuban, with many very successful educationally and financially, the Latino population of the area today is much more mixed, and many are struggling to find a way into the middle class. It looks more like California demographically today than it did two decades ago. MDC enrolls about 90% URMs, and almost two-thirds of its students receive federal aid.

We felt it was important to understand how the BA granting programs had been built, how they functioned, and how they avoided some of the political issues associated with the establishment of such programs.

### **Miami Dade College**

Miami Dade College, formerly known as Miami-Dade Community College, is the largest institution of higher education in the nation with approximately 165,000 students, 90% of whom are students of color, with two-thirds qualifying for financial aid. It began offering Bachelor's programs in 2003 as the Florida legislature acknowledged a need to increase its production of bachelor's degrees to meet workforce needs. Today, it offers the Bachelor of Science (BS) and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) in ten different areas: Biological Sciences, Education, Nursing, Allied Health (Physician Assistant), Supply Chain Management, Electronics Engineering Technology, Film and Digital Production, Information Systems Technology, Public Safety Management Supervision, and Management. The Bachelor's programs have also been growing, with new programs,

especially in health and business (business incubation) projected to come on line. In 2010, 1,863 students were enrolled in one of the bachelor's programs; by 2014, 3,593 students were enrolled, a doubling in growth over the five-year period. Approximately 40% of all students are enrolled in either an Associate's degree program or a Bachelor's degree program.<sup>3</sup>

As is typical of community college baccalaureate programs, students must complete an associate's degree before applying to the bachelor's degree. This is generally known as a 2 + 2 program, and they often must take approximately three additional courses to meet prerequisites for the bachelor's program. These prerequisites generally satisfy the general education requirement for a bachelor's degree. The largest number of students in the BS programs were between 21 and 25 years of age, with about 58% of the students no older than 30. This is not necessarily typical of community college programs where many bachelor's students are college returnees in their 30s and 40s. While about 71% of MDC students are Latino, 66% of bachelor's degree students are Latino. In contrast, about 17% of MDC students are Black, and almost 23% of bachelor degree students are Black.

Costs to attend MDC are \$116 per unit for lower division courses and \$127 per upper division unit. This is considerably less than other public state colleges. Its nearest competitor, Florida International University, also located in the Miami area, charges almost double this amount. MDC also publishes promotional materials that show their bachelor's degree recipients actually earn more than the average college graduate in the areas in which they offer degrees. They argue that a primary reason for this is that their degrees are more tailored for the needs of industry.

At MDC we interviewed 11 individuals representing five of the campuses and several baccalaureate programs. We also interviewed the Provost. All expressed a great deal of pride in the programs they were building or had built and were anxious to talk about the programs and students. A summary of their responses to the questions we posed follows:

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor's Degree Completion?**

Of course, we were looking to see if anyone expressed that the program was designed or intended to help close the gap in degree completion for URM students. However, every one of the individuals interviewed noted the impetus was workforce opportunities in the area and the ability to place students immediately into jobs. Unlike other parts of the state of Florida and other places in the country, MDC did not appear to encounter the same level of resistance to the development of its bachelor's programs from

---

<sup>3</sup> Community colleges serve a variety of different needs. Many students are in classes preparing them for transfer but not for an associate degree, are taking ad hoc, adult education, citizenship, English classes, or are in technical programs (e.g., welding, culinary). 40% were in associates or BA degree programs; the other 60% can be enrolled in any number of different courses depending on what the college offers.

senior institutions. For example, it offers a BS in Nursing, something we were told had been impossible at another Florida college because, although there was an acknowledged shortage of nurses, the nearby senior institution had lobbied against the competition. MDC has been especially savvy in gathering political clout for its programs by currying the support of high profile individuals from the Miami area and beyond. The college does a great deal of public relations and draws famous people to its various conferences and events. Moreover, because of its size, it has a large corps of alumni who support and lobby for it.

Deans of colleges also noted other new programs in the offing in business and health. Because almost all of the students at MDC are URM, they are the fabric of the school. The assumption appears to be that if they get degrees they will contribute to addressing the underrepresentation of these groups at the bachelor's degree level. The focus is on the job market, and the gap closing effect hardly needs mention.

### **How Do You Advertise the Bachelor's Programs?**

Again, MDC is not typical of other places that we studied as the institution is so well known, and their programs so highly touted, it does not really seem to require advertising at this point. Nonetheless, they are frequently in the local papers and on television due to the many educational and arts events held at the campus. This, of course, does not provide information about the bachelor's degree, but the college has a paper and a more widely distributed newsletter (a newspaper size publication) that tout the programs and carry stories of students going on to graduate school. Students in the bachelor's programs are generally drawn from their own lower division pool of students, so students gain knowledge of the bachelor's option as they are studying for the AA. However, the teaching program, one of the largest at MDC, did go into feeder high schools to present the program and invited interested high school students to come to the campus and experience the program for a day.

### **Do URM Students Encounter Any Particular Barriers to the Bachelor's Programs? Are Programs Offered in Areas that Tend to Attract URMs?**

Many BA programs require a minimum 2.0 GPA in lower division courses, but some of the programs have more stringent requirements, including a minimum 2.5. In impacted programs, such as applied science, physician assistant and nursing, students are admitted according to GPA, which means that much higher GPAs are required to gain entrance. A couple of the programs also noted that they are instituting some form of entrance exam, including the possibility of the GRE because they found that students with lower qualifications were not succeeding or progressing in the program as well as hoped. Thus, while there is a clear commitment at MDC to open access, in reality, high demand areas such as nursing, physician assistant, and some business and science-oriented programs were competitive and required a solid foundation in math and science, which is moving directors increasingly toward higher admissions standards. All contended that they are maintaining URM students in the programs at rates similar to the overall campus representation, yet one can see that in a more diverse context it might be more difficult to sustain this same high representation of URM.



White and Asian students are not represented in the bachelor's programs at any higher rate than their proportion in the overall school population, so it would appear that the programs are indeed attracting URM students at a rate commensurate with their representation in the population, and that the program offerings are attractive to these students. It is interesting that African American students are enrolled in these programs at higher rates than their proportion of the student population (by about 5 percentage points), whereas Latinos enrolled at rates that were lower than their representation in the student population (by about 5 percentage points). The discrepancy is less, however, than it was 5 years prior when the over/under presentation of Blacks and Hispanics was closer to ten percentage points (see Appendix E). We saw this same phenomenon at other colleges we studied as well.

Program directors did note that a consistent barrier is financial need and that they have all worked at getting scholarships to help support students, though there is clearly much greater need than can be met with current resources. They were very conscious of the costs associated with the programs. Most programs relied on "hybrid" on-line and on campus instruction, usually characterized as 50/50. Directors contended that this resulted in cost savings, not in professors' salaries, but in use of on campus facilities, although it was not entirely clear that this had been carefully cost out.

Financing their education was especially an issue for undocumented students. Several interviewees mentioned that the campus worked with these students to find financial aid through private sources and other sources that actually targeted aid to undocumented students. The students were encouraged to get the DACA ("Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals"), and this made it possible for the college to provide them with in-state tuition and other supports. When asked what the general attitude was at MDC about undocumented students, one respondent noted, "We are all immigrants here, so we try to help them."

### **Are Special Services Provided to Help Ensure the Success of the URM Students?**

Once again, given that the great majority of the students in the college and in the program are URM, it was not viewed as either a necessity or even appropriate to provide some kind of special services or counseling for these students. However, the various programs did have associated tutors and counselors and some directors spoke of "intrusive counseling" if students were falling behind.

### **Have There Been Any Attempts to Hire URM Faculty in the BA Programs?**

All program directors were eager to note that they had URM faculty while only 3 of 10 directors themselves were from an underrepresented racial or ethnic minority. But this, they suggested, was a long-term project. They were hiring younger URM faculty that would move up the ranks with time. Among the faculty as a whole, 43% are Latino, 16% Black and 35% non-Hispanic White. Both the President and the Provost of the College are Latino/a. Appendix E includes demographic characteristics of Miami-Dade College students in the Associate's and Bachelor's programs for the years 2010 - 2014.

**Was there any concern about a “cooling out” function of the BA programs? That is, were academically talented students diverted from graduate education by a job-oriented degree?**

Virtually all of the program directors spoke to this issue, usually without prompting. Many of the programs saw themselves as actually preparing their bachelor’s students for graduate education and contended that the applied degree, which included all regular general education requirements, in no way impeded further education. In fact, some contended that graduate schools saw these students as better prepared to further their studies. This was particularly true in the case of the health and science specialties. MDC appears to be attempting to meet workforce needs at two levels: preparing students to enter bachelor’s level jobs and preparing students to move forward into more educationally demanding careers that would require a master’s degree after the bachelor’s was complete.

Much was learned from MDC, but given that their demographics are so skewed toward URM, it was impossible for interviewees to respond to questions about specific accommodations for these students. Thus we felt it necessary to explore another community college in Florida, with demographics more like the state as a whole. We decided to investigate Valencia College and speak with its Provost and Director of Bachelor’s Programs.

**Valencia College**

Valencia College (VC) is located in Orlando, a much smaller city than Miami, about midway between Miami in the south of Florida and Tallahassee, the state’s capital and northernmost large city. It began offering bachelor’s degrees five years ago. It is more diverse demographically than Miami, where two-thirds of the population is Latino. Orlando has similar percentages of African Americans (28%) and Latinos (25%), with about 40% non-Hispanic White residents. However, in the state as a whole, non-Hispanic Whites comprise about 57% of the population, with Blacks comprising about 17% and Latinos about 24%. The average age of students at VC is 24, similar to Miami, and dissimilar to the average age of students at California Community Colleges. Its median income and percent of residents in poverty, however, is quite similar to Miami. Like Miami, Orlando has a large service economy catering to tourism. Many low paying service jobs are available. VC sees itself as offering the opportunity for individuals mired in this low paying economy to raise their skill level and credentials and move into more middle class jobs. Studying Valencia College allowed us to look at a community college that had greater diversity of students than MDC, and where we could reasonably ask questions about equity of access to programs among different ethnic and racial groups, but where other demographic features were not significantly different from Miami-Dade.

Valencia College is also relatively large at over 42,000 students spread across five campuses. It offers three bachelor’s programs in electrical and computer engineering technology, radiographic imaging, and cardiopulmonary sciences. The admission requirements are similar to those of most bachelor’s programs at MDC, requiring a minimum 2.0 GPA with some additional courses beyond the Associate’s Degree. However,

since these programs to date have not been as competitive as those offered at MDC, they have not yet encountered the need to ratchet up requirements in order to select among large numbers of applicants. The first thing to know, however, is that only one campus of five offers the bachelor's programs, the West Campus. West Campus is about one-third non-Hispanic White, 24% Black, and 26% Hispanic. The Ocala Campus is known as the Latino campus (with more than 55% Latino students), but it does not have a bachelor's program.

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor's Degree Completion?**

The Provost explained that they were interested in ALL students and did not focus on any particular groups. She did note, however, that they were beginning to focus on Spanish-speaking individuals because they saw this as a particular asset in the labor market. They were thinking of how their programs might incorporate students' language ability as a particular asset in the program. Their bachelor's degrees began when Central Florida University (CFU) decided to give up three bachelor's programs and turned them over to VC. According to the Provost, the campus works very collaboratively in a consortium with CFU and other local colleges so that they aren't competing for students. This has created a very positive atmosphere. Nonetheless, CFU does not want to give nursing degrees to VC even though there is an acknowledged shortage. The Provost characterized this as "a battleground." Moreover, VC would like to offer business degrees, which they plan to do, but CFU has insisted that they do the "bookkeepers," rather than higher level management because CFU is trying to become known in this area. Thus even within a relatively collaborative arrangement among the colleges, jockeying for degree authority, and resistance to giving up sole authority to award them, continues to be an issue.

The Provost did note that they are attempting to build pathways for students stuck in low paying hospitality jobs, so that they might work their way up into management in this area. Of course these low paying jobs are disproportionately held by URM, but there has been no particular discussion of targeting these students from a racial/ethnic perspective. She also noted, in passing, that she perceived the strongest students to be the Latinas in the college.

### **How Do You Advertise the Bachelor's Programs?**

The Provost offered that the only "advertising" they were doing was putting information about the bachelor's programs on their website, which was not attracting students. In the allied health area this was not a particular problem because the program is small and cannot take more than 25 students, but in the engineering field, they need to attract more students and so would be thinking about how to approach this. They did not have a plan to advertise to URM communities in particular.

**Was any consideration given to the types of degrees to be offered being degrees that URM were likely to be attracted to?**

No. But they are now thinking about this in terms of attracting students with language skills—bilinguals--and attracting more students to the engineering program.

**How have you done with respect to URM graduates from your bachelor's programs? Are they enrolling at the same rate as non-URM?**

With respect to enrollment, Latino students appear to enroll in the feeder AA degrees at considerably higher rates, but do not complete the bachelor's degree at comparable rates as Black students. White students enroll in the feeder programs at somewhat higher rates than might be expected for their percent of the student population, but graduate the bachelor's program at similar rates to Black students.

**Valencia College Applied Bachelor's Graduates 2010-2015**

<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total Feeder Enrollment</b>	<b>BS Degrees</b>	<b>% Total Feeder</b>
Black	105	11	10.4%
Asian	78	4	5%
White	452	49	10.8%
Latino	298	14	4.6%
Unknown	81	5	6.1%
Total Degrees		85	

We also collected information about the reported statewide data for applied bachelor's degrees offered at the college system. Although there was a 3 percentage point increase in enrollments of Latinos from 15.2% in 2008-09 to 18.2% in 2012-13, this was under the approximate 24% of the college population. And while the African American college population is closer to 17% overall, their participation in community college baccalaureate programs rose from 16.4% in 2008-09 to 19.4% in 2012-13, slightly above the statewide percentage. At Valencia, similar to the state as a whole, African Americans appear to be graduating from one of these programs at somewhat higher rates than Latinos, although at Valencia Latino students were enrolling in the feeder programs at higher rates.

**Are there any particular barriers you have encountered that are specifically an issue for URM students?**

The Provost noted that she has seen that the Hispanic students often have to work in addition to going to school (evidently more so than others) and that this gets in the way of completion. She also noted that transportation was a big problem. The programs are a fair distance from where many URM, especially Latinos, live and so they had difficulty getting to campus. They were experimenting with more on-line coursework to address this problem, but she worried a great deal about the problems with on-line, namely not having

face-to-face contact with students and losing them. They have also moved to more evening and weekend schedules to accommodate the working students.

### **Have There Been Any Attempts to Hire URM Faculty in the BA Programs?**

The Provost contended that they make an effort to hire URM “in all our programs.” In engineering tech they have URM faculty (at least one that she could recall). But only one or two people teach exclusively in the baccalaureate program, so they can’t really hire specially for those programs. They are helping some existing URM faculty to get MA degrees to be able to teach college math.

### **Was there any concern about a “cooling out” function of the BA programs? That is, were academically talented students diverted from graduate education by a job-oriented degree?**

Unlike MDC, Valencia College does not appear to be focused on graduate education for its bachelor’s students in any of their applied bachelor programs. However, this appears to be because to date they have been very limited in what they can offer. These are, in fact, degrees that are created to meet a specific bachelor level workforce position. As the Provost mentioned, most of their students were college returnees who were working in lower level jobs and looking for a way to improve their present earnings. Valencia’s bachelor’s degree programs are still small and undifferentiated, and targeted to specific occupations.

## **TEXAS**

Texas has only recently joined the states offering a bachelor’s degree at its community colleges (the first program was launched in 2005, others in 2008) and it only allows three colleges to offer them. Two colleges offer just one degree (although the single degree can have various different tracks), and one college offers 4 degree types. Texas, like California, has a significant problem of under-education of its URM population, especially Latinos, as they form almost as large a percentage of the youth population as do Latinos in California. In Texas, 64% of Asians (ages 25-64) hold at least a bachelor’s degree, as do 41% of Whites, and 27% of Blacks (U.S. Census, 2015). However, only 15% of Latinos have completed at least a bachelor’s degree. In this sense, Texas is similar to California. Also like California and the other states we examined, Texas has faced challenges to affirmative action and it has labored under on-again, off-again admissions policies since 1996, when the Hopwood Case resulted in the abandonment of affirmative action for several years. In fact, ten years ago the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) launched a decade long challenge to . . . close the college attainment gap between URM and non-Hispanic Whites. That gap has not been closed, but the initiative raised awareness of the troubling under-education of URM in the state. Offering the baccalaureate at Texas community colleges could, therefore, be seen as a gap-closing effort.

In Texas we interviewed the heads of the baccalaureate programs at two of the three colleges offering the degree. (The third college, located in South Texas along the US-Mexico border, like MDC, is a virtually 100% URM campus and so we surmised that our

questions would not reveal a great deal about how a campus might organize itself to meet the particular needs of URM students. We had already seen the limitations in this regard at MDC.) We also interviewed the Executive Director of THECB.

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor Degree Completion?**

We posed these questions to the Executive Director of THECB, who was quick to respond that the community college baccalaureate was very much his project and that “as tuition and fees have continued to increase at the four-year colleges, there is a need to create more low cost options,” and he added that he believed they should be expanded to more colleges. To achieve this, he worked with the Texas legislature to mandate a study, conducted by the RAND Corporation, to assess the workforce needs in the state and how expanded community college bachelor’s programs might meet these demands (Daugherty, Goldman, Butterfield, & Miller, 2014). Importantly, the director noted that “equity is the driver; equity for low income students.” Yet the RAND study was framed as being driven by unmet workforce needs. Nonetheless, this is the closest that anyone we spoke with came to framing the community college baccalaureate initiative as a gap closing effort, albeit for low income students generally, rather than for URM. The more typical response across the states was that it was intended to “meet workforce needs,” which seemed to be the most effective way to sell the idea to a reluctant legislature that had been lobbied hard by senior institutions not wanting to invite competition for students. But this framing by the Executive Director may also be because he had been deeply engaged in a “closing the gaps” mission for a decade and was acutely aware of the inequities in the system. Directors of programs at the campus level did not necessarily frame the issue in the same way.

The three colleges currently authorized to provide the bachelor’s degree are Midland, Brazosport, and South Texas. Midland is a city of approximately 136,000 persons, half of whom are non-Hispanic White, about 40% Latino, 6% African American, with all other groups comprising a very small percent of the population. Oil is the most important industry in Midland. It does, however, have the distinction of being the one-time home of the two Bush presidents and their wives. The Director of the Bachelor of Applied Technology (BAT) program has also been a Vice President for Instruction and is currently Special Assistant to the President. The BAT is in organizational management; next year the college expects to offer a degree in health management. The Director said that an important impetus was to reach “first generation college-going students.” Both the Midland and the Brazosport campuses are very small, serving only 4100 to 4600 students in total, compared to the South Texas campus that serves over 30,000 students and awards many more bachelor’s degrees (145 in 2014). This campus is located in west Texas in the middle of the state in a small community.

## Midland College

### Do URM students enroll in the bachelor's program at similar rates to their enrollment in the college as a whole?

The table below displays the enrollment figures for Midland across the institution and within BAT programs. There were very small numbers of graduates from the BAT program at Midland in 2014, so numbers are not necessarily reliable over the long term. However, at this point in the program, White students are very over-represented in BAT enrollment and especially in degrees garnered. Latinos are especially under-represented in program enrollment.

#### Enrollment at Midland College

Fall 2014	Total	White	African American	Latino	Asian	Other
Total Enrollment	4,617	40.6%	6.5%	46.2%	2.4%	4.2%
BAT Enrollment	24	58.3%	8.3%	33.3%	0%	0%
Pell Grants (All)	19%	12%	43%	25%	13%	11%
Pell Grants (BAT)	29%	27%	0%	44%	0%	0%
Degrees Total All	605	43%	4.8%	41.3%	.8%	9.9%
Degrees BAT	20	65%	15%	15%	0%	5%

### What have you done to advertise or disseminate information about the program to URM communities?

The Midland Director carried out the standard advertising to the broader community: newspapers, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, and “word of mouth.” But the Director noted that the Latino population is very spread out so it was hard to target to a specific area. She was quick to note that they didn’t have money for television advertising, which would have disseminated the information more effectively.

## Brazosport College

Brazosport College is in a cluster of 8 small cities in the Gulf Coast region. In addition to petroleum, Brazosport boasts a tourism industry with a variety of water sports and fishing. The population demographics are similar to Midland. The Program Director in Brazosport is also a long time administrator at the school. While the Program Director at the Brazosport campus characterized the bachelor’s program as a way to help petroleum workers return to school to get a management degree, something that ostensibly had little to do with gap closing, she did note that “it’s the only affordable thing that the Latino families can do.”

Why were these colleges, in addition to South Texas, chosen? It is important to note that the process of selection was characterized as “very political,” and powerful legislators had lobbied for the programs in their backyard, which clearly influenced how one might

respond to the question about the impetus of the program, and how it might, in fact, depart from the characterization of the THECB director as an attempt to close gaps for low income students. The Director of the BAT program is a long time faculty member and administrator with degrees in accounting and management.

**Do URM students enroll in the bachelor’s program at similar rates to their enrollment in the college as a whole?**

The table below shows the enrollment figures for Brazosport in Fall 2014. White students, and to a much lesser degree Black students appear to be enrolling in the bachelor’s programs at a higher rate than their representation in the schools’ population generally. Hispanics enroll at significantly lower rates and graduate at even lower rates still. African Americans appear to graduate from the programs at nearly double or triple their representation at the campus as a whole.

**Enrollment at Brazosport**

Fall 2014	Total	White	African American	Latino	Asian	Other
Enrollment All	4,131	52.5%	8%	35.7%	.8%	3%
Enrollment BAT	144	59%	9.7%	24.3%	1.4%	5.6%
Pell Grants All	19%	16%	32%	21%	13%	8%
Pell Grant BAT	25%	20%	67%	24%	33%	0%
Degrees Total	741	57.2%	9.2%	28.2%	.8%	4.6%
Degrees BAT	19	57.9%	15.8%	21.1%	5.3%	0%

**What have you done to advertise or disseminate information about the program to URM communities?**

At Brazosport, the Director replied that the campus had advertised in newspapers and other media, did an annual spring event at which the community was invited to see the offerings of the campus, had specifically reached out to the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and have an outreach center located “in the part of town that is Hispanic.” Nonetheless, she felt that they had not done a good enough job of outreaching to minority communities and felt it was something the college needed to work on. She, like the Director of the Brazosport program, appeared to feel that more needed to be done to get the word out.

**Was any Consideration Given to Offering the Types of Degrees and Programs likely to attract URMs?**

Both Midland and Brazosport colleges noted that they had thought about meeting the needs of minority students, but in a general way. The colleges sought funds from local industry to pay for tutoring programs that support the students in their academic work, and this support could be attractive to URMs. One of the campuses had been reasonably successful in gathering scholarship funds, but that had not been sustained. Moreover, one of the Directors voiced the opinion that Latinos were especially attracted to programs that allowed them to enter the workforce immediately on completion, so the applied



baccalaureate was, in itself, appealing to this population. However, the data suggest that Latinos are not drawn to these programs at the same rate as their representation in the college enrollments.

### **Do URM Students Encounter Any Particular Barriers to the Bachelor's Programs?**

Everyone, everywhere, seems to agree that financing the education is a major problem for URM, especially for Latino families. It is notable that a very high percentage of African American students in the BAT program at Brazosport were receiving Pell grants, which no doubt helped them with their financial challenges. Many fewer Latino students were receiving these grants at either college we examined. It is somewhat inexplicable that no African American students were receiving Pell grants at Midland, yet an even higher percentage of these students managed to complete the degree. One wonders if the low percent of Latinos receiving Pell grants might be related to their citizenship status, in which case the reference to Latino students having an especially hard time financially might make sense.

It was also noted that transportation was a problem for these Latino families when the programs were not located in the areas where most Latinos live. Finally, as was the case with all low income individuals, most had to work while going to school so flexible scheduling and alternative means for taking courses (hybrid or online) were options the colleges believed they needed to offer. The Texas campuses have kept costs as low as possible, \$55 per unit, and one way they have done this is to offer much of the curriculum online, reducing on-campus class and faculty time.

One issue that arose was that the baccalaureate programs are 2 + 2; that is, students must first complete an associate's degree to be eligible for the bachelor program. This could be a barrier if students were not counseled into the associate's degree from the beginning. While acknowledging that this could be a barrier, the Directors did not know to what extent it was a problem. One suggested that she was quite sure that the existence of the applied bachelor's degree was acting to increase enrollment in the associate's degree program, but she did not have any statistics on this.

One of the directors described what she called "intrusive counseling." Students in the program were assigned to an "advisor" and were required to meet regularly with a counselor. Both campuses described tutoring provided to students if they were falling behind, but this also appeared to depend greatly on the campuses' effectiveness at raising funds outside the regular college budget.

### **Have you assigned or hired any URM faculty to staff the bachelor's program?**

The Midland campus had hired an African American and a Chinese professor to staff the new program in health management that both campuses were about to launch. No Latino faculty had been hired at Brazosport for these programs. It must, however, be borne in mind that these colleges were operating relatively small programs and very little hiring had been done as a result.

## WASHINGTON

In 2005, the Washington state legislature approved the creation of an applied baccalaureate program pilot at four community and technical colleges (England-Siegerdt & Andreas, 2012). The first set of baccalaureate programs was launched in 2007 and four more were added in 2009. The state's inability to produce the necessary baccalaureates with the existing capacity of its public postsecondary system and an increasingly diverse population (e.g. low-income, first-generation, and people of color) prompted more interest in the applied baccalaureate at the two-year colleges. In Washington, 48% of Asians, 38% of Whites, and 23% of African Americans between 25 and 64 years of age hold at least a bachelor's degree (U.S. Census, 2015). However, only 17% of Latinos are similarly credentialed, while more than 20% of the school age population is Latino and growing more rapidly than any other segment of the population. Thus in 2010, the legislature approved the expansion of these baccalaureate degrees at the state's community and technical colleges. By 2014-15, there were 35 programs at 15 community and technical colleges, and there were several more approved to begin operations in the following year.

We began our examination of Washington by speaking with the Deputy Executive Director for Education Services and the Director of Transfer Education of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC). The Deputy Executive Director for Education Services noted that these applied baccalaureates represent a paradigm shift on what technical education is – particularly the idea that these programs should not be terminal. Instead, these baccalaureate degrees should be a means for students to pursue future goals and advance their socioeconomic mobility, especially for the most underrepresented groups who comprise a growing demographic in the state.

Consequently, the Washington SBCTC has published a few reports to show the extent to which target groups have access to the applied baccalaureate programs. These reports explicitly acknowledge the importance of educating students from the most historically marginalized groups in higher education and indicate that this is one of the policy goals in the legislation that created these programs. Some of the target groups specifically acknowledged in these reports are people of color, Latina/os, low-wage workers, immigrants, and English language learners. The representation of URMS has grown steadily across the state in the BAS programs, particularly Latina/os. In 2015, Latina/os comprised 12% of all BAS enrollments, up from 7% in 2011 (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2015a). African American representation remained the same at 7% since 2011, while Asian representation slightly increased from 10% to 12%. Conversely, White student enrollment has decreased over time from 72% to 65% (Washington SBCTC, 2015a).

The Director of Transfer Education connected us to three community colleges to visit and speak with the leaders of baccalaureate programs: Bellevue, Columbia Basin, and Highline. According to the “2014-15 Applied Baccalaureate Degrees: Policy and Outcomes Evaluation” report, Bellevue College enrolled 43% students of color in workforce programs, 36% in Bachelors of Applied Science (BAS) programs, and 33% completed the BAS (Washington SBCTC, 2015a). Columbia Basin College enrolled 35% of students of color in workforce programs, 31% in BAS programs, 34% students of color completed a BAS

(Washington SBCTC, 2015a). These general patterns suggest that students of color access and complete BAS degrees at a lower rate than their representation in workforce programs at Bellevue, while there appears to be parity overall at Columbia Basin. Highline was in its first year of implementing BAS programs and thus did not have graduates yet to report. Another system report shows no differences by race on wage earnings of BAS graduates (Washington SBCTC, 2015b). However, it is important to note that the completion rates for students of color in these reports are not disaggregated for URMs, which could be useful to determine if there are gaps within this group. A trend that should continue to be monitored in future reports, and in the roll out of these programs, is the increasing full-time enrollment pattern among BAS participants. Although it is a fact that full time students are significantly more likely to complete a degree, given that URMs are less likely to attend college full-time, this could signal a declining percentage of URM in the programs.

### **Columbia Basin College**

Columbia Basin College is located in Pasco, a city in the southeastern region of the state. There are approximately 69,000 residents in Pasco. The city's demographics differ from the rest of the state in that it has a large Latina/o population. Latina/os comprise half of the population in Pasco, followed by Whites (38.7%). African Americans and Asians each represent less than 2% of the population. Pasco along with two nearby cities, Kennewick and Richland, comprise the Tri-Cities area with approximately 200,000 residents. It is important to note that the three cities differ substantially in their demographic composition given that Latina/os make up only 24% of Kennewick's and 7.8% of Richland's populations. The local economy includes a lot of agriculture, manufacturing, and one of the largest employers in the region is the Hanford nuclear facility.

Columbia Basin College is fairly small with a little more than 6,000 students. The college's demographics mirror the surrounding community with White (58%) and Latina/o (31%) students representing the majority of students. Columbia Basin is recognized as an Hispanic Serving Institution and has received Title V federal funds to support its HSI initiatives. More than sixty percent of the students are 24 and under. Columbia Basin currently offers three applied bachelor's programs: Applied Management, Cyber Security, and Project Management. The two management programs are housed in the College of Business.

We interviewed the Director of Applied Baccalaureate Development and the Dean of Business. The Director of Applied Baccalaureate Development previously worked at Bellevue College and managed the applied baccalaureate program pilot in Radiation and Imaging Sciences.

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor Degree Completion?**

The primary motivation behind the bachelor's programs follows the trends in other states – meeting workforce needs and increasing baccalaureate attainment. To attain program approval, there must be extensive evidence verifying the need and the employability of graduates. The college provides this evidence to the SBCTC, who then

approves each additional program. The Dean also mentioned that when the state examined the overall demographics of the BAS programs, Columbia Basin accounted for much of the diversity given its large Latina/o population.

### **How Do You Advertise the Bachelor's Programs?**

The Director of Baccalaureate Development mentioned that the marketing of programs was focused regionally. She also mentioned that in long-term planning, more work could be done to inform middle and high school counselors on the BAS programs as students consider their educational trajectories. In a survey she developed for the local high school counselors, she found that most had heard about the BAS programs at Columbia Basin, but most did not fully understand the differences between the various programs and degrees. The Dean mentioned that recruitment is also done through various efforts on campus (brochures, flyers, etc.) and locally through chapters of professional associations. They also were working to partner with URM-owned businesses in the region to develop internships. She hoped that in the long-term, these internships could serve as a recruitment tool to enroll a more diverse student population as well.

### **Do URM Students Encounter Any Particular Barriers to the Bachelor's Programs? Are Programs Offered in Areas that Tend to Attract URMs?**

Some programs did enroll somewhat different student populations. The Cyber Security program appeared to enroll more White and Asian students, but it was noted that the program was working hard on addressing these enrollment gaps. In addition, it appeared that the demographics of the first two years of computer science were changing, so this might suggest that in a few more years the enrollment rates might increase for URMs in the computer-oriented BAS program. In contrast, the Applied Management program was more representative of the college's demographics, and the composition of the lower-division courses reflected the enrollment into the BAS programs. This program accepts several different Associate in Applied Science degrees, thereby increasing the pool of students eligible for this BAS. The Director of Baccalaureate Development mentioned that several colleges in the state were also starting their own Applied Management BAS degree. Lastly, the Project Management program's student diversity fell somewhere between the other two programs.

The barriers to bachelor's degrees are common for community college students and not specific to URMs. Specifically, many students struggle with math in lower-division courses. This struggle with math was mentioned as one of the reasons why students preferred to enroll in the Applied Management program at Columbia Basin College instead of the Washington State University (WSU) program. The WSU program required more math pre-requisites. Another common barrier was English writing skills since many students at the college are second language learners. Access to financial aid may also pose as a barrier when students may need to complete a few pre-requisites before beginning a BAS program.

Despite the typical barriers students face in community colleges, the Dean mentioned that many URMs were among the highest achieving students in the BAS

programs. In her more than 30 years at the college, she had observed a general change in the performance level of certain populations, such as second language learners. Where there were initially concerns about the skills of students of color many years ago, these same student populations were now competing very well and in some instances outperforming their peers at the college. It is notable, however, that data on URM enrollment and completion was collected by the system, and local campuses were not as aware of their racial and ethnic composition or the implications for program outcomes.

### **Are Special Services Provided to Help Ensure the Success of the URM Students?**

The Director of Applied Baccalaureate Development highlighted the importance of an embedded support system in the design and execution of the baccalaureate programs. More specifically, one person was hired to oversee the recruitment and retention for students in the BAS programs. This individual's primary role is to provide academic advising and advocate on behalf of the BAS students to ensure their seamless transition and success in these programs. While not specific to URM, there are tutoring services provided to ensure students obtain additional support for math and statistics.

### **Has There Been Any Attempt to Hire URM Faculty in the BA Programs?**

While the Dean noted that the diversity of the faculty did not necessarily reflect the student population, she had a good reputation for bringing in a diverse faculty. However, faculty diversity varied by program. For example, the Dean acknowledged that it was harder to recruit a diverse faculty in the Cyber Security program. While there was more faculty diversity in the management programs, there was still more work needed in order to better reflect the student population. The Dean further noted that there were few full-time faculty, which allowed them to be mindful in hiring adjuncts that could serve as excellent role models for students.

## **Bellevue College**

Bellevue College is located in Bellevue, a suburb east of Seattle across Lake Washington. Bellevue is Seattle's largest suburb with more than 136,000 residents. Historically, there were race clauses in the communities surrounding Seattle. Thus, Bellevue was very White and wealthy in most of its history but more recently has experienced demographic shifts. The city is still predominantly comprised of White (59.2%) and Asian (27.6%) residents. African Americans represent only 2% and Latina/os 7% of the city's demographics. The college is located near many well-known large and small technology companies.

Bellevue's student population somewhat reflects the surrounding community with White students comprising 47% of the student population followed by Asians (17%). In contrast, Latina/o (11%) and African American (5%) student enrollments are slightly higher than their representation in the city's demographics. Approximately 65% of the students are 24 years of age and under.

Bellevue was one of the first colleges to pilot an applied baccalaureate program. The college had five baccalaureate programs in 2014-15. Four are BAS programs: Radiation

and Imaging Sciences, Interior Design, Health Care Technology and Management, and Information Systems and Technology. In addition, there are four separate concentrations within the Radiation and Imaging Sciences. The fifth was a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This past summer, the college received legislative approval to begin developing a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. We interviewed the Vice President of Instruction, the Dean of Health Science and Wellness Institute, and the Director of Baccalaureate Development.

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor Degree Completion?**

Proving that there is a need in the labor market is the primary impetus behind developing the BAS programs. At Bellevue, the choice to pursue the Radiation and Imaging Sciences during the pilot phase was of particular interest because placement and wage earnings would be easier to track, thus showing the impact that BAS programs could have. While it appears that the concern of closing the degree completion gaps was possibly not the primary motivation with regards to the BAS, there was a clear indication that the system requires the colleges to consider how the proposed programs provide access to place bound and working students, including historically underrepresented students. The colleges thus have to address issues of access and equity during the program approval process.

In addition, the Director of Applied Baccalaureates shared how part of the college's rationale for pursuing approval to create a BS in Computer Science was its potential to serve a more racially diverse student population. Although the college may not enroll as many Latina/o or African American students, the college is only a bus ride away from many diverse communities. As such, the argument was that the community college could provide better access to a BS in Computer Science since the University of Washington turned away many lower division students from continuing in the major. These students, including URM, who are pushed out from the university's program have to redirect their career or major plans, or reverse transfer and enroll elsewhere. Given the high demand for this type of degree in the region, Bellevue could in essence work to provide these students and others, particularly URM, a pathway to the bachelor's. Now that this program has been approved, it will be important to monitor if it does serve as a critical gateway for URM in Computer Science.

### **How Do You Advertise the Bachelor's Programs?**

A lot of marketing of the programs happens through professional associations as well as career fairs where employees already possess a two-year degree and may want to return to get their bachelor's degree. Some mailings have also been used through some programs to do more targeted recruitment of recent graduates from particular programs. More than half of the students who enroll at Bellevue come from outside their immediate community. The general consensus was that more could be done to advertise the bachelor's programs and effectively brand the BAS programs.

## **Do URM Students Encounter Any Particular Barriers to the Bachelor's Programs? Are Programs Offered in Areas that Tend to Attract URMs?**

Acknowledging that student demographics at Bellevue differ from the other two campuses we visited, the Dean of Health Science and Wellness Institute noted that there were no differences between the students who enroll at Bellevue from those that enter the BAS programs. Despite the less diverse student population, the Dean mentioned that she and the Vice President for Instruction requested advice from the system on how to explicitly address access and equity with regards to the Bachelors of Science in Nursing. There was initially pushback from faculty to permit the use of a lottery as a way to level the playing field between applicants. The system provided some guidance on allowing for 25% of the program slots to be determined by GPA alone and another 25% that prioritize experience. The last 50% would be determined by a lottery. This was done in an effort to diversify the admission pool.

While no additional details were provided on the enrollment of URMs in the other BAS programs, the Director of Baccalaureate Development discussed how additional considerations could be made in the future to reach out to students who may be on the cusp of completing an AAS, such as those who may have a 1.9 GPA, in an effort to diversify the pool of students who could then possibly pursue a BAS program in the future.

## **Are Special Services Provided to Help Ensure the Success of the URM Students?**

The college has a student services plan but it appears to not be specific to URMs. However, there was a mention of several support services across the campus. These include: TRiO<sup>4</sup> Student Support and Retention Services, multicultural services, and financial aid.

## **Has There Been Any Attempt to Hire URM Faculty in the BA Programs?**

The college has thought about recruiting more faculty of color given the lack of diversity currently in the programs. The Dean of Health Science and Wellness Institute mentioned, however, that this also requires expanding the pipeline into graduate degrees for communities of color. Thus, students who graduate from these programs and pursue graduate degrees may become part of the pool of faculty applicants in the future and diversify the faculty ranks. The college also has a Chief Diversity Officer who developed an Equity and Inclusion plan that includes the hiring process across the college. In addition, there is also a mandatory equity workshop series that new faculty are required to complete. While this is optional for existing faculty, there are some incentives for other faculty to complete the workshop.

---

<sup>4</sup> TRiO is a federally funded program that provides academic support to low-income, first-generation college students and students with disabilities.

## **Highline College**

Highline College is located in Des Moines, a suburb between Seattle and Tacoma. Among the three colleges we visited, Highline was located in a more racially diverse community. While Whites constitute the majority in the surrounding community, there are approximately 9.1% African American, 15.2% Latina/o, and 10.7% Asian residents. In addition, approximately 3% of the community identify as Native American or Native Hawaiian.

Similarly, Highline College enrolls a more diverse student population than the other two colleges we visited. Students of color comprise one third of the college as follows: 15% Asian, 11% Latina/o, 10% African American, and 2% Native American or Native Hawaiian. White students made up approximately a third of the students at Highline College, and the remaining third were multiracial or did not report their racial background. Comparable to the other colleges, about two thirds of the students were under 24 years of age.

Highline began offering four applied bachelor's programs in 2014-15: Cybersecurity and Forensics, Global Trade and Logistics, Respiratory Care, and Youth Development. As such, these were the newest programs among the colleges we visited and consequently there were no graduates yet. Highline anticipates the first set of graduates in spring of 2016. We interviewed the Workforce and Baccalaureate Education Director.

### **What was the Impetus for the Bachelor's Program? Was There a Concern about Closing Racial/Ethnic Gaps in Bachelor Degree Completion?**

The Workforce and Baccalaureate Education Director considered the introduction of bachelor's degrees at the community college as a means to a living wage for students. She further clarified that access to a living wage and providing students pathways to non-terminal degrees was especially important for underrepresented students given the region where the college was located. Although Seattle is one of the most affluent areas in the nation, not everyone has access to the same opportunities. Students in South King County, where Highline is located, particularly need access to credentials that will help them compete in the Seattle/King County job market. In addition, she echoed what other college representatives mentioned with regards to meeting the needs of the labor market.

### **How Do You Advertise the Bachelor's Programs?**

The Workforce and Baccalaureate Education Director noted that the marketing of the BAS programs is mainly done with current students enrolled in the AAS programs. In addition, the Director was creating workshops for college staff to inform them about the BAS programs. She also mentioned reaching out to the TRiO programs on campus to inform them of the new baccalaureate opportunities available at the college, given the commitment of this federally funded program to increase access to postsecondary degrees for first-generation, low-income students.



## **Do URM Students Encounter Any Particular Barriers to the Bachelor's Programs? Are Programs Offered in Areas that Tend to Attract URMs?**

A third of students at Highline College are students of color. In fact, the Director of Baccalaureate Education notes that Highline is often touted as the most diverse college in the state of Washington. Consequently, most of the students in the BAS programs are students of color. However, the Director recognized that issues of equity must always remain at the forefront of everyone's mind. She further reinforced that there will always be a need to examine the systems in place that may impede students from achieving their educational and professional goals. As the baccalaureate programs have been developed at the college, the programs have been designed towards serving students of color and helping them earn the skills to enter the workforce. The Director noted that, more frequently, employers in certain fields are seeking employees who are bilingual, a population that is well represented at the college. The Director saw this as an opportunity to draw from the community's bilingual skills. However, a common barrier that exists among community college students was math.

## **Are Special Services Provided to Help Ensure the Success of the URM Students?**

The Workforce and Baccalaureate Education Director serves as a key advocate for students in the BAS programs. When students encountered barriers, they could connect with the Director, who could then help connect them to the various support services available on campus. The Director also mentioned connecting students to TRIO, and also thinking long-term about bringing in other support services that have adopted culturally relevant approaches and been effective in promoting student success, such as the Puente Program in California. The Umoja program has already been implemented on campus and began serving the first cohort of students in 2015-16.

The Director further highlighted several programs, services, and centers on campus that work with students and highlight pathways into the bachelor programs. Moreover, students work closely with both the applied bachelor faculty leads. With smaller classes, URM students are able to receive critical support. Students are also able to access scholarships on campus.

## **Has There Been Any Attempt to Hire URM Faculty in the BA Programs?**

The BAS programs do have some faculty of color. In addition, the BAS programs work with URM faculty from other departments, such as Communications, Sociology, and Political Science for the GE requirement courses. The Director noted, however, that more could always be done to ensure a broader representation of URM faculty in the college and across the system. The college is committed to having diverse staff and faculty on campus.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

California is embarking on a monumental shift in its higher education policy. The state is not a pioneer in this endeavor – it is 22<sup>nd</sup> in the nation to establish a community college baccalaureate—but the potential is arguably greater for California than for any other state. This is because it allows the state to address, in innovative ways, what we previously described as the elephant in the living room. California is lagging behind in college degrees – soon to be at least one million short by latest counts—because its URM population, and Latinos in particular, are not acquiring these degrees. White students and Asian students in the state continue to get four-year degrees at relatively high rates. The gap between White/Asian degree completion (45% and 58% respectively) and Black/Latino degree completion (27% and 13% respectively) is stunning. And given that Latinos are now the majority of students in California’s K-12 schools, the gap is indeed disturbing.

The community college baccalaureate has the potential to change this. It has the potential to take a state that is 45<sup>th</sup> in the nation in baccalaureate completions and make significant gains in BA production among those students who have been least likely to get a college degree. But this will not happen without conscious attention to this as a goal. We have seen the potential go unrealized at other colleges we have studied. And it has not been for lack of desiring such an outcome. We believe it is due to a failure to make this an explicit goal. For this reason, we offer the following conclusions and recommendations.

1. Even where a real impetus for community college baccalaureate programs may be closing the gap in college degrees between URM and others, programs are primarily –or entirely—framed as meeting workforce needs. This appears to be the way the programs are sold to sometimes reluctant legislatures and others who might oppose the programs. Framed as meeting workforce needs, their potential for increasing the degree completion of URM may not be realized (even when there is a system level acknowledgement of this goal) if there is no overt focus on this outcome at the individual college level.
  - *Hence, we recommend that there be a focus on data collection and monitoring of the extent to which these programs enroll and graduate URM students that extends beyond the system level to the campus level and that the campuses be instructed to monitor these data.*
  - *We also recommend that each campus offering the baccalaureate be required to submit an equity plan that provides guidelines for ensuring that access, and success, in these programs is equitable.*
2. We did not see any attention to the issue of whether the programs selected for the bachelor degree at the campuses we studied were programs likely to attract URM. Oftentimes, URM may not pursue or be channeled out from programs that require strong preparation in math and science, as their high schools have not prepared them well in these areas. This, in turn, may result in eschewing programs that may be the most remunerative and provide superior labor market opportunities.

- *Among the considerations for a closing-the-gap strategy should be the types of programs that are offered: In addition to meeting workforce needs, are these programs likely to attract URM? Are they located in places that URM are likely to be able to attend? Campuses should collect data on program applications by race and ethnicity.*
  - *Programs with requirements that may result in low enrollment of URM should consider how they can maintain their rigor while simultaneously offering prerequisite courses that meet the basic standards for the program in a more “user friendly” format, or that provide additional support for students who may arrive at the campus underprepared by their secondary schools. A more “user friendly” example is the requirement of an approved statistics course instead of Algebra 2, especially when Algebra 2 is not really necessary for success in the program. Or, offering a “shadow” class that scaffolds and supports the core class, where students otherwise demonstrate sufficiently strong skills to be successful in the program.*
3. If URM are to be attracted to these programs, it is imperative that they have accurate and timely information about them. At most of the campuses we studied, there was no real outreach plan to attract URM. Candidates for the bachelor’s programs were generally taken from the pool of students in the associate’s program. Thus, if the lower division pool was not diverse, the candidates for the bachelor’s degree were not likely to be diverse either.
- *Colleges need to have a marketing and outreach plan to reach underrepresented groups, and this should go beyond simply informing their own students of the program, unless their student pool is highly diverse.*
  - *Colleges should take advantage of the existence of college success programs such as Puente and Umoja to create connections with their baccalaureate programs. These programs are geared to preparing students for success in the BA and are a natural source of qualified applicants from underrepresented groups.*
4. We did not see major structural barriers to enrollment in the bachelor’s programs (colleges generally required a few extra courses to meet general education or specific technical requirements), as they were keeping costs and criteria for admission to a minimum in many of the programs, usually citing a 2.0 as the GPA requirement, and not usually higher than a 2.5 for specific programs. For most programs there was not an examination barrier. However, some programs, especially in health sciences, were becoming “impacted” and directors noted that those students with lower grades were not faring particularly well. This was leading to rising admissions criteria and the institution of entrance examinations, including the consideration of the GRE or similar tests. In some cases, students were being admitted competitively according to GPA. This could represent a trend as programs become more popular. Thus, one of the great benefits of the community college bachelor’s degree, its easier access for URM students who may not be as competitive for the degree program (because of unequal preparation),

can be lost if program directors are not equally vigilant about equity alongside program quality.

- *Barriers to access may be raised as programs mature and demand for them increases. This issue should be carefully considered by community college staff, and equalizing measures be put into place. These might include such things as bridge programs or intensive courses to help URM and other low-income students better prepare to be competitive for admission and success in the programs. It is important for the state to monitor this issue over time.*
  - *Programs may want to consider skills such as multilingualism as an offsetting admissions criterion to make such students more competitive for admission even in the face of increasingly demanding admissions criteria.*
5. Recruitment and especially retention of URM tends to be associated with the presence of a critical mass of URM students as well as faculty, which points to a need to focus on this challenge. However, we saw little evidence of specific attention to bringing in a critical mass of URM students or of hiring URM faculty.
- *The recruitment and retention of URM faculty teaching in the bachelor degree programs should be monitored to keep a focus on faculty diversity to the extent possible.*
  - *Professional development for existing faculty dedicated to understanding and supporting URM students should be considered as part of a strategy to increase the success of these students in the BA programs.*
  - *The Posse Program<sup>5</sup> is a successful model that admits a small cohort of URM students together with some counseling support to help them support each other through college. Such a model could prove useful for the community college baccalaureate programs.*
6. Most programs we studied are geared to transition students directly into jobs in the region and thus are workforce related. However, in Washington state as well as at MDC in Miami, there was a real consciousness of the possibility that graduates of these programs might go on to further study and this did not appear to be impaired by the structure of the programs. Moreover, all programs were requiring that students meet general education requirements associated with the standard bachelor's degree in their state. At MDC, the college touted the success of some of its students being accepted to prestigious graduate schools, and such stories are carried in the school newspaper. Moreover, program directors at MDC called attention to the specific pathway to graduate programs in some of their bachelor's programs. Similarly, in Washington, program leaders mentioned baccalaureate alumni who were pursuing graduate study.

---

<sup>5</sup> [www.possefoundation.org](http://www.possefoundation.org)

- *As these programs grow in California, it would be important to ensure that they do not foreclose opportunity for students who might want to continue their studies, and that they provide both information and encouragement (where appropriate) for further study.*
7. We saw a consistent pattern of Latino students enrolling in and graduating from most programs at lower rates than their representation in the campus population. This appeared to be related, in part, to greater economic struggles and to the immigration status of some Latino students. Some campuses provided targeted services to undocumented students, including seeking financial aid for them. California has more liberal financial aid policies for undocumented students who are still unable to qualify for Pell grants and other forms of aid that may be critical for enrolling and staying in college.
- *Attention to the specific financial needs of DACA<sup>6</sup>, and other undocumented students needs to be addressed, and it is important to understand to what extent this is hampering the enrollment and completion of bachelor degree programs for Latino (and other) students.*
  - *The BOG application waiver currently available only for lower division coursework should be extended to the upper division to reduce the costs of applying for the baccalaureate programs.*
8. Beyond the issue of citizenship, it is important to understand why Latino students are underrepresented in these bachelor's programs in other states, and whether this could become a phenomenon in California as well. Locating programs in places where Latinos live, or near convenient transportation, is one important factor. Availability of part-time versus full-time attendance may be another. But informants did not have a ready answer to this question.
- *It is important to investigate factors that may contribute to a phenomenon of underrepresentation of Latino students in bachelor's programs, if this becomes apparent in California.*
9. Several colleges noted that bilingual skills, such as Spanish and Mandarin speaking ability, were a clear advantage for students in the fields represented by the baccalaureate programs in all states studied. In some places they were actively encouraging, or even requiring students to strengthen their Spanish language skills. This could also be a marketing edge to recruit underrepresented Latino students to the programs.
- *California colleges may want to think about how they incorporate Spanish and other language skills into their recruitment strategies, perhaps even offering*

---

<sup>6</sup> Deferred Action Childhood Arrivals, those students who have spent most of their lives in the U.S., graduated from U.S. high schools and are able to qualify for deferred action on deportation in order to pursue higher education or military service.

*something like the Seal of Biliteracy.<sup>7</sup> The Seal advertises to potential employers that the graduate has high-level bilingual skills that should make them even more sought after as employees.*

10. The California Legislature may want to expand the opportunity for more students to be served by these programs by removing the requirement that the BA programs not be duplicated at other segments of higher education anywhere in the state, and change this to anywhere in the region. California is a big state. If a bachelor degree program is located only at San Diego State but students live in Redding, this does them little good. Especially as the BA program at the Community Colleges proves itself as a viable way of improving access for URM, the State should consider reducing the barriers regionally.

Fortunately, it is still early in the implementation of the new baccalaureate degree program in California's community colleges. There is time to incorporate strategies that could have a significant impact on the college degree completion of many underrepresented students. Moreover, all the relevant partners – the legislative office from which this initiative was launched, the Chancellor's Office of the Community Colleges that will implement the initiative, and the Legislative Analyst's Office that will conduct a first stage evaluation of the implementation for 2017 -- have all expressed an interest in monitoring the equity issues associated with this project. We hope that by calling attention to these issues and providing some recommendations that could address those concerns, the community college baccalaureate will not only successfully meet important workforce needs for the state but also make a dent in the distressingly low degree completion rates for California's underrepresented students.

---

<sup>7</sup> The Seal of Biliteracy is currently offered to students who graduate from California high schools demonstrating strong skills in the four modalities – understanding, speaking, reading, and writing—in two or more languages. Evidence suggests that this is an advantage to would-be employees in the labor market (Porras et al, 2014).

## References

Bemmel, E. P. (2008). *A cost-effectiveness analysis of two community college baccalaureate programs in Florida: An exploratory study* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3338441)

Burrows, B. A. (2011). *The vertical extension of Florida's community college system: A case study of politics and entrepreneurial leadership* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3108475)

California Community Colleges (CCC). (2014). *Report from the California community colleges baccalaureate degree study group*. Sacramento, CA: California Community Colleges. Retrieved from [http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/reportsTB/2014\\_01\\_BacDegree\\_StudyGroup\\_WEB.pdf](http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/portals/0/reportsTB/2014_01_BacDegree_StudyGroup_WEB.pdf)

California Community Colleges (CCC). (2015). *Key facts about the California community colleges*. Sacramento, CA: California Community Colleges. Retrieved from <http://www.californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/PolicyInAction/KeyFacts.aspx>

California Department of Education. (2015). *Current expense of education*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/fd/ec/currentexpense.asp>

Campaign for College Opportunity. (2015, April). *The state of higher education in California: The Latino report*. Los Angeles, CA: Campaign for College Opportunity. Retrieved from [http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015-State-of-Higher-Education\\_Latinos.pdf](http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/2015-State-of-Higher-Education_Latinos.pdf)

College Board (2016). *Trends in higher education. Trends in college pricing*. New York: College Board. Retrieved from <http://trends.collegeboard.org/college-pricing/figures-tables/average-published-undergraduate-charges-sector-2015-16#Key Points>

Colorado Commission on Higher Education. (2013). *Analysis and background on community college bachelor's of applied science bill draft*. Retrieved from [https://highered.colorado.gov/CCHE/Meetings/2013/dec/dec5\\_cccsBASbill.pdf](https://highered.colorado.gov/CCHE/Meetings/2013/dec/dec5_cccsBASbill.pdf)

DataQuest. (2015). *California educational data*. Sacramento, CA: California Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://data1.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/>

Daugherty, L., Goldman, C. A., Butterfield, L., & Miller, T. (2014). *Assessing the potential to expand community college baccalaureate programs in Texas*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation. Retrieved from [http://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RR745.html](http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR745.html)

Daun-Barnett, N. (2011). Community college baccalaureate: A fixed effects, multi-year study of the influence of state policy on nursing degree production. *Higher Education Policy*, 24(3), 377-398. doi:10.1057/hep.2011.10

Daun-Barnett, N., & Escalante, S. (2014). Local Influences of community college baccalaureate legislation on Nursing and Teaching degree production in Florida. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 38(11), 1030-1043. doi: 10.1080/10668926.2012.729496

Davis, K. A. (2012). *Faculty perceptions of educational innovation as it pertains to the community college baccalaureate degree* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3499679)

Department of Finance. (2003). *California 2000 population distribution in proximity to public postsecondary institutions*. Sacramento, CA: Demographic Research Unit. Retrieved from [http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports\\_papers/documents/Postsecondary\\_Proximity.pdf](http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports_papers/documents/Postsecondary_Proximity.pdf)

England-Siegerdt, C., & Andreas, M. (2012). Washington state's model and programs: Applied baccalaureate degrees at community and technical colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 158, 25-33. doi: 10.1002/cc.20014

Excelencia in Education. (2014). *Latino college completion: California*. Washington, DC: Excelencia in Education.

Fain, P. (2013, January 22). Michigan lets community colleges issue four-year degrees, amid controversy. *Inside Higher Ed*. Retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/01/22/michigan-lets-community-colleges-issue-four-year-degrees-amid-controversy>

The Florida College System. (2014, February). *Florida college system baccalaureate accountability*. Tallahassee, FL: Florida Department of Education. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/fcs/OSAS/Evaluations/pdf/FYI-baccalaureateaccountability.pdf>

Floyd, D. L., & Walker, K. P. (2008): The community college baccalaureate: Putting the pieces together. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 33(2), 90-124. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10668920802564667>

Gándara, P., Alvarado, E., Driscoll, A., & Orfield, G., (2012). *Building pathways to transfer: Community colleges that break the chain of failure for students of color*. Los Angeles, CA: Civil Rights Project/Proyecto Derechos Civiles, UCLA.

Gándara, P., & Contreras, F. (2009). *The Latino education crisis: The consequences of failed social policies*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Geiser, S., & Atkinson, R. C. (2013). Beyond the master plan: The case for restructuring baccalaureate education in California. *California Journal of Politics and Policy*, 5(1), 67-123. doi: 10.1515/cjpp-2012-0042



- Grothe, M. (2009). *The community college applied baccalaureate degree: Employers' and graduates' perspectives* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/13400/?sequence=1>
- Hrabak, M. R. (2013). *Policy and practice: An analysis of the 2001 Florida Senate Bill 1162* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3571412)
- Johnson, H., & Sengupta, R. (2009). *Closing the gap: Meeting California's need for college graduates*. San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California. Retrieved from <http://www.ppic.org/main/publication.asp?i=835>
- Joint Committee to Develop a Master Plan for Education. (2002). *California Master Plan for Education*. Retrieved from [http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/master\\_plan2002.pdf](http://www.ucop.edu/acadinit/mastplan/master_plan2002.pdf)
- Kidder, W. C., & Gándara, P. (2015). *Two decades after the Affirmative Action ban: Evaluating the University of California's race-neutral efforts*. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service.
- Kiely, L. (2010). *Factors that influence faculty intentions to support the community college baccalaureate* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3427261)
- Koseff, A. (2015, January 20). California community colleges board approves 15 pilot bachelor's degrees. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from <http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article7780146.html>
- Levin, J. S. (2004). The community college as a baccalaureate-granting institution. *The Review of Higher Education*, 28(1), 1-22. doi: 10.1353/rhe.2004.0029
- Manias, N. (2007). *The baccalaureate community colleges in Florida: A policy evaluation* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3274&context=etd>
- McKee, J. V. (2001). *Factors and issues surrounding development of one community college baccalaureate degree program* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from [http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/9424/McKee\\_Jonathon\\_V\\_2001.pdf?sequence=1](http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/9424/McKee_Jonathon_V_2001.pdf?sequence=1)
- McKinney, L., & Morris, P. A. (2010). Examining an evolution: A case study of organizational change accompanying the community college baccalaureate. *Community College Review*, 37(3), 187-208. doi: 10.1177/0091552109351185
- Miami Dade College Forum (2012, April). *Bachelor's programs open doors to success*. Retrieved from [http://www.mdc.edu/main/collegeforum/archive/vol16-02/features/l0100\\_bachelors.aspx](http://www.mdc.edu/main/collegeforum/archive/vol16-02/features/l0100_bachelors.aspx)

Mitchell, T. (2014, March 27). State college bachelor degree 'mission creep' becomes focus of Senate tuition proposal. *Tampa Bay Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.tampabay.com/blogs/the-buzz-florida-politics/state-college-bachelor-degree-mission-creep-becomes-focus-of-senate/2172248>

Moore, C., & Shulock, N. (2010). *Divided we fail: Improving completion and closing racial gaps in California's community colleges*. Sacramento, CA: Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy, California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from [http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2010\\_10\\_Divided\\_We\\_Fail\\_Full\\_Report-1.pdf](http://collegecampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2010_10_Divided_We_Fail_Full_Report-1.pdf)

Mullin, C. M. (2010, June). *Rebalancing the mission: The community college completion challenge* (Policy Brief 2010-02PBL). Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges.

Nasse, J. P. (2013). *Perceptions of professionalism: A case study of community college baccalaureate faculty* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3576236)

National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. (2005). *Policy alert supplement: California*. San Jose, CA: National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Retrieved from [http://www.highereducation.org/reports/pa\\_decline/states/CA.pdf](http://www.highereducation.org/reports/pa_decline/states/CA.pdf)

New Mexico Higher Education Department. (nd). *Northern New Mexico college dashboard*. Retrieved from <http://nmhedss2.state.nm.us/DashBoard>.

Perez, V. (2010). *Is the applied baccalaureate degree right for California?* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://csus.dspace.calstate.edu/bitstream/handle/10211.9/562/Thesis%20-%20combined%20chapters.pdf?sequence=1>

Pershin, G. (2006). *Adoption of policies that permit community colleges to grant bachelor degrees in Florida: Frame analysis* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3252158)

Porter, S. R., Cominole, M. B., & Jaquette, O. (2014). *Do community college baccalaureate degree policies increase degree production?* Paper presented at The Association for Education Finance and Policy, San Antonio, TX. Retrieved from, [http://stephenporter.org/wp-content/uploads/CCBA\\_paper\\_AEFP.pdf](http://stephenporter.org/wp-content/uploads/CCBA_paper_AEFP.pdf)

Porras, D., Ee, J. & Gándara, P. (2014). Surveying the linguistic landscape: Bilingualism and employment opportunities. In R. Callahan & P. Gándara (Eds.), *The bilingual advantage: Language, literacy, and the labor market* (pp. 234–257). Bristol, England: Multilingual Matters.

Remington, R., & Remington, N. (2005). The baccalaureate as agent of change: Great Basin College. In D. L. Floyd, M. L. Skolnik, & K. P. Walker (Eds.), *The community college*

*baccalaureate: Emerging trends & policy issues* (pp. 139-152). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Rice, J. P. (2013). Mission metamorphosis. In N. Remington & R. Remington (Eds.), *Alternative pathways to the baccalaureate: Do community colleges offer a viable solution to the nation's knowledge deficit* (pp. 36-49). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Ross, D. G. (2007). *Two-year colleges offering baccalaureate programming: Faculty development and support needs*. (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3243744)

Russell, A. (2010). *Update on the community college baccalaureate: Evolving trends and issues*. Washington, DC: American Association of State Colleges and Universities.

Russell, A. B. (2013). Update on the community college baccalaureate: Evolving trends and issues. In N. Remington & R. Remington (Eds.), *Alternative pathways to the baccalaureate: Do community colleges offer a viable solution to the nation's knowledge deficit* (pp. 67-83). Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Senate Rules Committee. (2014). *CA SB850 third reading: Senate floor analysis*. Retrieved from [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill\\_id=201320140SB850](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billAnalysisClient.xhtml?bill_id=201320140SB850)

Shah, V. J. (2010). *An exploratory study of community college teacher education baccalaureate alumni experiences* (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://www.accbd.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/dissertation2.pdf>

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2010). *The feasibility of expanding Texas community college baccalaureate programs: Report to the 81st Legislature*. Austin, TX: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Townsend, B. K., & Twombly, S. (2007). *Community college faculty: Overlooked and undervalued: ASHE higher education report*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

United States Census. (2015). *Current population survey*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>

University System of Georgia Board of Regents — Office of Research and Policy Analysis. (2009). *Time-to-degree for FY2008 bachelor's degree graduates*. Atlanta, GA: University System of Georgia Board of Regents. Retrieved from <http://www.usg.edu/research/documents/publications/rn-mar09.pdf>

Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. (2015a). *Applied baccalaureate degrees: Policy and outcomes evaluation*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges.

Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges. (2015b). *Post program earnings differences between the Associate in Applied Science and Applied Baccalaureate Degrees: Companion report to "Applied baccalaureate degree: policy and outcomes evaluation."* Olympia, WA: Washington State Board of Community and Technical Colleges.

Whitson, J. (2004, November 13). Vincennes University clears last hurdle to offer baccalaureate degrees. *Evansville Courier & Press*. Retrieved from <http://www.indianaeconomicdigest.net/main.asp?SectionID=31&subsectionID=195&articleID=15450>

## **Appendix A**

### **Historical Overview of California's Legislative Attempts To Offer Baccalaureates at the Community College**

Between 2005-2014, a handful of legislators authored bills attempting to permit a few community colleges the opportunity to offer baccalaureates. The first bill AB 1932 was introduced by Bill Maze in 2004. This bill would have established an advisory committee to recommend a framework for two Central Valley community colleges to begin offering bachelor's degrees. While this bill failed, the following year, Assemblyman Maze successfully promoted a community college baccalaureate partnership program through AB 1280. This bill authorized two annual grants in the amount of \$50,000 to collaborations between one or more community colleges and baccalaureate-granting institutions. The governor signed this bill in 2005. While this attempt did not confer baccalaureate-granting authority to community colleges, it did reinforce the critical role that these institutions play in promoting degree completion.

A few years later, a renewed effort emerged to create community college baccalaureate pilot programs at community colleges. In 2009, Jerry Hill authored AB 1455 to allow one community college to offer such a program. This bill failed and was then folded into AB 2400 the following year, which was authored by Marty Block. AB 2400 would have allowed San Mateo, San Diego and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College Districts to establish these pilot programs, but the effort again failed. Marty Block drafted another attempt in 2011 through AB 661 to establish baccalaureate programs at San Diego and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College Districts. Although this bill passed in the Higher Education subcommittee, it failed in the General Assembly due to inactivity. These sustained efforts subsequently paved the way for the successful passage of SB 850.

#### **Support for SB 850**

SB 850 was supported by Senators Hill and Anderson, along with Senators Beall, Correa, Hueso, Lara, Roth, Torres, Vidak, Wyland and Assembly Member Chávez, all listed as co-authors of the bill. The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office also supported the push for the legislation. In 2013, the Chancellor's office commissioned a group comprised of community college CEOs, trustees, academic and student support officers, faculty senate members, as well as UC and CSU representatives to explore how baccalaureate programs could complement the various goals of community colleges and meet regional workforce needs (California Community Colleges, 2014). The group recognized some inherent challenges to the development of these programs. For example, with the inclusion of admission criteria to the upper division level coursework, the programs would require additional state funding and might slightly alter the community college's open access mission. The faculty, in particular, argued that the legislation would modify the California Master Plan and change the college's mission (Senate Rules Committee, 2014). Nonetheless, the baccalaureate degree study group concluded that the community college baccalaureate programs provided a tremendous opportunity to serve underserved areas and populations, respond to workforce needs, benefit the state's

economy, remove barriers for degree completion, and compensate for a lack of university capacity in some fields (California Community Colleges, 2014). In other words, these programs enhanced the multifaceted mission of the state's community colleges rather than detracted from it.

Despite support for the bill, it was amended as it worked its way through the legislature to allay concerns held by the state's four-year institutions. The amended bill authorized the Board of Governors to establish a statewide pilot baccalaureate degree program at a maximum of 15 community college districts. The Chancellor would review program proposals and the Board of Governors would approve which community college districts would pilot programs. The program would commence January 2015 and participating district programs had to begin to offer programs by 2017–18. Participating students had to complete their degrees by the 2022–23 academic year. The bill also stated that the baccalaureate degrees must not be currently offered by the CSU or the UC (see Appendix B for the Authorizing Legislation).

The bill authorized that a community college district could seek approval to offer only one baccalaureate program that fulfilled a documented workforce need in the local region of the district. The districts were also required to obtain approval through the appropriate accrediting body in order to offer the program, and the pilot programs had to maintain the traditional mission of the community college to advance California's economic and global competitiveness. The districts also had to demonstrate that they possessed the necessary resources, expertise, and students to offer a quality degree in the area of study. The Legislative Analyst's Office will conduct a statewide evaluation of the baccalaureate degree pilot program due in 2022.

## **Appendix B**

### **Senate Bill No. 850**

#### **CHAPTER 747**

An act to add and repeal Article 3 (commencing with Section 78040) of Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, relating to public postsecondary education.

[ Approved by Governor September 28, 2014. Filed with Secretary of State September 28, 2014. ]

#### *LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST*

SB 850, Block. Public postsecondary education: community college districts: baccalaureate degree pilot program.

Existing law establishes the California Community Colleges, under the administration of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, as one of the segments of public postsecondary education in this state. Existing law requires the board of governors to appoint a chief executive officer, to be known as the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges. Existing law establishes community college districts, administered by governing boards, throughout the state, and authorizes these districts to provide instruction to students at the community college campuses maintained by the districts.

Existing law requires community colleges to offer instruction through, but not beyond, the 2nd year of college and authorizes community colleges to grant associate degrees in arts and science.

This bill would, commencing January 1, 2015, authorize the board of governors, in consultation with the California State University and the University of California, to establish a statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program at not more than 15 community college districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, to be determined by the chancellor and approved by the board of governors. The bill would prohibit each participating district from offering more than one baccalaureate degree program within the district, as specified. The bill would require a district baccalaureate degree pilot program to commence by the beginning of the 2017–18 academic year, and would require a student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program to complete his or her degree by the end of the 2022–23 academic year. The bill would require participating community college districts to meet specified requirements, including, but not limited to, offering baccalaureate degree programs and program curricula not offered by the California State University or the University of California, and in subject areas with unmet workforce needs, as specified.

This bill would also require the governing board of a participating community college district to submit certain items for review by the chancellor and approval by the board of governors, including, among other things, the administrative plan for the baccalaureate degree pilot program and documentation of consultation with the California State University and the University of

California. The bill would provide that the Legislative Analyst's Office shall conduct both a statewide interim evaluation and a statewide final evaluation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program implemented under this article, as specified, and report to the Legislature and Governor, in writing, the results of the interim evaluation on or before July 1, 2018, and the results of the final evaluation on or before July 1, 2022. The bill would provide that on or before March 31, 2015, the board of governors shall develop, and adopt by regulation, a funding model for the support of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program, as specified.

This bill would make these provisions inoperative on July 1, 2023, and would repeal the provisions on January 1, 2024.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

---

## ***BILL TEXT***

### ***THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:***

#### **SECTION 1.**

The Legislature finds and declares all of the following:

(a) California needs to produce one million more baccalaureate degrees than the state currently produces to remain economically competitive in the coming decades.

(b) The 21st century workplace increasingly demands a higher level of education in applied fields.

(c) There is demand for education beyond the associate degree level in specific academic disciplines that is not currently being met by California's four-year public institutions.

(d) Community colleges can help fill the gaps in our higher education system by granting baccalaureate degrees in a limited number of areas in order to meet a growing demand for a skilled workforce.

(e) These baccalaureate programs will be limited and will not in any way detract from the community colleges' traditional mission to advance California's economic growth and global competitiveness through education, training, and services that contribute to continuous workforce improvement, nor will these programs unnecessarily duplicate similar programs offered by nearby public four-year institutions.

(f) Community colleges can provide a quality baccalaureate education to their students, enabling place-bound local students and military veterans the opportunity to earn the baccalaureate degree needed for new job opportunities and promotion.

(g) Twenty-one other states, from Florida to Hawaii, already allow their community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. California is one of the most innovative states in the nation, and the California Community Colleges will use that same innovative spirit to produce more professionals in health, biotechnology, public safety, and other needed fields.

#### **SEC. 2.**

Article 3 (commencing with Section 78040) is added to Chapter 1 of Part 48 of Division 7 of Title 3 of the Education Code, to read:

#### ***Article 3. Baccalaureate Degree Pilot Program***

##### **78040.**

For purposes of this article, "district" means any community college district identified by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges as participating in the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program. Each participating district may establish one baccalaureate degree pilot program pursuant to Section 78041.

##### **78041.**

Notwithstanding Section 66010.4, and commencing January 1, 2015, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, in consultation with the California State University and the



University of California, may authorize the establishment of district baccalaureate degree pilot programs that meet all of the eligibility requirements set forth in Section 78042. A district pilot program established pursuant to this article shall commence no later than the 2017–18 academic year. A student participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program shall complete his or her degree by the end of the 2022–23 academic year. For purposes of this section, a pilot program commences when the first class of students begins the program. The statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program shall consist of a maximum of 15 districts, with one baccalaureate degree program each, to be determined by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and approved by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

#### **78042.**

(a) A district shall seek approval to offer a baccalaureate degree program through the appropriate accreditation body.

(b) When seeking approval from the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, a district shall maintain the primary mission of the California Community Colleges specified in paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 66010.4. The district, as part of the baccalaureate degree pilot program, shall have the additional mission to provide high-quality undergraduate education at an affordable price for students and the state.

(c) As a condition of eligibility for consideration to participate in the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program, a district shall have a written policy that requires all potential students who wish to apply for a Board of Governors Fee Waiver pursuant to Section 76300 to complete and submit either a Free Application for Federal Student Aid or a California Dream Act application in lieu of completing the Board of Governors Fee Waiver application.

(d) A district shall not offer more than one baccalaureate degree program, as determined by the governing board of the district and approved by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, and subject to the following limitations:

(1) A district shall identify and document unmet workforce needs in the subject area of the baccalaureate degree to be offered and offer a baccalaureate degree at a campus in a subject area with unmet workforce needs in the local community or region of the district.

(2) A baccalaureate degree pilot program shall not offer a baccalaureate degree program or program curricula already offered by the California State University or the University of California.

(3) A district shall have the expertise, resources, and student interest to offer a quality baccalaureate degree in the chosen field of study.

(4) A district shall not offer more than one baccalaureate degree program within the district, which shall be limited to one campus within the district.

(5) A district shall notify a student who applies to the district's baccalaureate degree pilot program that the student is required to complete his or her baccalaureate degree by the end of the 2022–23 academic year, as specified in Section 78041.

(e) A district shall maintain separate records for students who are enrolled in courses classified in the upper division and lower division of a baccalaureate program. A student shall be reported as a community college student for enrollment in a lower division course and as a baccalaureate degree program student for enrollment in an upper division course.

(f) A governing board of a district seeking authorization to offer a baccalaureate degree pilot program shall submit all of the following for review by the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges and approval by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges:

(1) Documentation of the district's written policy required by subdivision (c).

(2) The administrative plan for the baccalaureate degree pilot program, including, but not limited to, the governing board of the district's funding plan for its specific district.

(3) A description of the baccalaureate degree pilot program's curriculum, faculty, and facilities.

(4) The enrollment projections for the baccalaureate degree pilot program.

(5) Documentation regarding unmet workforce needs specifically related to the proposed baccalaureate degree pilot program, and a written statement supporting the necessity of a four-year degree for that program.

(6) Documentation of consultation with the California State University and the University of California regarding collaborative approaches to meeting regional workforce needs.

(g) (1) On or before March 31, 2015, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges shall develop, and adopt by regulation, a funding model for the support of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program that is based on a calculation of the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in all district pilot programs.

(2) Funding for each full-time equivalent student shall be at a marginal cost calculation, as determined by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, that shall not exceed the community college credit instruction marginal cost calculation for a full-time equivalent student, as determined pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (d) of Section 84750.5.

(3) A student in a baccalaureate degree pilot program authorized by this article shall not be charged fees higher than the mandatory systemwide fees charged for baccalaureate degree programs at the California State University.

(4) Fees for coursework in a baccalaureate degree pilot program shall be consistent with Article 1 (commencing with Section 76300) of Chapter 2 of Part 47.

(5) A district shall, in addition to the fees charged pursuant to paragraph (4), charge a fee for upper division coursework in a baccalaureate degree pilot program of eighty-four dollars (\$84) per unit.

(h) (1) The Legislative Analyst's Office shall conduct both an interim and a final statewide evaluation of the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program implemented pursuant to this article.

(2) The results of the interim evaluation shall be reported as a progress report, in writing, to the Legislature and the Governor on or before July 1, 2018. The interim evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(A) How many, and which specific, districts applied for a baccalaureate degree pilot program, and the baccalaureate degree pilot programs they applied for.

(B) Which potential four-year baccalaureate degrees were denied and why they were denied.

(C) Baccalaureate degree pilot program costs and the funding sources that were used to finance these programs.

(D) Current trends in workforce demands that require four-year degrees in the specific degree programs being offered through the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program.

(E) Current completion rates, if available, for each cohort of students participating in a baccalaureate degree pilot program.

(F) Information on the impact of baccalaureate degree pilot program on underserved and underprepared students.

(3) The results of the final evaluation shall be reported, in writing, to the Legislature and the Governor on or before July 1, 2022. The final evaluation shall include, but is not limited to, all of the following:

(A) The number of new district baccalaureate degree pilot programs implemented, including information identifying the number of new programs, applicants, admissions, enrollments, and degree recipients.

(B) The extent to which the baccalaureate degree pilot programs established under this article fulfill identified workforce needs for new baccalaureate degree programs, including statewide supply and demand data that considers capacity at the California State University, the University of California, and in California's independent colleges and universities.

(C) Information on the place of employment of students and the subsequent job placement of graduates.

(D) Baccalaureate degree program costs and the funding sources that were used to finance these programs, including a calculation of cost per degree awarded.

(E) The costs of the baccalaureate degree programs to students, the amount of financial aid offered, and student debt levels of graduates of the programs.

(F) Time-to-degree rates and completion rates for the baccalaureate degree pilot programs.

(G) The extent to which the programs established under this article are in compliance with the requirements of this article.

(H) Information on the impact of baccalaureate degree pilot program on underserved and underprepared students.

(I) Recommendations on whether and how the statewide baccalaureate degree pilot program can or should be extended and expanded.

(4) A district shall submit the information necessary to conduct the evaluations required by paragraph (1), as determined by the Legislative Analyst's Office, to the Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, who shall provide the information to the Legislative Analyst's Office upon request.

(5) A report to be submitted pursuant to paragraph (2) or (3) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

**78043.**

This article shall become inoperative on July 1, 2023, and as of January 1, 2024, is repealed, unless a later enacted statute that is enacted before January 1, 2024, deletes or extends that date.

## Appendix C

### A Snapshot of States with Community College Baccalaureates

Significant differences exist among states that currently offer community college baccalaureate programs. Variation occurs at every level: how programs are implemented, how many programs are offered at a community college, and the extent to which the community colleges retain their traditional mission and culture (Russell, 2013). In some states, community colleges that were granted permission to offer these degrees have fully morphed into baccalaureate-granting institutions. However, most of these were created without any intention to expand these programs to more than one or a few colleges (Russell, 2013). This applies to community college baccalaureate programs in Arkansas, Louisiana, Utah, West Virginia, and most recently, New Mexico (Russell, 2013). Another pattern limits the conferral of these degrees to technical fields only, as is the case with Texas.

Another prevalent model includes multiple institutions offering baccalaureates while simultaneously maintaining the traditional functions of community colleges (Russell, 2013). States employing this model typically view community colleges as integral to meeting the demand for baccalaureates by increasing attainment. Florida, Washington, and Georgia follow this model and are thus the most extensive in terms of the number of community colleges that offer baccalaureate degrees. Distinctions emerge between these three states with regards to the types of baccalaureate degrees offered at the community college. Florida's and Georgia's colleges offer an array of workforce and applied baccalaureates despite the potential overlap with public four-year institutions. In contrast, the overwhelming majority of Washington's programs offer applied baccalaureates. However, these three states also offer Bachelor's of Science in Nursing along with Indiana, Nevada, and New Mexico. These differences highlight the range of models operating throughout the nation that are tailored to meet a state's particular needs. The following section describes seven states that grant community college baccalaureates in more detail.

#### Florida

Florida first approved community college baccalaureates in 2001. Concerns over baccalaureate degree production across the state were the driving force behind this change in legislation. Florida is the fourth most populated state but was served by relatively few four-year institutions, which hindered the state's ability to address local workforce needs and constrained educational options for students (McKinney & Morris, 2010). Many dissertation studies examine Florida as a case study given the sheer growth of these baccalaureate programs across the state.

A subset of these studies explored the political process of obtaining the legislative approval for community college baccalaureates (Burrows, 2011; Pershin, 2006). Senator Don Sullivan authored Bill 1162 that would allow St. Petersburg Community College to offer bachelor's degrees. Senator Sullivan's motivation grew out of frustration and lack of satisfaction with the articulation of associate's and baccalaureate degrees at the University

of South Florida's regional campus. A similar bill was previously passed that would have allowed community colleges to offer certain bachelor's degrees, but Governor Jeb Bush vetoed the funds for the bill. To be more strategic in his approach, Senator Sullivan reframed this change in policy "as solving the problem of the lack of access to education in his county rather than granting bachelor degrees to community colleges" (Pershin, 2006). Senator Sullivan then spent many years developing the necessary political and local allies, engaging in advanced planning by holding speaking engagements to inform the public about the need for increased access to higher education in the county, and the lack of responsiveness from the University of South Florida in the Baysboro campus (Burrows, 2011). There was lots of political maneuvering, last minute additions to the bill and a late introduction to the legislative session that led to its approval (Burrows, 2011). Interestingly, Florida's community college leaders expressed concern over the development of a new tier of institutions that may lead to a three-tiered system like California, which may not help solve Florida's baccalaureate production problem given California's lower ranking on degree production (Burrows, 2011).

As a result of Senate Bill 1162, St. Petersburg College was the first to receive approval to confer baccalaureates (McKinney & Morris, 2010). Today, St. Petersburg College (the community college name was changed as part of Bill 1162) offers baccalaureates in 23 programs, which is the most at any US community college. St. Petersburg is permitted by law to add baccalaureates without external approval. To avoid the possibility of Senate Bill 1162 becoming a purely political process, a separate bill was created to establish a statewide process for future baccalaureate proposals (Burrows, 2011). As such, all other community colleges in the state have to go through an approval process that is different from St. Petersburg College.

In 2014, twenty-five of Florida's 28 community colleges offered at least one baccalaureate. The programs offer Bachelors of Science, primarily in Education and Nursing, as well as Bachelors of Applied Science in technology-oriented fields. However, Senate Bill 1148 introduced by Senator Negron in March 2014 required new programs to be approved by the Legislature instead of the state's Board of Education (Mitchell, 2014), effectively placing a moratorium on new programs. With the moratorium up in 2015, the battle was on to restrict the growth of (community) college degrees (in Florida they are simply known as "colleges") and new legislation is anticipated for 2016. Concerns stem from duplication of programs at other institutions and the perceived changing mission of the community colleges in the state.

## **Georgia**

The University of Georgia System includes research universities, comprehensive universities, state universities, and state colleges. The mission of state colleges is to serve the local workforce needs and offer bachelor's degrees in a few programs (University of Georgia System, 2009). The number of colleges offering bachelor's degrees continues to grow as the Board of Regents determines which colleges will offer more programs. In 2014, fifteen state colleges offered at least one bachelor's degree. Currently, the bachelor's degree programs are offered in a few applied fields and in more workforce fields as well as in more academic areas. Among the most recent, for example, Georgia Perimeter College was allowed to offer bachelor's programs in Sign Language and Health Informatics in 2011. In 2008, four state colleges (Dalton State College, Gainesville State College, Georgia Gwinnett College, and Macon State College) accounted for 1.9% of all bachelor's degrees granted in Georgia (University System of Georgia Board of Regents, 2009). The average time to baccalaureate degree completion at state colleges is 6.3 years while only 4.3 for all other students in the state system (University System of Georgia Board of Regents, 2009). The longer time to degree reflects the more diverse student population enrolled at state colleges, indicating that these baccalaureate programs expand access to more students in the state.

## **Indiana**

In 2004, Vincennes University obtained permission from the Indiana Commission on Higher Education to offer baccalaureates in select areas. While there are 15 other community colleges throughout Indiana, Vincennes University is the only two-year institution within the state that offers bachelor's degrees. Vincennes offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Education, Homeland Security and Public Safety, Nursing, and Technology. One concern cited by a member of the Indiana Commission on Higher Education was loss of the two-year mission. The Indiana Government Efficiency Commission's Subcommittee on Higher Education had also recommended that Vincennes remain a two-year institution (Whitson, 2004). However, the university's President reassured that Vincennes would not lose its two-year focus. Another commission member concurred that Vincennes would not be expanding more baccalaureate programs in the near future (Whitson, 2004). Indiana's situation is unique, however, in that the primarily two-year campus is allowed to use the title of "university."

## **Nevada**

Since 1998, Nevada has allowed the community college baccalaureate. Nevada's public system of higher education is comprised of two research universities, one state college, and four community colleges, which makes it a fairly small system in terms of the number of institutions. Three of the four community colleges now offer bachelor's degrees. Great Basin College (GBC) offers the most with a mix of workforce and applied bachelor degrees. Bachelor of Science degrees are offered in Education and Nursing.

The initiative to obtain permission to offer baccalaureate degrees at Nevada's community colleges began with GBC in 1995. GBC's President established a 2+2

articulation program with the University of Nevada, Reno as an initial step to promoting baccalaureate attainment in the region (Remington & Remington, 2005). The President also began engaging the Regents on his interest in developing baccalaureate programs and obtaining the necessary funding to expand the infrastructure of the college's extension campuses. Three years later, the Chancellor and the President obtained the necessary approval and funding from the Regents to conduct a feasibility study along with the support of the local district's Superintendent. The study concluded that the most pressing need for the region was a teacher education program, which was then approved and accredited (Remington & Remington, 2005).

## **New Mexico**

New Mexico authorized community college baccalaureates in 2004. Only one out of the seven independent two-year colleges, Northern New Mexico College, offers baccalaureates in both academic/professional and applied fields. The academic/professional bachelor's degrees include: Biology, Education, Environmental Science, Mathematics, and Nursing. Northern New Mexico College granted 51 of the total 7,241 bachelor's degrees awarded in 2011, indicating that the program is still fairly small in size within the state (New Mexico Department of Higher Education, n.d.).

## **Colorado**

Through Senate Bill 10-101, Colorado authorized Colorado Mountain College (CMC) in 2010 to begin offering baccalaureate degrees (Colorado Commission on Higher Education, 2013). There are 13 community colleges within the Colorado Community College System but CMC is one of two local district community colleges that are not part of this system. There was very little opposition to the passage of Senate Bill 10-101, which authorized CMC to offer bachelor's degrees because of the geographic isolation of this community college with the rest of the state. CMC was approved to offer up to five baccalaureate degrees that meet workforce demand, obtain regional accreditation, demonstrate it as the most cost effective approach, and provide a cost-benefit analysis showing that the program will not negatively impact the college nor need state funding. CMC offers a BS in Business Administration, a BA in Sustainability Studies, BA in Elementary Education, a Bachelors of Science in Nursing, and a BAS program. The programs graduated a total of 61 students in Spring 2013. In February 2014, the passage of Senate Bill 14-004 approved the development of bachelor's of applied sciences within all of the state's community colleges.

## **Michigan**

In 2012, Michigan became the 21<sup>st</sup> state to offer bachelor's degrees at community colleges. Through Act No. 495, community colleges can offer baccalaureate degrees in applied and technical fields, such as cement technology, maritime technology, energy production, technology or culinary arts. Initially, nursing was also listed as a program area for community college baccalaureates but was ultimately removed to alleviate the disputes between the two- and four-year institutions (Fain, 2013). There was a lengthy political battle between community colleges and four-year institutions to confer these applied

baccalaureates because some four-year institutions in Michigan also offer applied baccalaureates. Northwestern Michigan College was the first to get approval to confer a BS in Maritime Technology and in January 2014 graduated its first two students.



## Appendix D

### Interview Protocol

Introduce self and enter into the conversation with the following:

There can be many reasons for launching a bachelor's degree program at the community college level:

- Because the institution wants new challenges
- Because faculty have been wanting new opportunities
- Because the state or the region is falling behind in granting degrees
- Unmet workforce needs
- Because there is inequity in the system as to who gets degrees and the community college captures a lot of the students who do not complete a BA degree

What was the primary impetus at your institution?

1. Did you have an equity plan in place from the beginning to ensure that there would be equal access to these programs?
2. How are the admission criteria determined? Are they different than for the associate level?
3. Did you envision any barriers to equity in access to these programs? Do the students in the bachelors' program(s) reflect the same ethnic/SES composition as the college as a whole? (are some groups more attracted to this program than others?)
4. Do the faculty in these programs reflect the diversity of the faculty as a whole? Has there been any attention to ensuring diverse faculty? [research shows that this may increase URM student success]
5. Are there any financial impediments that can make the program more difficult to access for low-income students?
6. Does the bachelor's program include regular gen ed requirements? Do these degrees transfer for grad school?
7. Is there any possibility that the program could work as a "cooling out" function – channeling the brightest students to terminal degrees?
8. What have you done to ensure that these degree recipients are equally employable as those who have a regular BA/BS?
9. Was increasing degrees among URM students part of any of your plans or discussions? For example, does your counseling focus on attracting URM?

10. How have you marketed the program? Does it draw students from a wider region than the regular cc student?
11. Do you provide any special support services for those students pursuing the bachelor's?
12. What kind of data are you collecting and how do you use those data to modify or enhance the program?

## Appendix E

### Miami Dade College Student Demographic Characteristics

Demographics for credit students enrolled in Bachelors or Associates				
Fall 2014	Associates		Bachelors	
	N	%	N	%
<b>TOTAL STUDENTS</b>	60,245	100	3,593	100
<b>ETHNIC</b>				
American Indian/Alaskan	108	0.2	2	0.1
Asian	696	1.2	45	1.3
Black, non-Hispanic	10,421	17.3	815	22.7
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	46	0.1	3	0.1
Hispanic	43,212	71.7	2,372	66
Unreported	1,946	3.2	74	2.1
White, non-Hispanic	3,816	6.3	282	7.8
<b>SEX</b>				
Female	34,590	57.4	2,261	62.9
Male	25,650	42.6	1,332	37.1
Unreported	5	0	-	-
<b>FULL &amp; PART-TIME</b>				
Part-time	35,797	59.4	2,431	67.7
Full-time	24,448	40.6	1,162	32.3
<b>ENROLLMENT</b>				
New/FTIC	10,874	18	3	0.1
Continuing	41,347	68.6	3,208	89.3
Former	3,764	6.2	270	7.5
Transfer	1,526	2.5	19	0.5
Dual H.S. Enrollee	980	1.6	-	-
Other	1,754	2.9	93	2.6
<b>LANGUAGE</b>				
English	32,721	54.3	1,782	49.6
French/Creole	2,582	4.3	208	5.8
Other	1,794	3	115	3.2
Spanish	23,148	38.4	1,488	41.4
<b>CITIZENSHIP</b>				
U.S. Citizen	42,829	71.1	2,738	76.2
Resident Alien	13,813	22.9	713	19.8
Refugee/Asylee	1,486	2.5	76	2.1
Student Visa	922	1.5	44	1.2
Other Visa	330	0.5	10	0.3
Other	865	1.4	12	0.3
<b>RESIDENCY</b>				
Miami-Dade County	57,126	94.8	3,526	98.1
Other Florida	173	0.3	6	0.2
Out-of-State	1,691	2.8	13	0.4
Out-of-Country	1,255	2.1	48	1.3

<b>MATRICULATION</b>				
Bachelors	-	-	3,593	
Associate in Arts	44,100	73.2	-	-
Associate in Science	16,145	26.8	-	-
<b>AGE</b>				
17 or younger	831	1.4	-	-
18-20	22,205	36.9	38	1.1
21-25	20,125	33.4	1,112	30.9
26-30	6,960	11.6	907	25.2
31-35	3,457	5.7	503	14
36-40	2,426	4	340	9.5
41 or older	4,241	7	693	19.3
Mean Age		24.8		31.88
<b>First-Generation</b>	21,824	36.2	1,009	28.1
<b>Received Pell Grant</b>	33,394	55.4	1,460	40.6
<b>Low-income</b>	12,697	21.1	845	23.5
<b>Average Term GPA</b>		2.75		2.77