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Comprehensive Developmental Education Reform in Florida: A Policy Implementation Typology

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ABSTRACT
This study identified the policy perspectives of "street-level bureaucrats" in higher education (in this case, community college personnel) and linked them to a typology of 4 policy implementation patterns. The context for this qualitative study is state legislation in Florida (Florida Senate Bill 1720, 2013) that fundamentally reformed developmental education in the 28 state colleges (formerly community colleges) in the Florida College System (FCS). Study participants included 518 administrators, faculty, academic advisors, support staff, and students at 10 institutions in the FCS. The study employed Kluge's (2000) 4-step methodology for deriving an empirically grounded qualitative typology. The 4 implementation patterns in the typology include *oppositional, circumventing, satisficing*, and *facilitative* implementation. Our study highlights implications for developmental education reform efforts nationwide and identifies the dynamics that predispose street-level bureaucrats to adopt either oppositional or facilitative implementation behaviors.

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Community colleges; developmental education; policy implementation; street-level bureaucrats; typology

The implementation phase of the policy process is critical to the effectiveness of any public policy reform. During the implementation phase, "street-level bureaucrats" (Lipsky, 1980, p. 3) carry out the provisions of legislation in the day-to-day operations of government. Street-level bureaucrats are "public service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work" (Lipsky, 1980, p. 3). The procedures that street-level bureaucrats follow to implement policy, their discretion over their jobs, and the opposition or support that policies have among public employees can significantly influence the success or failure of legislation (Anderson, 2006).

We examined the policy implementation behaviors of street-level bureaucrats[1] (in this case, campus personnel) in the context of Florida Senate Bill 1720 (SB 1720, 2013), which dramatically reformed developmental education (DE, or remediation) in the 28 state colleges (formerly community colleges)

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in the Florida College System (FCS).[2] Collectively, the FCS provides degrees and certificates to approximately 900,000 students (FCS, 2016).

Enacted in 2013, SB 1720 was intended to reduce the cost of DE and expedite the remedial course sequence through increased student choice. Under the law, DE became optional for "exempt" students who were active-duty military personnel or who had started ninth grade at a Florida public high school in 2003–2004 or later and graduated with a standard high school diploma. The law stipulated that state colleges no longer require placement tests for exempt students who could enroll directly in college-level coursework regardless of prior academic preparation, effectively bypassing DE. In addition, SB 1720 required advising for all students, which included information about developmental coursework where applicable (Hu et al., 2015).

Under SB 1720, state colleges also had to adopt specific instructional strategies in DE including modularized, compressed, contextualized, and corequisite courses. Modularized instruction involves breaking content into smaller units (i.e., typically computerized modules) so that students can focus only on the skills for which they have deficits. Compressed courses are classes that shorten the length of time in the developmental course. Contextualized instruction is related to "metamajors" or "a collection of programs of study or academic discipline groupings that share common foundational skills" (SB 1720, 2013, p. 28). Corequisite instruction is "instruction or tutoring that supplements credit instruction while a student is concurrently enrolled in a credit-bearing course" (SB 1720, 2013, p. 28).

Because these modifications required campus personnel to make fundamental changes in how they delivered their traditional services, SB 1720 is an ideal example for examining the roles and experiences of street-level bureaucrats in policy implementation. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the policy perspectives (or perceptions of legislation) and implementation behaviors of street-level bureaucrats in state colleges following DE reform in Florida. The research questions for this study were:

(1) What were the policy perspectives of campus personnel who implemented DE reform in Florida state colleges?
(2) How did campus culture contribute to the policy perspectives of campus personnel who implemented DE reform in Florida state colleges?
(3) What types of policy implementation behaviors did campus personnel report engaging in following DE reform in Florida state colleges?

Developmental education reform

DE involves non-credit-bearing courses that are below college level, typically in reading, writing, and mathematics (Bautsch, 2013). DE is most prevalent in community colleges due in large part to the open-access philosophy of community colleges (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014; Nix et al., 2016). Community colleges are also intended to increase the affordability of higher education with lower tuition rates (Cohen et al., 2014; Phillippe & Patton, 2000). Consequently, community colleges enroll more students who are both academically underprepared and disproportionately from low-income and underrepresented student populations than do 4-year institutions (Cohen et al., 2014).

Students are typically identified as academically underprepared and in need of developmental coursework through standardized placement tests (Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015). Students then enroll in developmental instruction, which is more likely to emphasize knowledge transmission through drill and practice exercises than participatory and collaborative learning (Grubb, 2013). Academic support services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, and learning labs and centers are frequently available to help students succeed in DE coursework (Grubb, 2013; Hu et al., 2015).

DE is so widespread that more than half of community college students in the United States enroll in at least one developmental course (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010) at a cost of $3 billion annually (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011). However, policymakers and academic researchers have expressed concern about the low success rates of the large numbers of students enrolled in these courses (Bailey et al., 2015; Martorell & McFarlin, 2011; Scott-Clayton & Rodriguez, 2014) as well as the high cost. Despite its broad-based adoption and expense, only a fraction of students who enroll in DE courses ever earn a college degree (Complete College America, 2012).

As a result, a robust policy debate has emerged around DE as some states have enacted laws that curtail remedial course offerings in public institutions (Parker, Barrett, & Bustillos, 2014). DE reforms in states such as Louisiana, Nevada, South Carolina, and Tennessee required that remedial course offerings shift from 4-year institutions to community colleges (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2016). Policy directives in California, Florida, Kentucky, North Carolina, North Dakota, and Tennessee have reformed DE in community colleges either through acceleration or measures that improve placement and advising processes, revise curriculum, and enhance academic support (Bailey, 2009; Hu et al., 2015; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2016).

Study context

In Florida, 70% of students entering community college for the first time enrolled in at least one DE course during the 2009–2010 academic year, costing the state $81 million (Underhill, 2013). Concerned about time-to-

degree completion rates and overall success for DE students, the Florida legislature passed sweeping legislation in 2013 (SB 1720, 2013), much to the surprise of many campus leaders in the FCS. Prior to SB 1720, students were required to take DE coursework based on placement tests, and severely underprepared students might have taken several levels of DE coursework prior to enrolling in gateway courses (Hu, Bertrand Jones, et al., 2016).

Campus leaders in the FCS first responded to the mandate by creating "implementation teams" or ad-hoc committees to plan for the required changes and shift financial and human resources. The mandate had significant effects on institutions and affected the work of street-level bureaucrats in areas such as administrative structures, planning functions, staffing and budgeting, curricula design, information technology, admissions processes, financial aid, new student orientation, academic advising, and data reporting (Hu et al., 2015). These changes increased the workload for administrators, faculty, advisors, and support staff: Administrators spent significant time planning for implementation, faculty redesigned DE curricula, and advisors and support staff worked longer hours due to increased demand for their services. Another factor contributing to heavier workloads was the need to sort students into exempt and nonexempt categories and direct services to them accordingly. The new sorting procedures necessitated new admissions and intake processes, new advising procedures, new variables in data sets for exempt and nonexempt students, and new technology interfaces for exempt and nonexempt students (Hu et al., 2015).

While the legislation significantly impacted the work of street-level bureaucrats, SB 1720 also affected students. The legislation is too recent to determine the long-term effects on graduation rates, transfer rates, and time to degree completion. However, descriptive analyses have shown a complex mix of changes in enrollment patterns and passing rates in developmental and gateway courses (entry-level credit-bearing classes) after the legislation passed. With the new option for exempt students to bypass developmental courses, substantially fewer students enrolled in DE classes and more students enrolled in gateway courses. Students of color, women, and students eligible for free or reduced lunch, in particular, were less likely to enroll in DE courses (Hu et al., 2016).

For the students who remained in DE courses, passing rates decreased compared with rates prior to the legislation. Of the four DE instructional strategies mandated by the legislation, students were most likely to succeed in corequisite or concurrent courses. Passing rates in gateway courses also declined compared with previous years. Students who were nearly college-ready were more likely to pass the gateway course than were students who were the most severely underprepared. However, based on estimates of the whole cohort, the overall proportion of students passing a gateway course increased compared with previous years (Hu et al., 2016).

After describing DE nationally and the Florida context for our study, we turn to the conceptual framework, which is grounded in Lipsky's (1980) theory of street-level bureaucrats.

Conceptual framework

Winter (2012) has suggested that a general policy implementation framework is unlikely, if not impossible, due to the complexity of the implementation process. Instead, he recommended that implementation research could be improved:

> [b]y accepting theoretical diversity rather than looking for one common theoretical framework, and developing and testing partial theories and hypotheses rather than trying to reach for utopia in constructing a general implementation theory, seeking conceptual clarification, and focusing on both outputs (behaviors of implementers) and outcomes as dependent variables in implementation research. (Winter, 2012, p. 212)

Thus, our conceptual framework was intended not as a grand implementation theory, but as a means of conveying the complexity of the data in our typology and identifying specific, critical considerations related to the behaviors of street-level bureaucrats within the broader conceptual area of policy implementation and Florida DE reform specifically.

Our framework was grounded in Lipsky's (1980) theory of street-level bureaucracy, in which public service workers influence policy outcomes because their discretion over decisions and routines directly impacts how the public experiences policy on the front lines of implementation. Therefore, policy outcomes can be attributed, at least in part, to "the degree of conflict or consensus over its goals and objectives" (Van Meter & Van Horn, 1975, p. 459) among street-level bureaucrats. Lipsky's (1980) theory provided a useful lens by which to approach the issue of policy implementation in higher education.

The relative lack of research focused specifically on policy implementation in higher education and, more importantly, the characteristics of public higher education in the United States, which make it unique in fundamental ways from other areas of state government and governmental actors, necessitate the development of a typology specific to policy implementation in higher education. Lowry (2007) argued that public higher education "in the United States constitute[s] a rich and largely unexplored venue for research by scholars of state politics and policy, particularly on a wide range of questions regarding bureaucratic and budgetary politics" (p. 318). Therefore, we have attempted to build on existing policy implementation theory and research to derive from our data a higher education policy implementation typology that, although specific to our case, may also have utility in future examinations of policy implementation in higher education.

Street-level bureaucrats' discretion is central to their policy implementation behaviors and their ability to affect policy outcomes (Lipsky, 1980). The discretion of street-level bureaucrats can result in a continuum of organizational behaviors from active resistance to active cooperation with policy implementation efforts (Meyers & Lehmann Nielsen, 2012). Sorg's (1983) typology of policy implementation categorized the behavior of street-level bureaucrats according to a matrix of four categories, which include intentional compliance, unintentional compliance, unintentional noncompliance, and intentional noncompliance. Street-level bureaucrats' active resistance to implementing policy has also been labeled *bureaucratic resistance*, defined as "action or intentional inaction that defies, opposes or sidesteps the rules, roles or routines of the organization" (Brower & Abolafia, 1995, p. 151). In contrast, active cooperation with policy implementation efforts has been explored in the literature on *prosocial organizational behavior*, which Brief and Motowidlo (1986) defined as behavior of organization members that promotes "the welfare of the individual, group, or organization toward which it is directed" (p. 711). *Satisficing*, a term that can be explained as finding minimally acceptable solutions to organizational problems when competing demands make compromise necessary (Simon, 1956), can be considered a middle ground between the opposition of bureaucratic resistance and the active cooperation of prosocial organizational behavior.

Like the broader higher education literature, studies of DE reform have not typically cast community college personnel as street-level bureaucrats. However, policy implementation studies of DE reform have identified various challenges related to the work of campus personnel in community colleges. These challenges include difficulties establishing statewide oversight and monitoring of reform efforts, limited institutional resources for implementation, and resistance from campus personnel (Edgecombe, Cormier, Bickerstaff, & Barragan, 2013; Hu et al., 2015).

Methods

Few scholars have addressed the process of deriving empirically grounded typologies from qualitative data (e.g., Kluge, 2000; Patton, 1990). Patton (1990) distinguished between "indigenous typologies," which are derived from research participants' in-vivo classifications of their own cultural settings, and "analyst-constructed typologies," which are derived from researchers' identification of patterns in qualitative data. The present study was an analyst-constructed typology grounded in data provided to us by campus personnel about how they implemented SB 1720. We employed Kluge's (2000) four-step methodology for obtaining a qualitative typology.

Data collection

Four interview protocols for the administrative team that guided the implementation, faculty, academic advisors, and support staff focus groups were designed to identify new institutional processes following the passage of SB 1720 at each state college in each functional area (administration, advising, instruction, and academic support). A student focus-group interview protocol was designed to elicit feedback from students on their experiences and perceptions of the effectiveness of the changes to advising, instruction, and academic support.

Research team members collected data on site visits to 10 state colleges in Florida. Data sources included field observations, institutional documents, and transcripts from 87 semistructured focus groups. Focus groups with 78 administrators, 140 faculty members, 71 academic advisors, 25 support staff members, and 204 students resulted in data from a total of 518 focus-group participants. Digital recordings of the focus groups and interviews were used to generate verbatim transcripts. Typed field observations, institutional documents, and focus-group and interview transcripts were imported into qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10 for coding and analysis.

Data analysis

Kluge (2000) identified the following steps in constructing a qualitative typology: (a) the development of analyzing dimensions, (b) grouping of the cases, (c) analysis of meaningful relationships and type construction, and (d) characterization of the constructed types. In describing our data analysis process, we highlight the preliminary data analysis steps we took to prepare our data for typology construction and then elaborate on how we performed each of Kluge's four steps. Overall, our analysis involved successive grouping processes: identifying policy implementation cases, grouping cases into 14 behaviors, and categorizing the 14 behaviors into four types. Each phase of our data analysis process is described in detail in the following paragraphs.

Initial steps

In our initial phase of data analysis, we read through the field observations, institutional documents, and focus-group and interview data to synopsize the chronology of policy implementation processes and procedures at each of the 10 institutions. From these synopses, as well as our exploration of the literature, we developed an a-priori coding framework of the policy implementation behaviors of street-level bureaucrats (i.e., administrators, faculty, academic advisors, and support staff). Codes included broad themes from the institutional synopses such as *developmental math*, *gateway math*, and *academic support* as well as "sensitizing concepts" (Patton, 1990) from the

literature such as *bureaucratic resistance, prosocial organizational behavio*r, and *satisficing*.

In this initial phase, researchers engaged in a reliability-building process with a subset of the data files (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). Each researcher coded the files individually using the a-priori coding framework. To achieve intercoder reliability, we met as a team weekly to discuss and compare coded text. We obtained a mean Kappa coefficient of .70 (averaged across 178 codes).[3] We then coded the remaining files identifying additional emergent codes not captured under existing a-priori codes (Corbin & Strauss, 2015).

Researchers also wrote analytic memos throughout the data collection and analysis processes. Memos are written records that describe the products of the analyses of the components, themes, and patterns that emerge (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Patton, 1990). Memoing in this project was used to identify salient, interesting, illuminating, or important themes in the data and to establish patterns among codes.

Our units of analysis were the perceptions and actions of individual street-level bureaucrats. Therefore, each instance of an implementation behavior in our data was defined as a "case." Our preliminary coding process resulted in 14 distinct policy implementation behaviors, for which we developed definitions inductively from our data (see Table 1). Each of these 14 behaviors

Table 1. A policy implementation typology and its associated behaviors.

Implementation Type	Behavior	Definition
Oppositional	Arguing	Resisting a policy by verbally contending with policymakers and/or superiors
	Appealing to External Interests	Resisting a policy by requesting aid from outside the organization
	Leaving	Resisting a policy by leaving the organization
	Failing to Act	Resisting a policy by entirely failing to implement a provision of the policy
Circumventing	Temporary Inaction	Resisting a policy by failing to take action on the policy until absolutely necessary
	Selective Implementation	Resisting a policy by choosing to selectively implement provisions of the policy
	End Running	Resisting a policy by bypassing superiors without their approval
Satisficing	Playing Dumb	Implementing a policy by pretending not to understand the consequences of implementation
	Working to Rule	Implementing a policy by doing only that which is strictly required
	Service Rationing	Implementing a policy by establishing levels for distributing services
Facilitative	Fundamental Rule Change	Implementing a policy by significantly altering operating procedures
	Reallocation	Implementing a policy by shifting financial or human resources
	Improvising	Implementing a policy by creating novel solutions to problems lacking formal organizational solutions
	Reprioritizing	Implementing a policy by rethinking and rearranging organizational priorities

Table 2. The dimensions of a typology of policy implementation.

	Low Compliance	High Compliance
Low Effort	Circumventing Implementation	Satisficing Implementation
High Effort	Oppositional Implementation	Facilitative Implementation

consisted of one or more "cases" or examples of the behavior of a street-level bureaucrat. For example, an implementation behavior was "delayed implementation" and one of the cases of delayed implementation came from an institution where a street-level bureaucrat described not beginning exempt/nonexempt sorting until the summer after the policy was implemented.

Step 1: Development of analyzing dimensions

In contrast to quantitative typology construction, in qualitative typologies, dimensions are not identified before the data collection and analysis processes begin, but rather, they are identified during data analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2015). Every type in a typology involves a combination of attributes and their levels (Kluge, 2000). Thus, in our research, we identified two attributes (effort and compliance) from our 14 policy implementation behaviors, as well as two levels of each attribute (high and low). Definitions for effort and compliance were induced from the data. We defined "effort" as the amount of work by campus personnel devoted to implementing the provisions of the legislation. We defined "compliance" as the extent to which campus personnel cooperated with and strictly conformed to the provisions of the legislation. This process resulted in four possible combinations: high effort/high compliance, low effort/high compliance, high effort/low compliance, and low effort/low compliance (see Table 2).

Step 2: Grouping the cases

In Step 2, we took the cases (already clustered into behaviors) and grouped them according to the dimensions identified. Each case of a behavior was then categorized into one of the four types. In this step, the dimensions of effort and compliance were considered two perpendicular continua. Each case of a behavior was plotted on the effort and compliance continua to assign them to a cell.

Step 3: Type construction

We then checked for *empirical regularities*, by which we refer to the *internal homogeneity* of the cases in each type and *external heterogeneity* of the cases between each type (Kluge, 2000). Stated simply, we asked, "Are the cases within the types conceptually similar?" and "Are the differences between the cases in each type sufficiently distinct?" We then confirmed that each case of a behavior

was appropriately grouped into the dimension (effort, compliance) and level (high, low) we had previously established. To illustrate, the cases of "improvising" were all judged to require high levels of effort and were all directed toward complying with the mandate. In contrast, the cases of "appealing to external interests" were judged to require high levels of effort but were directed toward opposing the mandate. The cases of "service rationing" were judged to involve low levels of effort to be compliant with the mandate, while cases of "temporary inaction" were judged to involve low levels of effort to be noncompliant.

Step 4: Characterization of the constructed types

In the final step, we labeled the four implementation types as facilitative (high effort/high compliance), satisficing (low effort/high compliance), oppositional (high effort/low compliance), and circumventing (low effort/low compliance) and induced definitions for each implementation pattern from our cases. We then created profiles of four composite institutions as a means for presenting the four types in our typology. Also, in the final phase of analysis, we developed a conceptual framework based on the patterns in our data, which linked educators' policy perspectives to our typology of policy implementation patterns.

Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of our qualitative interpretations was established through theoretical triangulation (i.e., using multiple theories from the policy implementation and the organizational behavior literatures to support interpretations), analyst triangulation (multiple analysts coding the data), and data source triangulation (field notes, document analysis, and focus groups). We conducted member checking by soliciting feedback on our research products from academic administrators. After incorporating their suggestions, we distributed our research products to all focus-group participants from an e-mail address where comments could be sent. In addition, we performed peer debriefing with three researchers who acted as "devil's advocates" in questioning the study's methods and interpretations (Patton, 1990).

A policy implementation typology of developmental education reform in Florida

We adopted a composite vignette approach to presenting qualitative data (e.g., Arnault, 2002; Conant, 2014) to consolidate and summarize our large quantity of data, as well as to highlight the relationship between campus culture and policy perspectives in our study. Each composite vignette contains data from more than one individual at more than one institution, reflecting characteristics of several individuals and state colleges (each assigned pseudonyms from the names of early Florida governors). Student

voices are not prominent in our presentation of the data due to many students' lack of familiarity with the legislation and our focus on the perspectives and actions of street-level bureaucrats.

We present our data according to the conceptual framework in Figure 1 using four extended composite vignettes. In each vignette, we first illustrate the perspectives of street-level bureaucrats as they relate to the policy directive (SB 1720, 2013), and then we link these perspectives both to a general implementation pattern and to specific behaviors associated with that pattern. We conclude each vignette by considering some of the consequences of these implementation behaviors for individuals and the institution. Our composite vignettes include: oppositional implementation at Perry Community College (PCC), circumventing implementation at Moseley Community College (MCC), satisficing implementation at Brown Community College (BCC), and facilitative implementation at Allison Community College (ACC).

Oppositional implementation

We defined oppositional implementation as actively resisting a policy directive through actions that defy the provisions of the policy. PCC is a large institution with multiple campuses dotted around an urban area. The student population at PCC has a high proportion of low socioeconomic-status students, immigrant students, and racially and ethnically diverse students. Ms. Smith described the demographics of each branch campus at PCC:

> I think the [branch campus name] serves mostly the African American community and a lot of Latinos as well. Poor neighborhoods, disadvantaged neighborhoods, so you can imagine that most of those students that are coming into the campus are

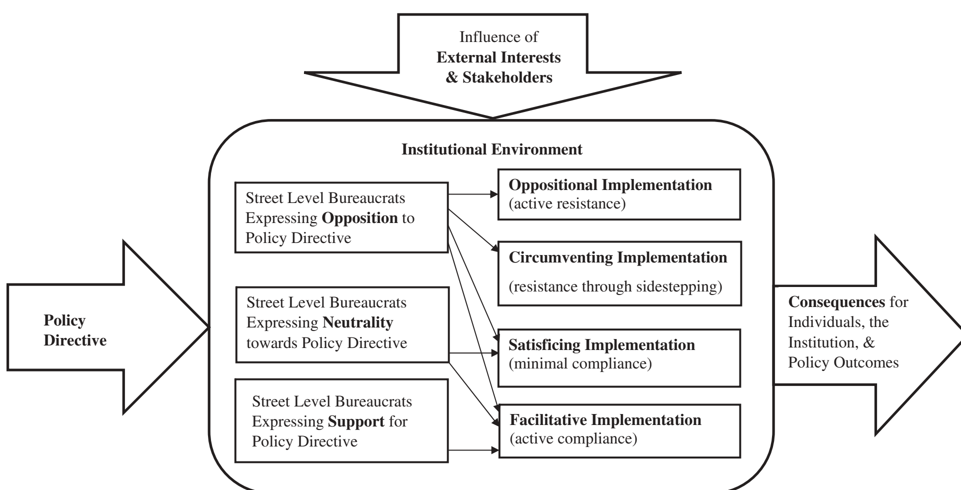

Figure 1. A conceptual framework of policy implementation behaviors in Florida's developmental education reform

> in need of some sort of remediation at one point or another.... And obviously you always get a huge percentage of other adults who are coming into the picture. The [branch campus name] has changed over the years, but is still a campus that is widely recognized for its second language acquisition programs.

The collective culture at PCC favors advocacy on behalf of both students and faculty. The unionized faculty is nearly as diverse as the students and tends to embrace progressive and emancipatory sociopolitical perspectives. The activist culture at PCC likely influenced the opposition that campus personnel expressed toward legislation that they believed had been imposed on them by noneducators.

News of the passage of the legislation filtered down from university administrators to faculty members. A PCC administrator described her emotional reaction when sharing the news with adjunct faculty in a departmental meeting:

> I think all of us were like—when the bill finally went down, we shed tears. I mean actual tears. And, when I had to talk to the adjuncts, I, in the middle of the presentation, just broke down and started crying, and I said, this is bullshit. That's what I said.

Campus personnel were then tasked with implementing a statute they opposed.

Oppositional implementation behaviors

A first implementation behavior for many street-level bureaucrats was to *appeal to external interests* both to inform them and to request political intervention.

Appealing to External Interests. A PCC faculty member appealed to the faculty union for assistance in combating the legislation: "I think I just heard about it through the union, the faculty union, and some of the efforts that we were making to advocate on behalf of our students." She also appealed to legislators who might have blocked or amended the bill: "[I]t was all over the campus, and of course, we were calling legislators and sending emails and all that sort of stuff, so I think we—especially those of us on the committees, we're living the bill." Besides appealing to external interests, another form of resistance was *arguing*.

Arguing. A faculty member at PCC described their attempts to influence the policy process by arguing with policymakers over the provisions of the legislation:

> It was purely a political decision. It had no basis in fact, in practice, in Florida data, in the disproportionate impact on students of color. There was literally no interest in any of that from the decision makers. That's what it felt like anyways as

> practitioners. We kept saying: 'What about this?' 'What about that?' "What about ...?" Yeah, we told them, we told them, we told them, we told them. So it just felt like it didn't really matter what we said at that point.

Opposition to the legislation influenced the ways in which college personnel such as faculty implemented the statute. For instance, one faculty member at PCC reported trying to convince exempt students to return to DE courses and failing a number of exempt students who remained in her college-level math class:

> You know, I mean, 40%—I'm teaching four sections or five sections of 1033 this semester. I can't remember. And 40% of my students were exempt at the start of the term, you know, and I got rid of quite a—I shouldn't say it that way, but I got rid of quite a few students, but not enough of them were exempt and they're failing. They're failing right now, and I still can't convince them to get out, you know ... And I think that's one of the other issues that we have is that we try to do this collegewide stuff, and it's just not gonna work.

Though street-level bureaucrats at PCC would likely not have characterized their behaviors as oppositional, their rationale was to support student success because they believed the legislation was harmful to students.

An administrator at PCC explained her perspective on the consequences of SB 1720 for returning adult students:

> So it's really hurting our population that—our big population here are people that are returning to school. They are either displaced homemakers. They are widows. We have an older population here. Those people have good work ethic. They have been out of school. They have done the McDonald's. They have done the digging ditches. They want to better their lives, and they are being punished.

Circumventing implementation

We define circumventing implementation as resisting a policy directive through intentional inaction or actions that sidestep or circumvent the provisions of the policy. We considered the circumventing implementation pattern at MCC, a college described by campus personnel as "a small town." The student population at MCC includes a large proportion of low-income and nontraditional students. An MCC administrator described the enrollment as "per semester, about 1,500, 2,000 students a year, on an annual basis. So, we are small. A lot of space and a lot of land." Due to its rural location, administrators at MCC sometimes struggle to recruit credentialed faculty and staff. A managerial culture predominates at MCC, in which administrators emphasize fiscal responsibility due to limited institutional resources, and the Governing Board and president exert considerable influence over academic affairs.

The deemphasis on faculty involvement in decision making in the managerial culture at MCC likely contributed to the attitude of indifference

expressed by campus personnel. This attitude of indifference often reflected disengagement from the implementation process. For instance, one MCC advisor explained:

> And I want to emphasize that, number one, I found out the semester before it was really submitted and implemented. I did not attend any meetings. I wasn't invited to any meetings. Was asked for no input. I was just basically a coal miner.

Circumventing implementation behaviors

This detachment from the policy process influenced the approach to implementation of the legislation at MCC. One form of circumventing implementation was to delay implementation until absolutely necessary.

Temporary Inaction. An administrator at PCC explained that rather than offer the new courses in January, implementation of the new instructional strategies was delayed until after the spring semester:

> The law said that you didn't have to implement in the spring. That was another political thing. We got enormous pressure from the division to implement in the spring and just with all of these, like we've shared, all this deep work we had to do with the faculty with the deans planning and the faculty development and the advising systems. There's no way we could have done that by January. . . . So, we resisted that advice.

After implementation became inevitable, another form of circumventing implementation was to apply the provisions of SB 1720 selectively.

Selective Implementation. While newly exempt students were informed of their ability to opt out of DE, advisors at MCC communicated the new rules to continuing students only when they questioned their status:

Researcher: Did you communicate to those students (continuing students) anything about their new status?

Advisor: I don't think we did. I don't think that we did. In the spring, since we weren't going live in the spring, there was a worry that there would be students who would be coming and saying, 'But I heard.' So we created a system for our advisors if the student presented themselves and said, 'But I heard I don't have to do this anymore"; we accommodated those.

An administrator at MCC explained her reluctance to tell students of their exempt status:

> One of the things that was really important to me was I didn't want a green-eyed, blue-eyed experiment (experiment with sorting exempt/nonexempt students). I talked about that real openly with everybody. That's what really bothered me about the way we had to implement this and even some of the direction we got

> from the state. And I know they were trying to be helpful, but the verbiage that they gave us as ways to explain to students what happened explained the whole thing. Like if you're a 'this' kind of student, 'dis da da da,' and if you're a 'that' kind of student, "da da da da." . . . I'm like no, I don't want students to have to figure [it] out. Matter of fact, I'd rather that they not even know.

A quantitative analysis of student educational outcomes under SB 1720 is beyond the scope of this qualitative study; however, our data suggest that from the perspective of street-level bureaucrats, implementation behaviors did have consequences for students. At MCC, the effect of circumventing implementation was to minimize the number of students classified as exempt who could opt out of DE, either due to delay or by failing to tell continuing students of their new status. Indeed, an administrator explained, "My goal was to have the lowest number of exempt students in the spring because the law said that you didn't have to implement in the spring."

Satisficing implementation

We defined satisficing implementation as passively cooperating with a policy directive through actions that are minimally compliant with the requirements of the policy. BCC functions as a feeder institution with a robust 4-year transfer program to the comprehensive university in the same city. The faculty culture emphasizes collegiality, shared governance, and academic freedom in curricular decisions. Due to BCC's proximity to the comprehensive university, a higher proportion of the faculty hold PhDs than at most other state colleges in the state. When asked about how the faculty responded to the legislation, faculty members remarked:

Faculty member: It's how we run our business. It really is. It wasn't anything novel. It was kind of like business as usual.
Faculty member: There wasn't resistance to that.
Faculty member: I know nobody listened.

Similarly, an administrator characterized the faculty culture at BCC as entrenched in old-fashioned modes of operating: "Faculty members . . . in institutions get sometimes stagnant or complacent with the way they've done things for a long time. It gets baked into the culture." The inertia of the faculty culture and slow pace of change at BCC reinforced a satisficing approach to implementation of SB 1720.

Satisficing implementation behaviors

One such satisficing approach to implementation was to pretend not to understand the likely consequences of the legislation by *playing dumb*.

Playing Dumb. Playing dumb involved adopting a literal interpretation of the statute regardless of negative consequences. An advisor at BCC described how faculty explained to him how they were refusing to adjust their gateway college-level courses despite having more academically underprepared students enrolled in them:

> [The faculty] said, 'These students are not going to be prepared for our classes. What do we do with them? We are not going to go back. We are going to teach like we always teach. We are not going to do anything special for these students.'

The approach here was to refuse to change teaching practices despite the possibility that more students would fail college-level courses after bypassing DE. Another satisficing behavior was to *ration services* provided to each student to accommodate increased demand.

Service Rationing. One form of service rationing was to curtail the time spent on each student during new student orientation and advising sessions. Rather than increase the length of the new student orientation for more material, the orientation had less material than in previous years. An advisor at BCC explained, "We had to remove some of the new student orientation curriculum.in order to make the time for the explanations and the different pathways."

In addition to rationing time during the orientation, an advisor described rationing advising sessions. An advisor at BCC explained that group advising was now necessary: "It is group advising because … [of] manpower. We can't see the current students and new students." He shared his belief that "[e]very individual student doesn't necessarily have to meet with their advisor."

Campus personnel and students were clear on the consequences of satisficing behaviors. One student explained how the shortage of advising staff was a problem:

> There are also not that many general advisors to handle as many students that come to them all at once at the beginning of the semester. We all try to make an appointment and they are seeing 40 students in a day, so it's a little too difficult for them to realize, 'Let's see what you need specifically.' They just generalize you because they have so many.

Similarly, an advisor at BCC described the long line of students waiting for an advising appointment: "I think I saw 40 people in the queue … I think that we were having like a 2-hr, 2.5-hr wait, a lot of it due to developmental ed stuff… . People were like, 'Screw it. We are leaving.' Thus, one of the consequences of satisficing implementation was that students reported relying on sources of information outside the university such as family and friends rather than advisors to make course decisions.

Facilitative implementation

We defined facilitative implementation as actively complying with a policy directive through actions that exert maximum effort to find novel solutions to problems presented by the policy. The campus culture at ACC emphasizes a holistic approach to student development, which encourages not only cognitive growth, but also psychosocial development. An administrator described the developmental culture at ACC:

> I think we have a large group of faculty that are really interested in student success and very motivated to try different things and to be innovative and to provide for the needs of students. I think as a whole that is, you know, that is what [ACC] is about. I don't think it's just like a cliché kind of thing. . . . It is the general culture of the institution.

The institutional focus on holistic student development influenced the way in which administrators convinced campus personnel that the legislation offered a unique occasion for growth.

On first hearing of SB 1720, an administrator began to see the opportunities for institutional reform. She explained, "I was excited, you know, it was like, OK, something fresh—I've been doing this for quite a while, so it was kind of exciting." She subsequently led a retreat with campus personnel who would be involved in the implementation effort. She remarked, "We started figuring out ways to tackle the problem. We had a lot of ideas." The administrator's leadership and her positive framing of the legislative reform influenced the way it was received by institutional colleagues: "I pitched it as an opportunity to change how we do business … and to benefit, you know, the college and our students." After planning for implementation, campus personnel introduced significant institutional changes.

Facilitative implementation behaviors

Among the most important reforms at ACC was the reallocation of human and financial resources.

Reallocation. One of the reallocation efforts involved the decision to shift faculty from teaching to tutoring in the academic support lab. An administrator described the reassignments:

> And, actually, we did reassign some of our faculty to work in the [learning lab]. . . . [B]ecause we were going to have lower loads, we gave them time in the [learning lab] as part of their load, so they have become tutors in addition to becoming instructors.

This solution solved two problems. Underprepared students' ability to bypass remediation led to lower teaching loads for DE instructors. In addition, developmental students who were now enrolled in gateway college-level

courses were utilizing academic support services at higher rates. The reassignment of faculty alleviated both problems. Issues resulting from reallocation also led to opportunities for innovative institutional solutions or *improvising*.

Improvising. An administrator described some of the new solutions:

> So we've experimented with, and it seems funny to say experimented with … and you say, 'OK, this is what we think might work and these are the different ways that we can implement it.' … So, in some cases, the combined courses are full term, and in some cases, they're 8 weeks. There are just some different combinations that we tried different ways of sharing the information … so that students would be better informed about what it is that they're actually enrolling in.

Ultimately, street-level bureaucrats believed that their facilitative implementation efforts resulted in improved student outcomes. A faculty member described changes in students' engagement levels after redesigning the curriculum:

> I have never had such enthusiastic learners.… . Most of the time, they come in and they have read the book. The chapters are pretty lengthy chapters. Very rarely do I have students who are not participating, and I don't think I can say that has happened before … I think it's the approach, because we could replace that book with just about anything. I think it's creating a different dynamic.

Campus personnel believed that their facilitative implementation behaviors had contributed to student success. Now that we have explored examples of the oppositional, circumventing, satisficing, and facilitative implementation patterns, we turn to some of the broader patterns and implications of our data.

Discussion

Our study has both specific implications for DE reform efforts in community colleges and broad implications for policy implementation theory. While there was a full spectrum of reactions to the legislation among campus personnel, ranging from unconvinced to responsive, opposition to the legislation was the most common perspective among street-level bureaucrats. The most frequently cited reason for opposing the legislation was fear of the possible negative consequences for students, particularly for underrepresented groups, and the concern that students were typically poor judges of their own academic preparation. Many campus personnel also worried that any long-term negative outcomes for students could fundamentally alter the democratizing mission of community colleges in Florida (Nix et al., 2016).

Campus personnel at some institutions expressed greater opposition to the legislation compared with personnel at other institutions, reflecting differences in institution type and campus culture. For instance, street-level

bureaucrats at ethnically and racially diverse institutions expressed great concern about the impact of the legislation on underrepresented groups. Faculty members at unionized institutions and state colleges with a large percentage of faculty with doctorates tended to believe that the mandated instructional strategies decreased their academic freedom and autonomy as instructors. Campus personnel at institutions with high percentages of rural and low-income students were concerned about students' access to technology, particularly in the modularized courses.

Patterns also emerged in terms of the number of negative responses to the legislation recorded by different types of participants (e.g., administrator, faculty, advisor, support staff, or student). Proportional to the number of research participants in each group, we recorded the most negative responses to SB 1720 from advisors and support staff followed by administrators and faculty. One possible explanation is that the street-level bureaucrats whose job responsibilities were most impacted were the most oppositional. Students expressed relatively few negative responses to the legislation (only 14 of the 204 students in our focus groups reacted negatively to SB 1720, 2013) though many students were unfamiliar with the legislation and its provisions in the 1st year of implementation.

While the most common policy perspective was opposition, facilitative implementation behaviors were prevalent in the FCS. Commonly coded implementation behaviors included fundamental rule change and improvising. A possible explanation for this seemingly contradictory finding is that the culture of service and commitment to students in the state colleges far outweighed any negative attitudes campus personnel felt toward SB 1720.

Another rationale for street-level bureaucrats who opposed the legislation to adopt a facilitative pattern of implementation was the desire to overturn the legislation. The objective in these instances was to prove to policymakers that the legislation was unworkable even with the most vigorous implementation efforts (i.e., "I told you so"). An important finding, then, is that when policies are unpopular with street-level bureaucrats, their commitment to their clients and even their desire to overturn legislation can function as a counterbalance to oppositional behavior.

Our typology of oppositional, circumventing, satisficing, and facilitative implementation patterns suggests that at least in community colleges, discretion over policy implementation of street-level bureaucrats remains undiminished. Furthermore, our focus-group data indicate multiple determinants of whether campus personnel will engage in oppositional, circumventing, satisficing, or facilitative implementation behaviors. Some of these factors include the culture of the institution, how leadership frames the legislation, individuals' sociopolitical worldviews, the extent to which the changes increase workload and disrupt the work life of campus personnel, and their perceptions about the likely impact of the legislation on student success.

None of these single factors alone was sufficient to explain the implementation behaviors of street-level bureaucrats.

Implications for legislators and campus leaders

It is too early to determine whether DE reform in Florida achieved its goal of reducing time to degree completion and increasing transfer and graduation rates for underprepared students. Nor do we know with any certainty whether long-term student outcomes will differ for underrepresented student populations as many street-level bureaucrats in the FCS feared. Given the substantial initial expense of implementing this unfunded mandate, the long-term financial impacts are also not yet clear. Additionally, it is unclear both whether student debt in the FCS will be reduced through acceleration of the DE course sequence and whether state colleges will eventually recoup the cost of implementation through the reduction of DE course offerings and improved outcomes in the remedial courses that remain.

Short-term outcomes of the legislation, however, have begun to emerge. Given the opportunity to bypass DE, large numbers of students in the FCS did so regardless of advisors' recommendations. As campus personnel predicted, students with the lowest levels of academic preparation did poorly in college-level coursework, suggesting that students with the greatest deficits can still benefit from DE, particularly in corequisite or concurrent instruction. However, contrary to the expectations of many street-level bureaucrats, students who were nearly college-ready oftentimes succeeded in gateway courses (Hu et al., 2016).

At the institution level, we know that the legislative mechanism for accelerating the remedial course sequence under SB 1720 (i.e., greater student choice) had numerous unintended consequences. In particular, the new sorting processes for determining which students were "exempt" and "nonexempt" based on year of entry to high school and later graduation date were costly and greatly increased the workload of street-level bureaucrats throughout the FCS (Hu et al., 2015). It is likely the legislation would have been less costly to implement had it not contained the exemption provision. However, an exemption status based on multiple measures of academic preparation rather than year of entry to high school and graduation date might have been more effective at improving outcomes by separating students who were likely to succeed in the gateway course from those less likely to succeed. Nonetheless, lawmakers contemplating legislation to increase student choice in community colleges in other states must be cognizant of the human and financial resources that were expended in Florida's DE reform as well as the opposition that such policies engendered in campus personnel.

Higher education policies do not implement themselves; they require campus personnel knowledge to ensure that mandates meet the objectives

established by legislators. The knowledge of street-level bureaucrats can be used to work for or against successful implementation (Lipsky, 1980). Thus, when policymakers and institutional leaders understand not just the variety of implementation behaviors, but also the dynamics that predispose street-level bureaucrats to adopt either oppositional or facilitative behaviors, they can interact with campus personnel in ways that increase the likelihood of successful implementation (Anderson, 2006).

To avoid oppositional and circumventing implementation behaviors, we suggest considering the sources of opposition we found in our data. Our data suggest that street-level bureaucrats oppose legislation when they feel powerless in the legislative process, lack inclusion and discretion over implementation plans within their organization, and question whether the legislation is good for society and their clients. Policymakers and institutional leaders can improve the fidelity of implementation by securing street-level bureaucrat buy-in, and they can increase the likelihood that the objectives of the policy will be achieved by reflecting on the following considerations when drafting legislation and monitoring its implementation: (a) Well-reasoned policy rationales reinforce the benefits of the legislation to society, street-level bureaucrats, and clients (in this case, students); (b) seeking public comment on legislation when it is drafted, especially among street-level bureaucrats, improves the efficacy of legislation; and (c) providing street-level bureaucrats with discretion over implementation and the ability to assign rewards and consequences to clients empowers street-level bureaucrats within their organizations (Tummers, 2011).

Implications for theory

Our analysis helps us to reconsider the role of street-level bureaucrats in policy implementation in the unique context of higher education. This context differs from most previous studies of street-level bureaucrats in state government and K–12 education because community college personnel enjoy far greater discretion over their work lives than so many public service employees. We propose that this distinctive feature of higher education is due, at least in part, to the longstanding tradition of academic freedom.

Our typology of policy implementation behaviors can be distinguished from a previous typology developed by Sorg (1983) in a different policy domain in two ways. First, while both typologies consider the dimension of compliance, our typology adopts the level of effort as its second dimension, while Sorg conceives of the second dimension as the level of intentionality. While intentional compliance and intentional noncompliance are easily recognized, unintentional compliance and unintentional noncompliance may be more ambiguous and therefore more difficult to identify in real-world policy implementation settings compared with the level of effort.

Perhaps more importantly, Sorg's typology does not identify specific behaviors of street-level bureaucrats associated with each type of implementation. Therefore, a strength of our analysis is its specificity, an attribute that may lend the typology to being operationalized as an implementation variable in future quantitative studies.

We distinguish our study from previous studies on bureaucratic resistance and prosocial behavior because we assigned organizational behaviors to the categories of *facilitative, satisficing, circumventing*, or *oppositional* based on the extent to which these behaviors contribute to achieving policy objectives. Prosocial behavior, in contrast, can be directed at individuals, groups, or the organization so that some prosocial behaviors such as "helping consumers with personal matters unrelated to organizational services or products" (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986, p. 714) may be inconsistent with organizational and policy goals. While facilitative implementation behaviors could involve assisting individuals such as students with personal matters, they must also be directed more broadly at implementing SB 1720. Additionally, prosocial organizational behaviors may merely involve fulfilling one's assigned organizational role or they may involve exceeding the expectations of one's organizational roles. We differentiated between these types of behaviors by characterizing those that merely involve fulfilling one's job-related implementation responsibilities as *satisficing* and characterizing those that involve exceeding one's job-related implementation responsibilities as *facilitative*.

The complexity of contextual factors in our extended vignettes reinforces Winter's (2012) assertion about the difficulty of developing a unifying theory of implementation. Our data and conceptual framework illustrate the complexity of implementation processes. We observed a wide range of perspectives on SB 1720 at the institutions we visited. We encountered strong supporters of the legislation at state colleges where the majority of staff opposed the statute and campus personnel who strongly opposed the legislation where facilitative implementation was the campus norm. We interviewed street-level bureaucrats who opposed the legislation and engaged in each of the implementation patterns (i.e., oppositional bureaucrats engaging in oppositional, circumventing, satisficing, or facilitative behaviors). Street-level bureaucrats who were neutral toward the legislation tended to engage in either satisficing or facilitative behaviors, and street-level bureaucrats who supported the legislation engaged primarily in facilitative behaviors.

Future research directions

To fully examine policy implementation, we first require a richer understanding of the behavior of street-level bureaucrats. Additional qualitative research is needed to better understand the typology and its application to institutions as well as street-level bureaucrats in other higher education

settings (i.e., 4-year institutions, private institutions), in other states, and in other state higher education policy areas (e.g., performance funding, transfer and articulation programs, college access programing, etc.). Our typology, which was derived qualitatively, can now be operationalized quantitatively. In future research, we could create an implementation variable, which aggregates the most prevalent implementation patterns of street-level bureaucrats at each of our 10 institutions to test whether aggregate implementation patterns influence policy outcomes (e.g., success measures for DE students).

Our review of the literature uncovered a dearth of policy implementation studies in higher education, particularly those that cast campus personnel as street-level bureaucrats. As state and federal policymakers turn greater attention to higher education institutions, such studies become increasingly important. The higher education literature would benefit from implementation studies that examine both state-level policy directives in other state contexts and federal higher education policies.

Conclusion

It is critical to understand how educators and other public professionals view policy, how these views influence their implementation of policy, and how their implementation behaviors influence the success or failure of public policy. Winter (2012) has argued that "implementation research should aim at explaining variation in implementing behaviors/outputs and the role of these behaviors in shaping outcomes for target populations" (p. 265). Therefore, our study of DE reform in Florida identifies the policy perspectives of street-level bureaucrats and links them to a typology of four policy implementation patterns. Our future work will involve a more focused examination of how the policy perspectives of street-level bureaucrats and their associated actions are translated into policy outcomes. Our current study also provides a perspective that can serve as a starting point for future research seeking to understand the implementation behaviors of campus personnel in diverse higher education contexts.

Notes

1. Because educators function as street-level bureaucrats in our study, we use the terms "campus personnel" and "street-level bureaucrats" interchangeably.
2. We use the term "state colleges" to describe FCS institutions specifically. In broader discussions, we use the term "community colleges."
3. Kappa ranges of .41 to .60 represent moderate intercoder reliability, values greater than .60 indicate satisfactory reliability, and values greater than .80 represent nearly perfect reliability (Burla et al., 2008; Everitt, 1996).

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