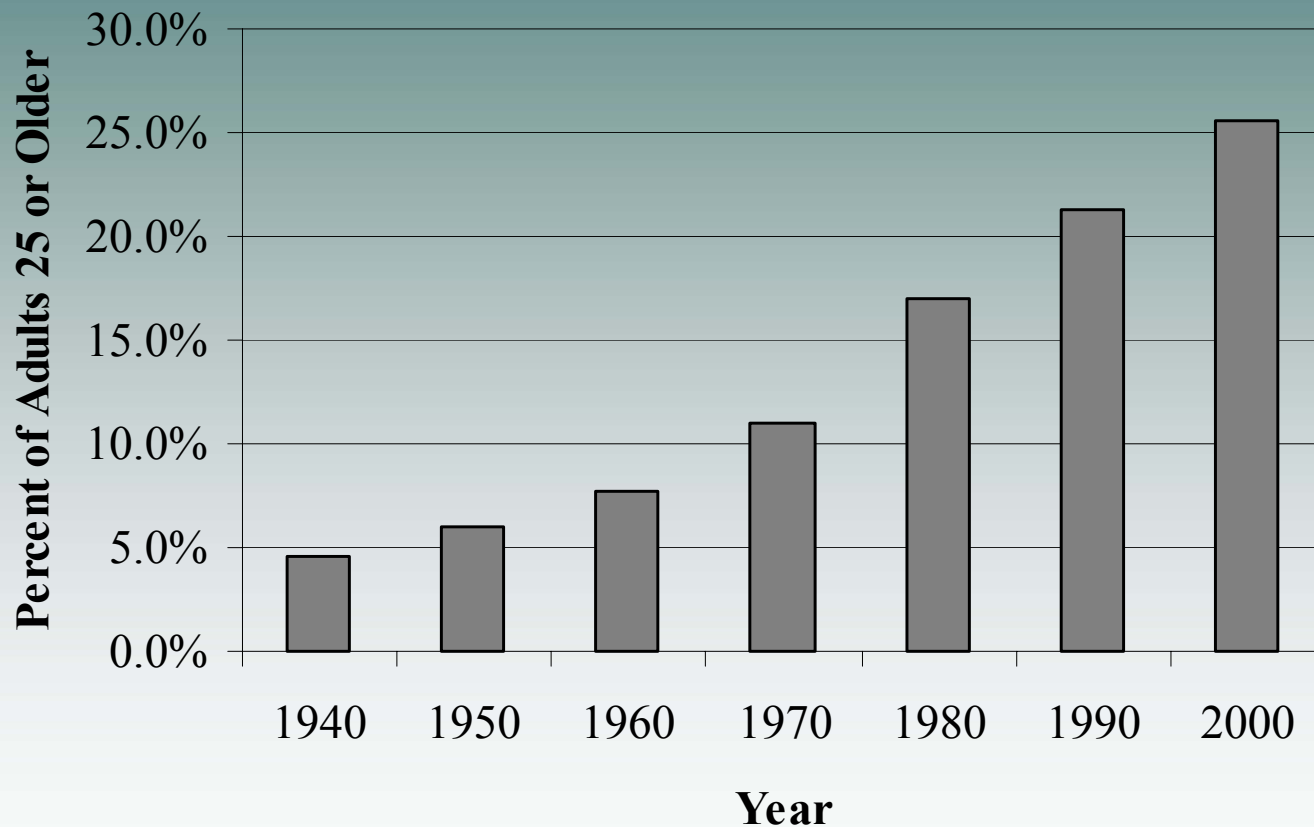


The Academic Mission of Community Colleges: Structural Responses to the Expansion of Higher Education

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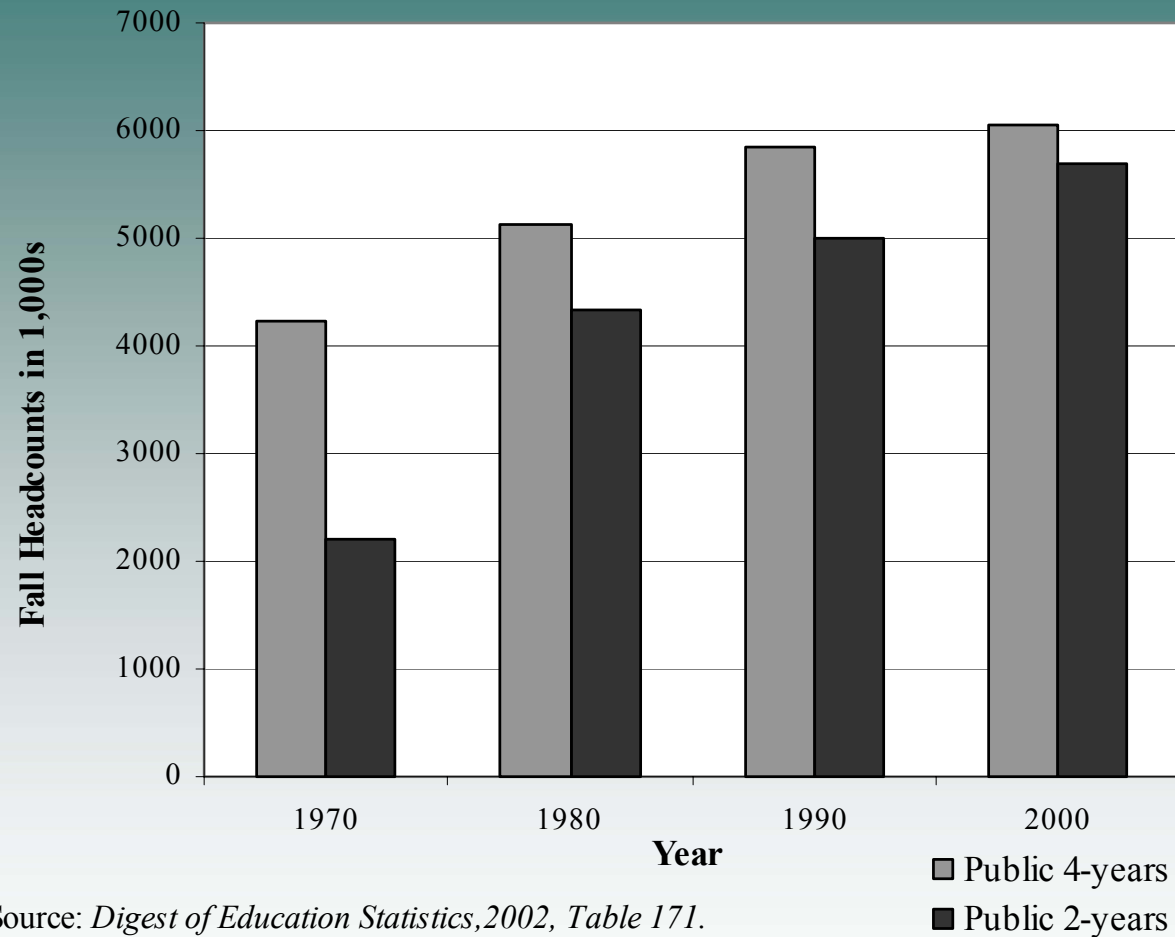
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Educational Attainment of Individuals 25 Years and Older: Percent with Four or More Years of College, 1940-2000



Source: US Census [<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/education/tabA-1.pdf>]

Public Postsecondary Enrollments, 1970-2000



Framework: Labaree (1997)

- American educational system is “a vast public subsidy for private ambition” (p. 258)
 - a) Social mobility—transfer—private good
 - b) Social efficiency—training—public good
- Public educational institutions achieve higher status by promising social mobility
- Newest institution in the hierarchy required by policymakers (and taxpayers) to offer social efficiency

Community Colleges Are Better Positioned Than Ever Before to Focus on Transfer

- Conceivable to transfer to top universities
- Rising tuition at public and private four-years
- Growing popularity of four-year degrees
- Continued growth of community college enrollments

Community Colleges as Stepping Stones to Big Name Colleges and Universities

- *Rolling Stone*, 1998: “community colleges give you small classes and an affordable head start on some of the top universities in the country”
- *New York Times*, December 2002: “Junior Colleges Try Niche as Cheap Path To Top Universities”
- *USA Today*, June 2003: “more and more, two-year institutions are serving as launching pads for the best and brightest, luring students ... with merit scholarships, intensive academic programs and the potential to be discovered by a big-name school”

Questions Raised by These Developments

- Community colleges have the option to pursue higher status. Is there evidence that this is happening?
 1. Structural
 2. Cultural
- How do these developments interact with occupational education?

Methodology

15 Case studies: the “National Field Study”
CA, TX, FL, NY, IL, and WA

- Sources of Data:
- More than 400 interviews with 658 informants
 - 42.4 administrators
 - 42.5 faculty and counselors
 - 12.2 students
- Information from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)
- College catalogues from 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

Table 1: Credit program enrollments

College	State	Location	Decade Established	Number of campuses	Fall 2000 enrollment	Percent Change, 1990-2000	Percentage Change in Enrollments at Competing/Receiving Public 4-years
WUCC	CA	Urban	1910s	1	14,406*	-2.6	5
WSCC	CA	Suburban	1960s	1	13,233	26.4	-9
WRCC	CA	Rural	1940s	3	4,344	74.7	-1
SMCC	FL	Mixed	1960s	5	13,186	3.2	81
SUCC	FL	Mixed	1960s	4	27,565	49.5	29
MWUCC	IL	Urban	1960s	1	8,147	-2.0	2
MWSCC	IL	Suburban	1960s	1	28,862	-1.1	2
WMRCC	IL	Rural	1960s	1	7,675	47.1	-11
NESCC	NY	Urban and Suburban	1950s	1	9,304	-1.0	-6
NEUCC	NY	Urban	1950s	1	6,928	7.8	-24
NERCC	NY	Rural	1960s	1	4,521	26.6	-10
SWUCC	TX	Urban	1970s	3	25,735	6.1	4
SWSCC	TX	Suburban	1980s	3	12,996	43.5	9
NWRCC	WA	Rural	1960s	1	1,854	5.8	4
NWSCC	WA	Suburban	1960s	1	11,234	18.6	12

Source: IPEDS

*District data, not IPEDS

** Redoing calculations, data will be in final draft

Table 2: Racial Characteristic of Colleges

College	Percent of Students, 2000			Percent Change, 1990-2000			Percent Change in Black & Hispanic Students at Competing/receiving Public 4-years
	White	Hisp.	Black	White	Hisp.	Black	
WSCC	65.1	13.2	1.6	-18.2	5.3	0.0	2.9
WUCC*	39.0	21.9	14.6	-10.2	6.7	-4.6	9.1
WRCC	41.3	41.9	7.4	-25.5	18.5	2.9	4.8
SUCC	57.9	17.9	13.4	-19.6	8.6	5.5	8.2
SMCC	80.0	5.1	12.2	-8.8	3.2	5.0	13.6
NERCC	95.2	0.7	2.3	-3.6	0.5	1.4	2.4
NESCC	88.0	1.7	7.3	-6.2	0.9	3.6	0.7
NEUCC	4.0	53.2	36.5	1.2	22.3	3.1	10.1
MWSCC	72.3	10.1	3.7	-11.6	4.9	1.4	3.8
MWUCC	18.7	19.3	45.8	0.9	9.1	-13.6	6.7
MWRCC	89.8	1.1	7.5	-4.0	0.7	3.0	4.8
SWUCC	64.8	21.3	6.6	-8.9	6.2	0.7	1.9
SWSCC	75.4	7.0	5.2	-14.6	2.9	2.0	6.3
NWSCC	69.8	2.4	3.2	-19.8	0.9	1.7	1.4
NWRCC	74.5	16.4	0.9	-4.1	9.4	0.5	2.8

Source: IPEDS

*Source is college not IPEDS

*Redoing calculations, data will be in final draft

Table 3: Full-time Faculty by College and Year

	Total Full-time Faculty			Ratio of Students to Faculty ¹	
	1990	2000	change	1990	2000
MWRCC	76	109	43	69	70
MWSCC	245	323	32	119	89
MWUCC	153	89	-42	54	92
NERCC	74	61	-18	48	74
NESCC	292	279	-4	32	33
NEUCC	300	183	-39	21	38
NWRCC	43	48	12	41	39
NWSCC	104	143	38	91	79
SMCC	135	163	21	95	81
SUCC	202	231	14	91	119
SWSCC	81	204	152	112	64
SWUCC	208	336	62	117	77
WRCC	45	57	27	55	76
WSCC	122	142	16	86	93
WUCC	121	151	25	114	95

¹ Based on Fall Credit Headcount from IPEDS

Table 4: Full-time Faculty by College and Year

Percent of Faculty Teaching in Academic Subjects			
College	1990	2000	Change
SMCC	(no data)	(no data)	(no data)
NESCC	44	45	1
NWRCC	44	47	3
SWUCC	43	49	6
MWRCC	50	50	0
WRCC	51	58	7
NERCC	57	60	3
MWSCC	62	62	0
WUCC	60	66	6
SWSCC	65	67	2
NWSCC	66	67	1
SUCC	70	72	2
MWUCC	76	75	-1
NEUCC*	60	77	17
WSCC	80	77	-3

* This college housed a nursing program in 1990 that increased the nursing faculty by 67 from its size in 1980. Omitting these faculty, there was still a reduction of the full-time faculty by about 16.7. In 1970, 73 of the faculty were teaching in academic subjects and 79 in 1980.

Table 5: Faculty with Doctorates by College and Year

	Pct. of total with Doctorates		Pct. of Academic faculty with doctorates		Pct. of Applied faculty with doctorates	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
MWRCC	14.5	15.6	21.1	20.4	7.9	10.9
MWSCC	9.8	17.6	13.7	26.0	3.3	4.1
MWUCC	19.6	27.0	24.1	28.4	5.4	22.7
NERCC	5.4	9.8	7.1	13.9	4.5	4.0
NESCC	5.6	10.0	8.8	15.2	3.1	5.8
NEUCC	19.3	50.8	31.8	61.7	0.8	14.3
NWRCC	11.6	4.2	26.3	9.1	0.0	0.0
NWSCC	10.1	13.5	13.9	15.4	2.7	8.1
SUCC	5.0	11.3	7.1	15.1	0.0	1.5
SWSCC	14.8	21.1	20.1	25.5	3.6	11.9
SWUCC	20.2	30.4	33.0	43.4	6.9	13.6
WRCC	6.7	10.5	13.0	15.2	0.0	4.2
WSCC	6.1	22.5	12.4	26.4	12.0	9.4
WUCC	14.9	16.6	20.6	23.2	8.3	3.8

Mission Priorities

- Strengthening connections to business and industry
- Faculty commitment to “traditional” transfer mission
- Result:
 - a) Occupational programs in contract and continuing education departments
 - b) Occupational programs that transfer

Developing Transfer-Oriented Occupational Programs

And what we have done recently, we have really changed our curriculum a lot and wanted to make it a lot more flexible...this is my first time to actually teach at a community college. I came from the university and so I wasn't really used to that. You know. A student going on to get a Bachelor's degree, how do we create that link? And now that it's more and more important in our industry to do that, we know that we needed at a community college level to be able to do, to do that as well. So SWUCC has really supported a lot of the programs that want to jump on that bandwagon, and one of the angles that we've take with it is to create a specialized degree that is totally transferable. (Hospitality Management Faculty, SWUCC, 5/2/01)

Criminal justice has evolved. You can't teach the same skills to change spark plugs as you do to carry and M-16 and police a society. We're getting ripped off, the taxpayers are getting ripped off, students are getting ripped off. They don't care. They just think "go for it" and when we go up and say we have to evolve, Criminal Justice has to evolve into an academic program and has to be transferable, they turn a blind ear. They're not interested in those kinds of problems or solutions. You keep it vocational, it makes money, then go do it. (Criminal Justice Faculty, NWSCC, 10/12/00)

Where Does “Social Efficiency” Fit?

I think the real question for community colleges is deeper, because do you provide the specialized training that the client wants, or do you take the higher road and say “we’re an educational institution, we do not believe that the problem” and we choose not to play? And, I don’t know. I don’t know the answer to that, because in a lot of colleges—ours is not entrepreneurial, yet, but certainly other community colleges are extremely entrepreneurial, and they’re you know, totally self-sustaining. They would never turn down a contract, you know? But it gets to be an issue in education. (Director of Workforce Development, NERCC, 11/3/00).

There’s probably been some concern by our traditional faculty that we are getting away from our traditions, but I believe that the professional technical programs that we offer are solid professional technical programs. And to me, the integrity of the institution and the curriculum and the faculty that we hire are the issue. (Associate Dean of Enrollment, NWSCC, 10/11/01)

Summary of Findings

- Community colleges in the study were moving towards 4-year structure and status
 - a) development of dual enrollment and honors program
 - b) more academic full-time faculty
 - c) more faculty with doctorates
- Occupational education evolving towards
 - a) Transfer
 - b) Contract and continuing education
- Increasing access not a motivating force
 - a) Little evidence of development in student services and remediation
 - b) Increases in minority enrollments not much more than neighboring four-years

Two Trajectories for Community Colleges

1. *Status Quo*: Comprehensive colleges that offer some contract and continuing education
2. Emergence of a new layer in stratified postsecondary system: Community colleges focus on transfer while converting their occupational mission into contract and continuing education.
 - a) Technology has changed the requirements of work
 - b) Businesses are outsourcing training
 - c) Businesses are needing to improve English skills of employees
 - d) Current community college occupational programs are evolving towards transfer, making them a “private” rather than “public” good