

AN ANALYSIS OF STAFFING ISSUES
RELATED TO COUNSELORS AND ADVISORS IN THE
WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Earl E. Martin

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

University of Washington

2004

Program Authorized to Offer Degree: College of Education

University of Washington

Abstract

AN ANALYSIS OF STAFFING ISSUES
RELATED TO COUNSELORS AND ADVISORS IN THE
WASHINGTON STATE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

Earl E. Martin

Chair of Supervisory Committee:
Assistant Professor Edward Taylor
College of Education

In 2001, a team developed and implemented a survey on staffing issues related to advisor and faculty counselor positions in the Washington State community and technical college system for the purpose of providing staffing data to inform education policy discussions. Chief student affairs officers from each of the 34 institutions assembled respondent teams to report the staffing trends for advisors and faculty counselor positions in five-year increments from 1985/86 to 2000/01.

The data indicates that traditional faculty counselor duties are being reassigned to rapidly expanding advisor positions within non-faculty classified staff and administrative exempt employee classifications. Employees in these non-faculty employee classifications groups are paid less, have less job security, and have less educational training than faculty counselors. Data is reported and analyzed for policy and educational leadership implications. Recommendations for future research, policy, and leadership considerations for the staffing of counselors and advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system are also included.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Figures	ii
List of Tables	iii
Chapter One: Introduction.....	1
Chapter Two: Review of Literature	28
Chapter Three: Methods	39
Chapter Four: Trend Data Results	45
Chapter Five: Current Data Results	55
Chapter Six: Educational Leadership Considerations	64
Chapter Seven: Educational Policy Considerations.....	77
Chapter Eight: Summary.....	95
References.....	110
Appendix A: Survey	115

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Number	Page
1. Average FTE Staffing Per College of Employee Groups Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 – 2000/01)	47
2. Employee-to-Student Ratios for Employee Groups Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 – 2000/01)	49
3. Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Counseling Faculty by Duties (1985/1986 – 2000/01)	50
4. Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Classified Staff Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 - 2000/01).....	51
5. Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Administrative Exempt Employees Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 - 2000/01)	52
6. Minimum Education Required for Counseling and Advising Positions.....	56
7. Actual Education Achieved for Counseling and Advising Positions.....	57
8. Funding Practices for Counselor Staffing during Academic Quarter Breaks	61
9. Funding Practices for Counselor Staffing during Summer Quarters	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table Number	Page
1. Survey Response	45
2. System Fall Quarter Student Headcount Enrollment (1985-2000)	48
3. Duties Ranked by FTE Staffing Counselors Compared to Other Job Classifications	54
4. Annual Contract Days by Employee Classification.....	58
5. Annual Pay Rates by Employee Classification	59
6. Pay Rates per Day by Employee Classification.....	60

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am most grateful for the support of amazingly wonderful and talented faculty members at the University of Washington and Central Washington University. The opening of their minds, their hearts, and their homes nourished my valuable learning and academic achievements. I will be eternally thankful for the encouraging mentorship and expert guidance that I received from them.

A very special acknowledgement goes to the late Dr. Kenneth Sirotnik, a member of my dissertation committee, a talented scholar, and much loved human being. Ken passed on before this work was finished, but his influence and memory is most profound for many. He lived an honorable life as a humble and brilliant educator who cared deeply about students and the field of education. He is an inspiration for many and is deeply missed, but his legacy continues through his many influences on others.

I deeply appreciate the support of my supervisor, Rich Haldi, and all my colleagues in the Counseling, Advising and Career Center at Everett Community College. Their sacrifices, flexibility and support were instrumental in the completion of this degree. A special thanks is extended to Dr. John Patella for his suggested improvements.

Michelle Roedell, a former community college counselor, was very instrumental as a colleague who shared a passion about our profession and our work with students. She did the majority of the state's archival research related to its community college system and the field of counseling while working on a position paper on counseling staffing issues with me for the

Washington State Community and Technical College Counselor's Association.

This research was critical to understanding the vision of our systems' founders.

In addition, special thanks goes to Dr. Dan Weinstein and his staff at South Puget Sound Community College, the Washington Federation of Teachers Counselors Task Force, and the all the members of the survey research team who were very instrumental in the development, distribution, and collecting of this research.

I also appreciate the time and assistance provided by Doug Whittaker and Chris Reykdal of the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges. The technical assistance and state system statistics they provided really helped illuminate the issues explored in this dissertation research.

I also want to thank my loving wife for her support and sacrifice. She has been very supportive of my academic pursuits and has sacrificed some of our valuable relationship time while I studied.

Most importantly, I acknowledge and give thanks to our Creator who has blessed me beyond my dreams.

DEDICATION

I'd like to dedicate the completion of this dissertation and my doctoral studies to my family ... those who have gone before me, those who I live with today, and those who we have yet to see the sparkle in their eye. Originating from a working class family whose members had yet to climb the ivory towers of higher education, I am most honored to carry their name and memory to the heights of this esteemed institution. However, I will never forget where I came from.

I was born in 1964 in Oakland, California to a wonderful 18-year-old mother whose family's men mostly worked on gas and diesel engines to make a living. Five years earlier, my mother was the oldest of eight when her mother, of Cree and French-Canadian descent, died in a tragic auto accident. My grandfather served during WWII and my father served 18 years in the military and was absent most all of my childhood. My stepfather came into our lives when I was around 5 years old and stabilized a struggling family of five.

While I was too young to understand then, I know now that the 1960's were a time of great tragedy and social upheaval for our nation. The agonizing assassinations of several distinguished national leaders and an unpopular losing war accounting for additional massive unnecessary deaths were accompanied by positive efforts to address unfair hardships facing women, ethnic minorities, and the poor. Our nation put a man on the moon and many dreamed of continuing FDR's vision of a great society.

I have personally benefited from and will be eternally grateful for the efforts of these past great society visionaries. In 1968, I was in the first class of the federal Head Start program in Seattle. When I was four years old my

mother needed to divorce my alcoholic father and she, my three younger siblings, and I landed safely in our nation's safety net of public assistance and public housing. In addition, my siblings and I benefited from free and reduced lunch programs in the many schools we attended as our stepfather towed us around the nation in search of good paying jobs. Most importantly for my college success, I received federal and state financial aid grants, loans, and work study jobs that allowed me the opportunity to access a post-secondary education.

Today, I am here completing my doctorate degree at the most revered institution of higher learning in our region, as a result of this collection of socially progressive programs. Contrary to the fears of these programs' critics, neither my family nor I became dependent, shiftless, or lazy due to receiving this much needed assistance. The effect of these programs was truly a temporary "hand-up," not a permanent "hand-out." Today my family is doing well and we are all positively contributing back to society. I truly believe these programs are worthwhile investments that ultimately benefit all of us.

With the help of progressive social programs designed by and supported by former national and state leaders, I have successfully overcome the steep barriers of poverty, educational disadvantages, and limited opportunities. As a result, I am very passionate about supporting and improving quality in these progressive programs for future generations.

In 1967, Washington State leaders passed legislation in support of a state community college system that will "offer an open door to every citizen, regardless of his academic background or experience...and offer thoroughly comprehensive education, training and service programs." These community

colleges were designed to support our nation's democracy by strengthening opportunity and social mobility for all citizens. In addition, the community college founders explicitly called for strong student counseling programs for the very diverse and needy trailblazers seeking to improve their lives by entering the wide open doors of community college opportunity.

In the name of equity, fairness and social justice, I also dedicate this work and my life's vocation in service to the educational and social needs of less privileged members of our society. The American community college is a glorious invention dedicated towards that same mission. I aim to continue to support and contribute to the founder's original vision of well-functioning, high quality, affordable, and accessible institutions in support of democracy, equal opportunity, and the American dream.

Chapter One: Introduction

Community colleges are a uniquely American invention designed to promote our national ideals of democratic freedom and socio-economic mobility and, as “open door” institutions, they often accept students who are not fully prepared for college and/or considered “at-risk”. Because of this unique role and student population, community colleges have historically emphasized high quality, holistic counseling staffing models to help students overcome a variety of barriers to reaching their goals.

In Washington State, the legislature created a state system of community colleges with the Community College Act of 1967. This act was amended to include technical colleges with the Community and Technical College Act of 1991 (Big Bend Community College, 2004). The origins of these acts was directly informed and instituted from influences from a Policy Plan for Community College Education in the State of Washington written by Arthur D. Little, Inc., which in turn was influenced by national report on two-year colleges known as the Carnegie Report (Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1966; National Committee for Appraisal and Development of Junior College Student Personnel Programs, 1965). The state policy plan and Carnegie Report both called for strong commitments for student counseling.

According to some community and technical college counselors, the original mission of the Washington State community college system is at risk. Originally envisioned and designed with an emphasis on comprehensive and holistic counseling services for complex student needs, some professionals fear the system has lost its way. In 2000, the Washington Community and Technical College Counselors’ Association (WCTCCA) wrote a position paper

that “lists and describes some of the documentation that proves the *intent* of Washington State's Community & Technical College Act is to provide an adequate, sound, and professionally staffed counseling program” (WCTCCA, 2000, p.1). Professional and labor groups representing counseling faculty groups have been sounding the alarm to college administrators and state legislators about a perceived eroding commitment to the counseling needs of students through reduced positions, hiring qualifications, and working conditions for counseling and counseling-related professionals in the Washington State community and technical college system. In their 2000 WCTCCA position paper, the counselor’s professional organization states,

On the whole, WCTCCA views the loss of counseling positions around the state as a direct violation of state law, contract agreements, fair labor practices, professional standards, Student Services Commissions standards, accreditation standards, research indications, ethical considerations, student rights, and the intention of educational reform. (p.9)

However, there has been little empirical evidence to support their concerns about reduced counselor positions, which have been based largely on anecdotal observations.

The purpose of this study is to provide more accurate staffing data to inform policy discussions between education labor leaders, counseling professionals, community college administrators and state legislators about staffing and funding issues related to counselors and advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system. The results of this study will better inform the debates commonly held between advocates for

student counseling and some opposing administrators. The tensions in the debates have centered on several important themes including the role of counselors and advisors, funding, labor/management issues, working days, local and state politics. While I have been a longtime proponent for holistic student counseling services, professionalism, and collective bargaining rights for employees, sincere efforts have been made to objectively describe the main background themes of tension in the field that serve to justify the necessity of this study.

I have a unique and informed perspective as a system insider who has worked in higher education in Washington State since 1982 in a variety of related positions including: community college student advisor, university peer advisor, community college faculty counselor, faculty labor union leader, state counselor professional association leader, administrative exempt academic advisor, and now as an administrator directing a community college counseling and advising department.

This study is an analysis of a survey on staffing issues related to counselors and advisor positions in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01. Specifically, chief student affairs officers from each of the 34 institutions were asked in 2001 to assemble respondent teams to report the staffing trends of full time equivalent (FTE) staffing, employment classification, duties performed for counselors and advisors positions in five year increments (1985/86, 1990/91, 1995/96, and 2000/01). In addition to trend data, respondents reported 2001 staffing data for job titles, minimum education required, actual education achieved, contract days, and pay rates for counselor and advisor positions in the Washington State

community and technical college system. This study also examines funding alternatives practiced in 2001 for hiring counselors for summer quarter and breaks between quarters.

Data will be reported and analyzed for policy and educational leadership implications related to staffing student services personnel at these institutions. The study's data and analysis will be related to the limited educational literature on these issues to expand what is known about community college counseling and advising staffing. In addition, trend data on staffing will be compared to student enrollment trends in the system to examine the proportion of employed counselors and advisors to enrolled students over time.

Background

In the fall of 2000, leaders from the Washington Federation of Teachers (WFT) labor union, Washington Community and Technical College Counselors Association (WCTCCA) and the Washington State Student Services Commission (WSSSC) had independently decided that more research was needed on the history and current practices of counseling and advising in the Washington State community and technical college system. These groups agreed to form an ad hoc task force and work together on a study to share resources and to increase the validity of the research.

The WFT and WCTCCA were interested in labor and professional issues related to the staffing of counselors. Both organizations had recently made official resolutions to study the staffing of counselors and advisors in the state system. Simultaneously, the WSSSC, which is comprised of chief student affairs officers (deans and vice presidents of student services) in Washington State community and technical colleges, had decided to pursue a study of these

staffing issues. WSSSC did this because a group of non-faculty advisors had formed a new group and had petitioned them for recognized status and reporting relations under the WSSSC umbrella of administrative sub-groups in student services. There are several groups of administrators under this umbrella including, for example: college registrars, multicultural student services directors, and disabled students services directors. The Counseling, Advising and Student Development Administrative Council (CASDAC) was also one of the reporting sub-groups and vigorously opposed the formation of a new WSSSC sub-group for advisors, known as the Washington Academic Advisors Coalition (WAAC). Although the motivations for collecting the data were different, the members of these different groups agreed it would be best to conduct a study together.

The background tensions related to this research are multifaceted and extend for decades. Some of the tensions in the field of community college counseling and advising include issues related to employee role confusion, funding, working days, organizational politics, state politics, labor issues, and managing employees. I have over 20 years of experience in the field and am a strong advocate for professionalism and equity, but will make sincere attempts to include multiple perspectives when examining these tensions.

Role Confusion

The role of counselors in the Washington State community and technical college system is not sufficiently clear and there appears to be large discrepancies between similar institutions within in the same system. One of the main components of this study includes a retrospective investigation of the actual duties performed by counselors and advisors within the Washington

State community and technical college system over a fifteen year period to better understand the roles performed by these employees over time.

There are two primary counseling models in the system that helps define the role of counselors. When there are conversations about developing state system standards, these models appear to be in conflict with each other. A few colleges use a clinical counseling model that borrows heavily from the mental health field and typically has fewer counselors seeing fewer students for more narrow and therapeutic issues. However, most colleges in the system implement an educational generalist counseling model that includes mental health, education, and student development themes and usually requires more counselors to counsel students on a broader range of holistic issues.

The most recent addition to the Washington State community and technical college system, Cascadia Community College in Bothell, Washington, has chosen to hire no counselors. This college has operated for 10 years now and their college President, Dr. Victoria Muñoz Richart, reports, "The unique academic and organizational design for Cascadia is destined to be a model for the nation. Responsiveness to our community and our students is not an empty promise, it is our commitment" (Richart, 2004). Cascadia Community College employs "Student Success Facilitators" who are not members of the faculty, nor are they required to have student counseling training.

The institutional discrepancies regarding the role of community college counselors in Washington State have created much tension between the state community and technical college counseling profession and some local college administrators. Counseling advocates feel some local administrators are outsourcing student counseling off campus and/or inappropriately narrowing

counselors to the role of mental health therapists in order to justify hiring less trained and less paid non-faculty advisors.

The tensions regarding the role of community college counselors center on a familiar conflict in education between advocates for local control versus those in favor of state system standards. Currently, local administrators enjoy much discretion on determining the staffing standards and service models on their own campus. Where there are established state and national standards, there is no accountability for local managers to comply. As a result, sister institutions, just miles apart, deliver very different levels of counseling and advising services. Advocates for the counseling profession who call for system standards and accountability for counseling and advising staffing have faced stiff opposition from many of the local administrators.

Role confusion is exasperated by state and national standards for counselors and advisors that overlap or in conflict with each other. The Student Services Manual is printed periodically by the chief student affairs officers in the system, the Washington State Student Services Commission (WSSSC). The latest manual has separate chapters for Counseling Programs and Advising/Educational Planning (WSSSC, 1998). The Council for the Advancement of Standards (CAS) outlined national professional standards and definitions in their 2001 Book of Professional Standards for Higher Education for both Counseling Services and Academic Advising (Miller, 2001). Overlapping definitions and standards aggravates the role confusion and labor tensions between these employee groups.

The Student Services Manual describes counseling as teaching students “how to identify and successfully achieve their academic, career and personal

goals”; and that “Counselors address the student holistically, assisting students with educational, career, personal and social development”; and “Counselors are faculty members with a Master’s Degree in counseling (or equivalent).” The manual also asserts that “Critical points where students need counseling include: assessing college, overcoming personal barriers to academic success, transferring to other institutions and entering the job market” and that “The college and the state must provide adequate funding for a broad range of counseling services” (WSSSC, 1998, p.15-17).

Meanwhile, the Student Services Manual describes Advising/Educational Planning as helping “the student set educational goals and make decisions about enrollment into college programs” and helping “students clarify goals and ... provide ongoing evaluation of progress toward educational goals.” The manual reports that “The advisor and student explore educational and training goals, career choices, and instructional program options” and “should have a bachelor’s degree or higher” (WSSSC, 1998, p.8).

The national CAS standards describes counseling as “an important support for the education and development for the whole person” and “to assist students to define and accomplish personal and academic goals” and “must have a graduate degree in counseling or equivalent.” However, the same book also describes academic advising as assisting “students in the development of meaningful educational plans that are compatible with their life goals” and assisting students “in overcoming educational and personal problems” and “must hold an earned graduate degree (or equivalent)” (Miller, 2001).

These state and national professional standards and definitions do little to relieve the contemporary role definition challenges. The role confusion is

precipitated by the introduction of a new growing class of employees commonly referred to as advisors or educational planners, but also have many other job titles such as career advisors, curriculum advisors, case managers, or student success facilitators. Advocates for the counseling profession feel these new positions are simply creative ways for local administrators to circumvent the faculty designation that counselors have in the Washington State community and technical college system. Advocates for these positions cite the importance of local judgment to creatively respond to the needs of students. In Washington State, community and technical college counselors have full faculty rank and privilege, and inclusion in the same academic bargaining unit as teaching and library faculty (Revised Code of Washington, 28B.50.851, 1998).

Faculty counselor positions have been with the system since its inception and there has been a decades-long theme of state educational leaders calling for strong student counseling programs, but falling short at funding them. Since recent documents have not provided sufficient clarity, counseling advocates often cite the original founders of the Washington State community and technical college system to bolster their advocacy for quality holistic student counseling programs as part of the original stated mission of these unique institutions.

In 1957, the Washington State Board of Education published a report from the Washington State Junior College Study Committee which stated "that provisions for counseling in considering the loads of the staff will become more essential since the counseling service is one of the most important services of the junior college" (p. 35), and recommended that "there be an increased emphasis on the expansion of the number of professional counselors" (p. 36).

In 1961, the Washington State Board of Education reported "Nowhere, perhaps, in the entire program of public education will the counseling function be more important than at this [the community college] level of educational experience...." (Washington State Board of Education, 1961, p. 36).

In 1965, the Washington State Board of Education stated in its Long-Range Development Plan for Community Colleges that "A sound counseling program is a fundamental responsibility of the community college" (p. 16).

The Carnegie Report.

A historic and national effort for developing standards for community college student services was known as the Carnegie Report (National Committee for Appraisal and Development of Junior College Student Personnel Programs, 1965). The Carnegie Corporation provided funding for a two-year study of two-year college student personnel programs. In cooperation with the American Association of Junior Colleges, an independent national committee of prominent educators was appointed. The findings of the Carnegie Report were succinctly described as: "The ultimate success of the comprehensive concept of higher education rests upon adequate guidance" (p. 20).

The conclusions and recommendations of this national committee became the model for community college student personnel programs across the country and are summarized as:

1. Counseling is central to community college success in fulfilling its mission of providing open admission and comprehensive educational and service programs.

2. The comprehensive nature of the counseling function is described, as well as students need for continuous appraisal through the counseling function.
3. Professional counseling qualifications are defined as a two-year graduate degree in a behavioral science field with a supervised practicum.
4. National ratio standards are defined as an ideal of 1:300, not to exceed one counselor for every 500 students. [These figures are based on a comprehensive counseling model, where counselors perform advising and other functions in addition to personal counseling].
5. The need to ensure adequate funding for counseling programs is described.
6. Recommendations include institutional support for professional development.

The Carnegie Report emphasized,

By opening the door ... community colleges, therefore, have assumed the enormously difficult task of educating highly diversified student bodies. It is obvious that these institutions must provide highly differentiated educational programs. It should be equally clear that if students are to choose wisely ... they must be assisted. The student is likely to do these things effectively only if the college recognizes the process of self discovery [career, personal, academic] as one of its principal purposes, and if services are adequate in scope and quality to give the student necessary assistance. For this reason, counseling and instruction are equal partners in the education of junior college students, more than at any other level of education (p. 2).

Policy Plan for Community College Education in the State of Washington.

The 39th Session of the Washington Legislature directed the State to prepare a comprehensive plan for the organization of community college education (Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1966). A policy plan was written that included a section on student services based in large part upon the recommendations of the Carnegie Report. This policy plan would soon after serve as the key document that influenced the original legislation that formed the Washington State community college system in 1967. The plan stated that "the degree to which the community college system in the State will be successful...will depend, in important part, upon a considerable expansion of the guidance and counseling function" (p. 38), and "The community college which appears best suited for today's tasks accepts students of widely varying ages, interests and capabilities, has at its heart a strong counseling center..." (p. 14). The authors of this founding document also weighed in on the local versus state control tension.

In other words, the range of programs offered in any college and the quality of the instruction and services being provided should not be fortuitous matters wholly dependent either upon local resources or local policies....The state therefore has an obligation ... to set guidelines, standards and criteria for defining what community college education should be so as to measure the adequacy of the programs and services being offered (p. 117-118).

A Confidential Report on the Finance and Operation of Washington's Community-Junior Colleges.

Early in the formation of Washington State community colleges there was recognition of the challenges of funding the necessary student services to support the mission of these institutions. A confidential report written by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction stated:

The community colleges in meeting enrollment increases have been consistently understaffed and the faculty overloaded, as measured by appropriate college standards. The operating districts in many instances have been slow to make provision for auxiliary services, such as librarians, counselors...reluctant to find reason for admitting the necessity of providing the level of services for which the college students are paying and for which funds have been provided in the apportionment formula (Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1961, p. 7-8).

Funding

Administrators who supervise counseling and advising functions often do not have counseling training and sometimes question the value of counseling. Some mid-level and upper management administrators have been known to say "I will never hire a counselor again". When pressed about the tensions surrounding the staffing of counselors one of the top reasons given for not hiring counselors centers on funding economics. Administrators have been known to say "Counselors are too expensive", "I want to get more bang for the buck" and/or "I can hire two curriculum advisors for the price of one counselor." Clearly funding is a chief concern to supervising administrators who are fiscally responsible for budget management.

Tensions related to the funding of counseling and advising positions are a central theme in the years of debates surrounding the both the counseling and advising needs of students and the equity needs of the employees who provide those services. Many system administrators have reported that they are constrained by funding limits and therefore are required to find creative ways to meet growing student needs with less funding. However, the funding data provided by the staff at the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (WSBCTC) does not support those assertions.

The proportional funding support of the community and technical college system compared to the entire state budget has held steady or slightly improved over the years. Chris Reykdal (2004), WSBCTC Operating Budget Director, reported that "As a general rule of thumb, the CTC budget has been gaining "market share", if you will, relative to (the) rest of the state budget." The Community and Technical Colleges (CTC) data is only available from the early 1990's after the technical colleges joined the Washington State community college system. In the 1991-93 funding biennium, the total budgeted funds for the community and technical college system was 3.9% of the state budget and it was 4% in the 1999-2001 biennium (Reykdal, 2004).

While the community colleges proportion of the state budget has remained steady, the total dollars in the state budget has grown significantly. In the 1991-93 biennium state budget, the community and technical college system budget was \$1,025,901 million out of a \$26,116,451 million Washington State budget. While in the 1999-2001 biennium budget, the community and technical college system budget was \$1,622,814 million out of a \$40, 449,586 million Washington State budget. The total state budget grew

55% from the 1991-93 to the 1999-2001 biennium. Over that same time period, the community and technical college system total budget grew 58% (Reykdal, 2004). These figures relate only to the last two-thirds of this study's fifteen-year examination from 1985-86 to 2000-01.

Over the years, Washington State's budget has grown significantly and the community and technical colleges' proportion has remained steady. However, the community and technical colleges' expenditures for student services has steadily increased over the period studied in this research. The student services divisions are the budget areas responsible for most of the staffing of counseling and advising positions discussed in this study. In 1985, 9.5% of the system's budget expenditures were in student services. In 1990, 1995, and 2000 those figures grew to 10.6%, 11.2% and 11.7%, respectively (Reykdal, 2004).

Advisors typically make less money than counselors and some feel this is the primary reason for the perceived growth of advisor positions and the erosion of counselor positions. One of the questions analyzed in this study is pay rate comparison between advisors and counselors to address this tension between counseling advocates and some opposing administrators. Counselor and advisors share an interest in the "equal pay for equal work" principle, while some budget authorities are often looking for creative ways to pay people less for the same product under the business productivity principle of "more bang for the buck". This clash of values underscores the funding tensions and gives support for this study's investigation of current pay rates for counselor and advisors in the system.

Working Days

The working days of their employees are another concern of supervising administrators. Faculty counselors typically are scheduled for fewer days per year when compared to administrative exempt and classified staff advisors. Administrators have been known to say, "Counselors are not around for advising when we need them the most, during the breaks and the summer." Counselors typically work the same days as their librarian and instructor faculty peers and this poses service coverage problems during the breaks and summers when faculty are typically not contracted to work. Counselors retort that they would be willing to work breaks and summers if those days were included in their contracts.

State law defines community and technical college counselors as academic employees (faculty) and their working days are typically negotiated as part of collectively bargained local faculty agreements (Revised Code of Washington, 28B.50.851, 2004b). Classified staff employees often work 12-month schedules and while they have some ability to collectively bargain local working conditions, there is structure provided by a statewide classified staff personnel system. However, administrative exempt employees do not belong to labor unions and therefore do not collectively bargain their working conditions (i.e. work days, contracted days, benefits, salary). Due to the differences in union negotiated working days (and other working conditions) between employee group classifications, there is an inherent incentive for some administrators not to hire faculty counselors.

Around the State, there have been anecdotal reports of many creative ways to address counselor work days during the breaks and summer quarter, but no one has studied this before. This study investigated if funding

alternatives exist in the current system that provide for counselor staffing during summer quarters and the breaks between academic quarters.

Managing Employees

Besides the economic concerns of funding and working hours, administrators who supervise counseling and advising personnel are also concerned about managing their staff without barriers. Because of the negotiated labor union contracts, faculty and classified staff employees have certain workplace protections against unfair and capricious actions effecting their employment. The labor unions have contractually negotiated due process procedures and representation in personnel matters that affect their members. These protections have proved burdensome for some supervisors.

Given these contractual job security provisions and combined with the protections of academic freedom, faculty tenured counselors feel comfortable fulfilling their professional obligation to support students by speaking candidly to supervising administrators about college policy and procedures. Many counselors are in a position to hear concerns from students and consider themselves strong advocates for students within the system.

Student services administrators who hire and supervise the counseling and advising functions typically do not have any faculty employees in their division besides counselors. Supervising tenured faculty employees requires a different approach than with subordinate administrative and support staff because many counselors have years of professional experience and advanced degrees comparable to or greater than their supervisors. These peer-like conditions between employees and supervisors can potentially lead to a

politically charged organization rife with power struggles between battling personalities and egos.

Within the system, there are familiar accounts of workplace politics and personality differences between faculty members and their supervising administrators. An administrator may be frustrated by the loss of control that they normally enjoy with their subordinates and with what may feel like employee insubordination from faculty members who challenge their decisions. A few administrators in the State have been known to complain about their inability to manage their counselors and have reported that they will not hire any new counselors or replace any counselors who leave their campus. One school administrator, who had a history of personality clashes and disagreements with members of a large counseling unit, has over time replaced most of them with non-faculty advisor positions. Administrative exempt is considered the most common employee classification of the counselor replacements. Administrative exempt employees have little to no job protection because they can be terminated with little notice or reason.

Organizational Politics

Another political dimension exists between divisions of the institutions. Since counselors are often employed in student services divisions with less political clout than instructional divisions, the student services administrator often does not fare well in attempts to hire or replace these faculty members. Often the political scenario poses the prospects of hiring a new instructor in an academic discipline versus hiring a new counselor. Instructor positions build capacity to enroll more new students, while counselors (and librarians) support the students who are already there. From a business perspective, instructors

help the college generate revenue and counselors (and librarians) are overhead expenses. Like many businesses, there is a compelling need for colleges to increase revenue and to reduce overhead costs. This strong economic argument is often used in political battles between divisions during the budget process often dashing the prospects of hiring or replacing counselors. Meanwhile, the demand for counseling and advising continues to increase and these same student service administrators must find creative ways to staff their divisions to address those vital student needs.

State Politics

Still another political dimension to the staffing of counselors and advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system includes a statewide political theme of local control versus system control. College presidents in the system have been effective in arguing for local control with many issues. They feel they have the best knowledge about their local circumstances and resist efforts by others to organize more uniform state standards and practices. Counselors and state legislators counter that the lack of standards could easily lead to an erosion of service to our citizens who attend our colleges and that the student needs are more alike than different between sister institutions. Counselors feel the quality of services for our institutions should not be randomly established by individual local administrators, while administrators argue that a “one-size fits all” approach is wrong for our institutions. It is a classic debate about local vs. system control. While the secondary education system in Washington State has had detailed legislated standards for counselor hiring qualifications for decades, the community and technical college system has none. Counselors and state legislators in support

of articulating minimum state staffing standards for counseling in the Washington State community and technical college system are at odds with administrators who prefer to let each college manage their local situation without outside interference.

Labor Issues

There are many labor issues contributing to the tension within these debates. Counselors, librarians and instructors are all faculty in the Washington State community and technical college system. Most of the faculty members in the system negotiate their working conditions through collective bargaining and local faculty unions. One of the highest faculty labor union priorities in the community and technical college system over the last 5 to 10 years is addressing the increasing system reliance on part-time faculty members who destabilize institutions and receive less pay, benefits, and job security when compared to their tenured full-time faculty colleagues. The use of part-time counseling faculty instead of full-time tenure-track counselors is also a tension in the system. The growing reliance on part-time faculty is another labor tension with management fueled by economics and workplace politics.

Another labor tension is the sense that there is an unfair labor practice of reducing the members of the bargaining group without bargaining. The practice of assigning the contracted work of a bargaining group to others, without negotiating with the original bargaining group, is known as “skimming” and is considered to be an unfair labor practice. Several supervising administrators around the State have been charged with of unfair labor practices through re-titling traditional faculty union work under non-faculty

work classifications in order to circumvent the local bargained labor contracts. This serious claim has been made at several community colleges in Washington State in regard through informal and informal labor grievance procedures, the Public Employee's Relations Council (a state organization that arbitrates public employee labor disputes) and the courts. Counselors have prevailed in every case known to this researcher, but at a great cost to employee morale and maintaining a healthy workplace environment. Hopefully, this study will help policy makers address the issues of inequity in working conditions (pay, benefits, and job security) for employees performing similar duties so that the emotional and economic costs of these disputes can be greatly reduced or eliminated.

Administrator's Perspective

After the survey was completed, the members of the WSSSC (a subset of the ad hoc research committee), quickly distributed an Executive Summary outlining their key findings and discussion items (WSSSC, 2001). Their summary focused primary on the importance of local control, the total number of advisors, student satisfaction with advising, counselor and advisor role definitions, working hours, and training. The Executive Summary was written by a subgroup of the WSSSC, but the document was voted on and approved by the entire organization. A review of their main points includes:

Local Control

The WSSSC Executive Summary stated that advising and counseling services are "based on the judgment of local institutional leadership" and that "Determining the appropriate mix of advising and counseling resources is the responsibility of the local colleges and should be based on the history, culture

and administrative structure of the college and the unique characteristics of the communities served” (WSSSC, 2001, p.3).

Creative Staffing to Meet Student Needs

The WSSSC Executive Summary cites the total increase of advising services by a diverse group of employees assembled by an administrative expectation that they use “efficiency in operation” and “creativity and imagination” in to meet student needs (WSSSC, 2001, p.1). The feel the total increase in advising staffing, through hiring more classified staff and administrative exempt employees, “demonstrates effective stewardship on the part of community and technical college administration” (WSSSC, 2001, p.3).

Student Satisfaction

The WSSSC Executive Summary cites statewide survey research with community and technical college students indicating that students believe that advising services “works well most of the time” (WSSSC, 2001, p.3).

Counselor and Advisor Role Definition

The WSSSC Executive Summary indicates that because of the demand for academic advising, counseling faculty members are underutilized in providing educational counseling and personal guidance (counseling). The administrators report that “Counseling faculty members devote more than twice their workload effort to advising and educational planning services than they do personal guidance (counseling)” and, “At some colleges, counseling faculty are over-utilized for advising and educational planning duties at the expense of providing professional counseling and personal guidance services” (WSSSC, 2001, p.2).

Working Days

One of the key points made in the WSSSC analysis included the issue of collectively bargained working conditions of faculty. The WSSSC stated “Because of the fewer hours and days worked, faculty counselors are not available to see students throughout the day, in the evenings, and during the summer months. On average, one counseling FTE provides 58 percent of the work hours of one administrative exempt/classified FTE” (WSSSC, 2001, p.3).

The economics of the staff’s contracted working days appear important to the WSSSC as they state in their Executive Summary, “As a system, community and technical colleges have found that advising services delivered by classified and administrative exempt staff are cost efficient” (WSSSC, 2001, p.2).

Advisor Training

The WSSSC Executive Summary states that “The majority of the non-faculty employees who advise (administrative exempt and classified staff) have a master’s degree or bachelor’s degree” and “Advising staff at community and technical colleges have appropriate degree credentials and are well-trained to provide advising, educational planning and career services” (WSSSC, 2001, p.3).

Statement of Problem

The Washington Community and Technical College Counselors’ Association (2000) reported that since the mid-1980’s it appears that the numbers of counselors in the Washington State system had significantly declined. During the same time period, it appeared that an increasing number of classified staff and administrators had been asked to provide counseling and advising duties. However, these claims were based more on anecdotal observations and lacked political legitimacy due to the lack of a comprehensive

study of staffing trends of counselors and advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system. Recently, there have been reports of role confusion, labor disputes, poor state leadership, and decreased morale in the counseling profession (WCTCCA, 2000). The heart of these concerns center on both the ideals of maintaining the unique democratic mission of the community college and professional issues related to maintaining quality professional standards and fair treatment by employers.

The State of Washington does not keep records of counseling staffing for its community college and technical college system. Over the years, anecdotal testimony and conjecture have filled lively debates, labor grievances, and court cases about counseling and advising staffing in the system. Practitioners, college administrators, and state legislators have asked questions regarding staffing levels, quality of staffing training, and the stability of the counseling profession in terms of pay rates and job security. This study will attempt to address those questions with the intended purpose of helping to inform policy makers on these issues based on empirical data in order to make informed policy and staffing decisions regarding the future role of counseling in the Washington State community and technical college system. Consistent with the essence of a doctorate in education (Ed.D.) dissertation, this study will address these “problems of practice” as they apply to the field, as opposed to an expansion of theoretical understanding more commonly found in Ph.D. research.

Research Questions

This study examined research questions related to current and trend staffing data of counselors and related positions in the Washington State community and technical college system. Specifically, the research questions were:

1. What are the staffing trends for counselor and related positions in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01 in terms of full time equivalent (FTE) staffing, employment classification, duties performed, and employee-to-student ratios?
2. What are the current staffing data in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for minimum education required, actual education achieved, contract days, and pay rates for different job classifications performing counseling and advising duties?
3. What are the current funding alternatives in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for staffing faculty counselors during the summer quarter and between academic breaks?
4. What are the educational leadership implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions?
5. What are the educational policy implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions?

Chapter Two reviews the literature related to describing the roles and duties of community college counselors. Funding themes and staffing, commonly defined as student-to-counselor ratios, are also reviewed. Lastly, this chapter details how this study is unique when compared to the existing literature.

Chapter Three describes the research methodology and procedures along with the rationale for each.

Chapter Four reports the results of the trend data related to research question #1: What are the staffing trends for counselor and related positions in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01 in terms of full time equivalent (FTE) staffing, employment classification, duties performed, and employee-to-student ratios?

Chapter Five reports the results of the survey related to research questions #2: What are the current staffing data in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for minimum education required, actual education achieved, contract days, and pay rates for different job classifications performing counseling and advising duties? and #3: What are the current funding alternatives in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for staffing faculty counselors during the summer quarter and between academic breaks?

Chapter Six addresses research question #4: What are the educational leadership implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions? Educational leadership literature is related to counseling and advising staffing issues in the Washington State community and technical college system.

Chapter Seven addresses research question #5: What are the educational policy implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions? Education policy literature is related to counseling and advising staffing issues in the Washington State community and technical college system.

Chapter Eight will summarize the study's findings and its limitations. Recommendations for future research, policy, and leadership considerations for the staffing of counselors and advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system are also included.

The counseling function has often been touted as critical to the success of the mission of the open-door community college (Jones, 1969; Thurston & Robbins, 1983; WCTCCA, 2000). However, little research has been done to measure community college counselor staffing and quality. As a result, the once envisioned cornerstone of community colleges is eroding under a lack of clarity and funding. These research findings will better describe what we know about the various roles and duties that counselors serve and the resources dedicated to counseling services. The aim of this study is to create baseline data to inform future policy and funding decisions related to these matters. The potential outcome of this research is an increase in knowledge and understanding that can inform policy decision-makers and educational leaders to address quality and equity standards necessary to maintain a stable and healthy counseling profession in order to meet the needs of the community college students and our state citizens.

Roles and Duties

The primary literature attempting to measure, categorize and analyze the activities of community college counselors begins in the 1960's. There is sporadic investigation of the services that counselors provide, mostly by state and region. Grubb (2001) summarizes the literature on community college by reporting:

Unfortunately, given the potential importance of guidance and counseling, the services have been largely under-appreciated and little examined. Like other services that do not directly generate enrollments and therefore revenue, guidance and counseling have been relatively peripheral to community colleges. There has been

relatively little research, either by individuals concerned with community colleges or by those who examine guidance and counseling issues more generally. The lack of research means that, while a few individuals in specific colleges may know a great deal about the availability of guidance and counseling services locally, it is difficult to generalize about community colleges across the country. (p.6)

Several researchers describe the abundant amount of confusion and conflict when defining the role of counselors in an educational system with many, and often contradictory, expectations and goals (Ancheta, 1983; Coll, 1993; Matson, 1983). The dynamic and diverse nature of community colleges create inherent challenges to developing a nationally agreed upon definition.

(Matson, 1983) reports:

It should be noted that efforts to describe the role of counselor in terms of tasks performed at any given moment or in a restricted geographic setting are too limiting to be of real value. As a college shifts its focus and its composition, the role of those responsible for the counseling function must shift or demonstrate sufficient flexibility to accommodate the changes in the institutions. (p.22)

However, three years later, the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education published professional standards for counseling programs and services. In 1997 and in 2001, the standards were revised and promote a comprehensive list of standards related to many aspects of the organization and delivery of higher education counseling services. The standards call for counseling services in individual and group counseling,

psychological testing and assessment, crisis intervention, outreach efforts to address student developmental, and helping students assess and overcome specific deficiencies in educational preparation. In a related section on career planning and placement service standards, the Council addresses services in career counseling, career counseling assessment tools, career information, decision making and goal setting (Miller, 2001).

Only one national study was found in the literature describing community college counseling services and roles. However, there are several reports and studies from individual states including California, New Jersey, Virginia, and Washington.

Keim (1988) sampled counselors in half of the American public two-year colleges listed in the Community, Technical, and Junior College Directory and 478 counselors responded for a return rate of 91.2 percent. The counselors reported the percentage of time actually and ideally spent on their duties. Results indicated that counselors spent 29% on academic and educational counseling; 16% on vocational counseling; 14% on administrative duties; 11% on personal counseling; 7% on teaching; 6% on testing; 4% on professional development; 3% on research; and 3% on supervision. Counselors reported they would ideally prefer to spend more time on vocational counseling, personal counseling, teaching, professional development, research and supervision, and less time on in academic and educational counseling, administration and testing.

In 1997, the Academic Senate for the California Community Colleges developed a policy paper on counselor's role, followed by a set of comprehensive

list of standards of practice for California community college counseling programs. In their introduction they report:

Over the years, the functions counseling departments perform have increased significantly, while the pressure to serve more students in cost-effective ways has grown as well. As a result, the question has arisen as to what roles counseling faculty should play in the delivery of services to students. (p. 1)

They list the core functions of California community college counseling programs as academic counseling, career counseling, personal counseling, crisis intervention, multicultural counseling, outreach services, college consultation, research and professional development. Specific standards for each of the core functions are listed (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 1997).

A study of 89 counselors at 15 New Jersey community colleges, (Drakulich, 1992) examined the actual and ideal time counselors spent on various duties. Results indicated that counselors spent 19% of their time on academic advising; 18% on administrative work; 14% on personal counseling; 10% on educational counseling; and 10% on career counseling. Ideally, counselors reported that they would prefer to do less administrative work, transfer counseling and academic advising, and focus more on personal and group counseling.

In Virginia, a study compared counseling personnel and chief administrative officers (Presidents and Provosts) prioritization of the service priorities of counselors. One hundred twenty-eight surveys were completed from a survey of all of the counseling personnel (N= 174) and chief

administrative officers (N=34) in the Virginia Community College system, for a 73.6% return rate. The researchers found significant conflicting priorities between the chief administrative officers and the counseling personnel. Chief administrative officers ranked financial aid, admissions and advising as their top three counseling priorities. Counseling personnel ranked advising, counseling, and career planning and placement as their top three priorities (Short, 1998). Generally, counselors often define their role as addressing the academic, personal and career barriers of students. However, Virginia chief administrative officers prioritized the business of student enrollment and registration as their top priorities for counselors.

Hughes (1976) distributed a survey to counseling administrators in each of the 27 community colleges in Washington State. Fifteen schools participated, representing 56% of the community colleges and 58% of the students served in the state community college system. Results indicated that counselors spent 29% of their time on professional and faculty activities; 23% providing individual counseling; 21% on guidance; 15% on group learning and 12% on campus and community service. Specific details were listed in the study and to the participants that more clearly described these functions. The Hughes (1976) found that the participants were consistent when interpreting the listed functions.

More recently, the Washington State Student Services Commission (WSSSC) has endorsed two strong sources describing the role of community college counselors. The WSSSC is comprised of chief student services officers from each of the 34 community and technical colleges and produces a Student Services Manual for the system that describes services and functions of each of

the main student service areas (Washington State Student Services Commission, 1998). The manual describes the role of counselors as:

Counselors address the student holistically, assisting students with educational, career, personal and social development.

Counselor's primary goal is the teaching of strategies whereby students can develop critical thinking skills, set academic goals, engage in lifelong learning, develop skills for employment and personal wellness, and to interact in a diverse environment. (p. 15)

In addition, the WSSSC and the community college presidents endorsed a document inspired by education reformers who are trying to build stronger linkages between the K-12 system and the community and technical college system in Washington State. The Washington State Guidelines for Comprehensive Guidance Programs from Kindergarten to through Community and Technical College outlines student learning objectives for three domains: personal/social development, educational development and career exploration and planning. The domains are further defined by components in each of the domains. Within each of the domains are age appropriate learning objectives with benchmarks for grades 4, 7, 10 and post-secondary (Coats, Ash, & Dorsey, 1998). This document is significant because the three domains and the learning objectives capture the primary service agendas of counselors in K-14 education. The mantra of "personal, educational and career counseling" is the trilogy of service domains that are frequently cited by counselors in the field.

Staffing and Funding

The primary method to study the amount of resources dedicated to community college counseling in the literature is by examining counselor-to-student staffing ratios. The rising number of students in proportion to the number of counselors is viewed as an indicator of decreasing resources devoted to counseling services. The ratio is described differently by researchers, with some reporting full-time equivalencies of students and others reporting the total headcount. For example, in their book on American community colleges, Cohen and Brawer (1996) reported that the counselor-to-full-time-student-equivalent ratio in United States community colleges to be 1:382. Alternatively, Raines (1968) recommends a counselor-to-student ratio of 1:350 using student headcount. While ratios have dominated the analysis of resources dedicated to community college counseling services, other authors have commented on funding themes more anecdotally based on their observations and experiences.

Keim's (1988) national study of community college counseling services investigated the actual counselor-student ratios for the nation and by regions as defined by accreditation regions. The national ratio was 951 full-time students for each full-time counselor. The counselor-to-student ratio by accreditation region were: Southern 1:665; Middle States 1:942; Northwest 1:948; North Central 1:986; New England 1:1,249; and Western 1:1,306. The distinction of relatively favorable counselor-to-student ratios in the South is substantiated by a study in the 1970's of 171 public community colleges in the Southeast where researchers found a mean counselor-to-student ratio of 1:368 (Goodman & Beard, 1976).

In a thorough formula based on estimating counseling needs, funding factors and time spent on counseling services in Washington State community colleges, Hughes (1976) calculates that a 1:500 counselor-to-student headcount ratio would be appropriate in Washington State community colleges. He cites that the literature is full of estimates of 1:300, but maintains his formula is a better indicator to establish standards of efficiency and effectiveness in counseling staffing. The Washington State Board for Community College Education (1977) cited a 1:500 counselor-student headcount ratio in their Manual for Student Services. Successive student services manuals in Washington State have been mute on the issue of counselor-to-student staffing ratios. The current edition reports "The institution and the state must provide adequate financial resources to ensure the provision of a broad range of counseling services. This requires strong institutional commitment to provide necessary facilities, staffing, and operational funding" (Washington State Student Services Commission, 1998, p. 17).

Researchers in California have tracked counselor-to-student ratios for its community college system since the 1960's. In 1965, the range between the 76 public junior colleges was 1:287 to 1:1667 and the median ratio was 1:501 (Girdner, 1972). In 1993, the range between 63 California community colleges for counseling service (excluding teaching and program coordination) was 1:690 and 1:2634 and the median ratio was 1:1346. The remarkable range of counseling staffing from one college to another lead these researchers to comment:

It is completely unacceptable to have such wide disparity in counseling and advising FTE ratios when funding for these

services is similar throughout the state and students are assessed the same fees at each campus. Colleges need to be accountable for their ratios. (Lorimer, 1994, p.13)

Throughout the literature a theme of inadequate support for counseling funding is repeated across at least the last four decades. A 1961 confidential report on the finance and operation of Washington's community colleges from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction said:

The community colleges in meeting enrollment increases have been consistently understaffed and the faculty overloaded, as measured by appropriate college standards. The operating districts in many instances have been slow to make provision for auxiliary services, such as librarians, counselors...reluctant to find reason for admitting the necessity of providing the level of services for which the college students are paying and for which funds have been provided in the apportionment formula. (p. 7-8)

In the 1970's, Richard Galant from the Office of Community College Services at the University of Michigan reported:

At a time when the size and composition of the student body are changing and budget constraints are causing administrators to examine the effectiveness of each campus service, counseling services are beginning to find it difficult to justify their usefulness. (Galant, 1978, p.61)

In the 1980's, John Terry, the highly esteemed Executive Director of the Washington State Board of Community College Education, when recognizing the lack of funding for counseling services said:

We who are in leadership positions in the community colleges give easy lip service to the importance of meeting student needs.

Words – no matter how pious or how significant a role the speaker may hold – are meaningless unless they can be translated into action. At issue is the quality of student development. Student development cannot prosper without the participation of an effective and comprehensive counseling program. (Counseling and Guidance Directors Association of Washington Community Colleges, 1984, p.1)

In 1997, Kara Cvancara of the American Association of Community Colleges said:

College counseling departments – like the colleges overall – are being pared back. In the lean, mean 1990's, counseling is often viewed as a non-essential college function and therefore is an easy area to cut ... colleges have been forced to cut back personal counseling services to students despite an increasing need for that counseling. (p.12)

More recently, Durodoye, Harris and Bolden (2000) concluded, "Community college counselors will continue to be confronted with shrinking budgets, rising enrollments, and increasing demands for personal counseling services" (p. 466).

It seems that a very clear trend exists in the literature indicating that as time has progressed so has the number of students per counselor. For more than 40 years the literature has provided testimony about the lack of funding for community colleges and especially for its much touted counseling functions.

While the research literature provided some limited information about counselor role, staffing and funding, no research was found specifically on counselor and advisor job titles, pay rates, summer staffing, break time scheduling, contract days, employment classification, educational achievement and minimum education required for counseling and advising positions. This study addressed all of these issues for the State of Washington community and technical college system.

This study was unique in that it distinguishes data about counseling and advising services by employment classification (administrative exempt, classified staff and faculty). Inherent in the impetus for this study was a long history of disputes between counseling faculty and some college administrators about a perceived reduction in training quality, staffing levels, pay, and job security for people who provide counseling and advising to community and technical college students in Washington State. Counseling faculty members were arguing that the State of Washington system is suffering from declining morale, professional standards, compensation, and job security for community college counselors. Their concern was that these factors may reduce the quality of service to our most at-risk students and weaken the democratic and equity missions of our community colleges (Washington Community and Technical Counselors Association, 2000).

Chapter Three: Methods

Research Design

Data was gathered by using a survey. This method was chosen because the data explored was quantitative and descriptive. In addition, cost and time constraints influenced this research methodology choice. Survey research provided affordable and quick results. Furthermore, the population was ideal for survey research as the participants were viewed to be easy to identify, accessible, and cooperative.

To increase the test validity of the survey instrument (see Appendix A), a survey design team was assembled with representatives from various constituency groups who brought different perspectives and have varied interests in this data. Invited members included representatives from the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (WSBCTC); Washington State Student Services Commission (WSSSC) comprised of community and technical college chief student affairs officers; Counseling, Advising and Student Development Administrators Council (CASDAC) which was comprised of administrators responsible for directly managing counseling and advising services; Washington Community and Technical College Counselors Association (WCTCCA), a statewide professional association for community and technical college counselors; Washington Academic Advisors Coalition (WAAC), a newly formed statewide professional group of academic advisors, and the Washington Federation of Teachers (WFT), a labor union.

This researcher was an instrumental member of the survey design team and actively participated in the draft process as a representative of the WFT. I wrote the glossary of terms related to the survey instrument and many of the

final approved survey items were originally written by me. At the time of survey construction, I was elected Chair of the WFT Counselor's Task Force assembled to work with constituency groups to address perceived inequities and unfair labor practices related to the counseling profession in the Washington State community and technical college system.

Members of the survey design team assisted in the development of a survey instrument (see Appendix A). Respondents were asked to answer the questions for their respective institutions for four sample academic years: 1988/86, 1990/91, 1995/96, and 2000/01. The survey sample included each of the chief student affairs officers in the 34 Washington State community and technical colleges. The sample list was obtained through the WSSSC and distribution and collection of data was centralized and protected by an Institutional Researcher from one of the community colleges. In addition, the Institutional Researcher served as a survey design consultant and assisted in the delivery, collection and protection of the data. To protect the respondent's anonymity, the Institutional Researcher separated the respondent's names and information that would identify their specific colleges from their responses in the original data set.

Data Collection Procedures

The WSSSC distributed the survey to each of its members, the Washington State community and technical colleges' chief student affairs officers. In addition, the WSSSC introduced the survey instrument with a cover letter (see Appendix A) communicating the scope and purpose of the study, data confidentiality assurances, and a contact person for questions. The respondents were asked to return the survey by a given date to the survey

design team's institutional research consultant for proper data protection and data entry. Each respondent was encouraged to form a campus committee to help complete the survey. Suggested representatives to the campus committees included employees from human resources, local labor union representatives, counseling, advising and other related positions. Respondents who did not return their completed survey by the deadline were called and asked if they needed any assistance. An expected high response rate of 80-90% was reasonable given the reporting responsibility the WSSSC members have to their own organization combined with a shared understanding of the importance of these issues.

Item Analysis

Since the survey items were developed collectively through the cooperation of various constituents holding diverse perspectives, the survey items developed had different levels of meaningfulness to the various committee members. The survey consisted of six parts. Several of the survey items (see Appendix A) are not related to the research questions posed in this dissertation. A rationale for each of the survey items is explained. However, I am more familiar with the survey items that were direct contributions to the survey item construction process.

Part 1 of the survey asked respondents to report the number of counseling and advising positions for the academic years 1985-1986, 1990-1991, 1995-1996, and 2000-2001. Respondents were asked to report the number of staff by the estimated proportion of their time spent on listed duties: advising, career services, educational planning, managing/directing, personal guidance, and teaching. In addition, the staffing data was reported in columns

that indicated which employee classification (faculty, classified staff, and administrator) those duties were being performed in. A glossary was included in the back of the survey that defined each of the listed duty categories and employment classifications.

Part 1 is very helpful toward answering the questions related to the role and number of counselor and advising employees per job classification over time. This part also addressed the faculty labor union concerns about the perceived statewide decline of counseling positions and the erosion of counselor duties performed through the assignment to other employee groups.

This part of the survey also asked about the source of funding for these positions (grant money, state money, or contract money) because some on the committee thought that the source of funding was a variable in the consideration of these issues. Specifically, some have charged that grant funded positions were more likely to be guilty of skimming faculty duties to non-faculty groups. However, this variable was not a subject of this analysis because differing sources of funding is not a valid legal reason to violate a faculty contract and therefore is not especially relevant.

Part 1 also surveys the minimum educational training required, entry-level salary, and number of annual contract days. These items were valuable measures related to examining equity of training quality and working conditions.

Part 2 of the survey focused on the organizational structure providing counseling and advising services, as well as collecting data on job titles, employment classification, minimum degree required, entry-level salary, number of annual contract days, and the total annualized full-time equivalency

(FTE) of both counseling and advising positions. FTE reporting allows for part-time positions to be added and summed into one total figure. For example, two half-time positions would total to one FTE.

The survey items relevant to this dissertation in this part included the data on minimum degree required, entry-level salary, and the number of annual contract days. The minimum degree required data is valuable information related to hiring standards for these related positions. While the salary and contract days allow for an analysis of salary per day comparison of counseling and advising positions. The number of annual contracted days addresses the service delivery interests of administrators by examining how many more days a year advisors work compared to counselors. The hypothesis is that non-faculty advisor positions are paid less per day, work more days and have less education required than counselor positions.

Part 3 of the survey included questions about advising policies. These items are not included in this analysis of this research because these policy factors were meant to allow researchers to distinguish individual campus circumstances to better understand their service delivery model and local campus situation. However, this analysis was statewide and does not attempt to identify or compare individual institutions based on local advising policies.

Part 4 examined the actual highest degree earned by advisors and counselors in the system. This data augments the survey items found in Part 2 about the minimum degree required. The minimum degree required data examined in Part 1 helped explore the bottom range of education allowed for the position, while the actual education data provided a current picture of the educational training of counselors and advisors in the system.

Part 5 of the survey instrument asked about funding alternative to pay for counselors during summer quarter and academic breaks. The explanation for developing this survey item is related to a common complaint of some administrators that they are not able to fund and thereby staff counselors to provide services during these periods. This item tested that hypothesis.

Part 6 of the survey asked respondents to form a team-based opinion appraising both advising and counseling services on their campus. This was the only qualitative portion of the survey. The items did not relate well to the research questions in this dissertation that are aimed towards establishing a base of quantitative facts to better inform policy discussions related to counseling and advising staffing in the Washington State community and technical college system. In addition, these items were not sufficiently methodologically robust, as the data result from averaging institutionally averaged opinions from small and unequal sample groups resulting in questionable data validity and reliability.

Chapter Four: Trend Data Results

This chapter reports the results of the trend data related to research question #1: “What are the staffing trends for counselor and related positions in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01 in terms of full time equivalent (FTE) staffing, employee-to-student ratios, and duties performed by employment classification?”

Survey Response Rate

Of the 34 community and technical colleges in the sample, 31 responded for a 91% response rate. However, each of the respondents did not complete all the sections regarding their full-time equivalency (FTE) staffing for each of the sample periods. In some cases, this was due because the college did not exist at that time. Twenty-seven respondents (79 %) completed all the survey sections (see Table 1).

Table 1: Survey Response

	Total in System	Submitted Survey	Number of colleges that completed FTE staffing allocations in Part 1 of the Survey			
			2000/01	1995/96	1990/91	1985/86
Colleges	34	31	29	28	27	27

Full-time Equivalency (FTE) Staffing by Employment Classification

Respondents were asked to report the full-time equivalency (FTE) of employees performing identified counseling related duties by the identified employee group categories. FTE data allows for the inclusion of part-time employees, for example, two 3/4th time employees would total 1.5 FTE positions.

A glossary of terms describing the various counseling-related duties and state employment categories were provided (see Appendix A) with the survey

instrument. The three identified employee classifications included administrative exempt, classified staff, and counseling faculty. The identified duties were advising, career services, educational planning, managing/directing, personal guidance, and teaching. In contemporary practice, “personal guidance” would commonly be referred to as “personal counseling”; however, the authors of this survey decided to use a more neutral term in hopes of not inappropriately skewing the reporting of this identified duty towards the counseling faculty employee classification.

Respondents were asked to partition the FTE allocation in each employee classification by the identified duties. For example, 2.5 FTE counseling faculty could be providing 1.5 FTE personal guidance, 0.5 FTE advising, and 0.5 FTE educational planning duties.

Respondents were asked to provide this data for four academic years including 1985/86, 1990/91, 1995/96, and 2000/01. As reported above, some respondents did not provide FTE data for all four academic years (see Table 1). The counseling faculty FTE average per college increased 7.7% from 5.22 FTE positions in 1985/86 to 5.62 FTE positions in 2000/01. Conversely, administrative exempt positions providing counseling related duties the FTE positions increased 800% from 0.56 FTE positions average per college in 1985/86 to 5.04 FTE in 2000/01. Classified staff positions providing counseling related duties increased 170% from 1.03 FTE per college in 1985/86 to 2.78 FTE per college in 2000/01 (see Figure 1). During this same period, as illustrated in Table 2, the system growth in student headcount enrollment increased by 64% (Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, 2003).

The dramatic percentage of FTE growth for classified staff and, in particular, administrative exempt employees providing advising are due in part to small beginning numbers in 1985/86. However, just during the last five years of the study, counseling FTE staffing increased 4%, while classified staff and administrative exempt employees who provided counseling and advising duties increased 39% and 79%, respectively. During this period, as illustrated in Table 2, system student enrollment increased 10% (Whittacre, 2003).

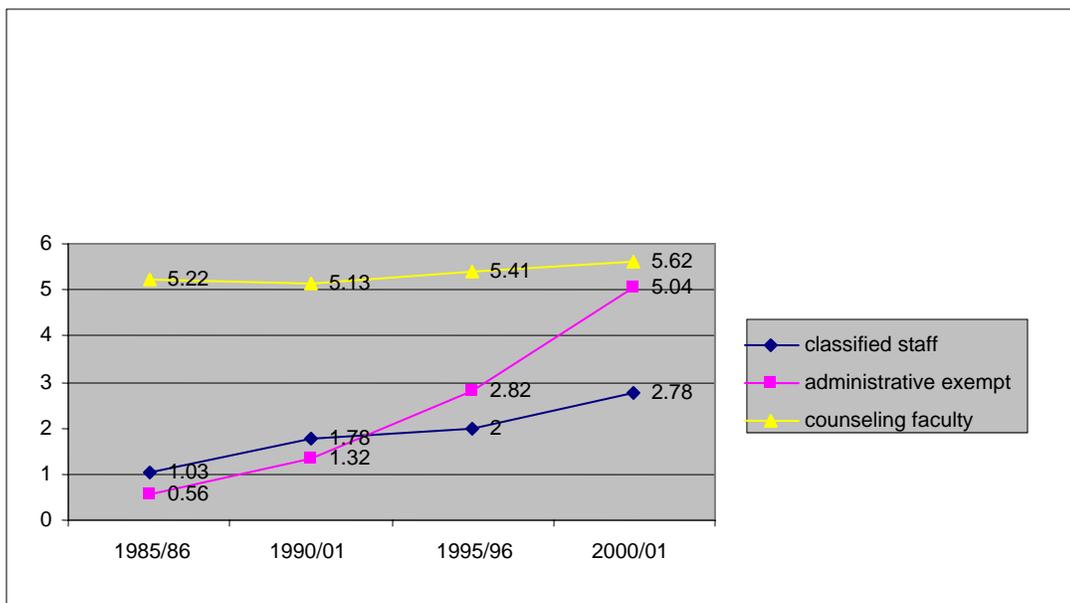


Figure 1: Average FTE Staffing Per College of Employee Groups Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 – 2000/01)

FTE Employee-to-Student Ratios by Each Employment Classification
from 1985/86 to 2000/01

Employee-to-student ratio data is way to measure the number of students in comparison the employees. This measure is often cited in the literature as way to track the commitment to staffing in response to student enrollment. From 1985 to 2000, the Washington State community and

technical college system has grown from 23 to 34 colleges and the student headcount has grown from 153,460 to 252,378 students (see Table 2).

Table 2: System Fall Quarter Student Headcount Enrollment (1985-2000)

System Fall Quarter	1985	1990	1991	2000
Total Headcount	153460	179886	228550	252378
Number of Colleges	23	24	29	34

In Figure 2, the employee-to-student ratios are tracked over the fifteen year period of this study by employee classification (faculty counselor, classified staff, and administrative exempt). Increasing numbers of students in relationship to an employee demonstrates increasing staffing scarcity. Faculty counselors were the only one of the three employee classification groups to see an increase in their employee-to-student ratio.

The employee-to-student ratio for faculty counselors increased by 48% from 1086 students per employee in Fall Quarter 1985 to 1604 students per employee in Fall Quarter 2000. Classified staff employees providing advising and counseling experienced a 41% improvement from 5504 students per employee in Fall Quarter 1985 to 3242 students per classified staff in Fall Quarter 2000. Administrative exempt employees experienced a dramatic 82% improvement from 10,123 students per employee in Fall Quarter 1985 to 1788 students per employee in Fall Quarter 2000. The total counseling and advising staffing per student improved 19% from 832 counseling and advising employees per student in Fall Quarter 1985 to 670 counseling and advising employees per student in Fall Quarter 2000. In summary, the faculty counseling employee

staffing has eroded, but the classified staff, administrative exempt and total employees providing counseling and advising has increased from 1985 to 2000.

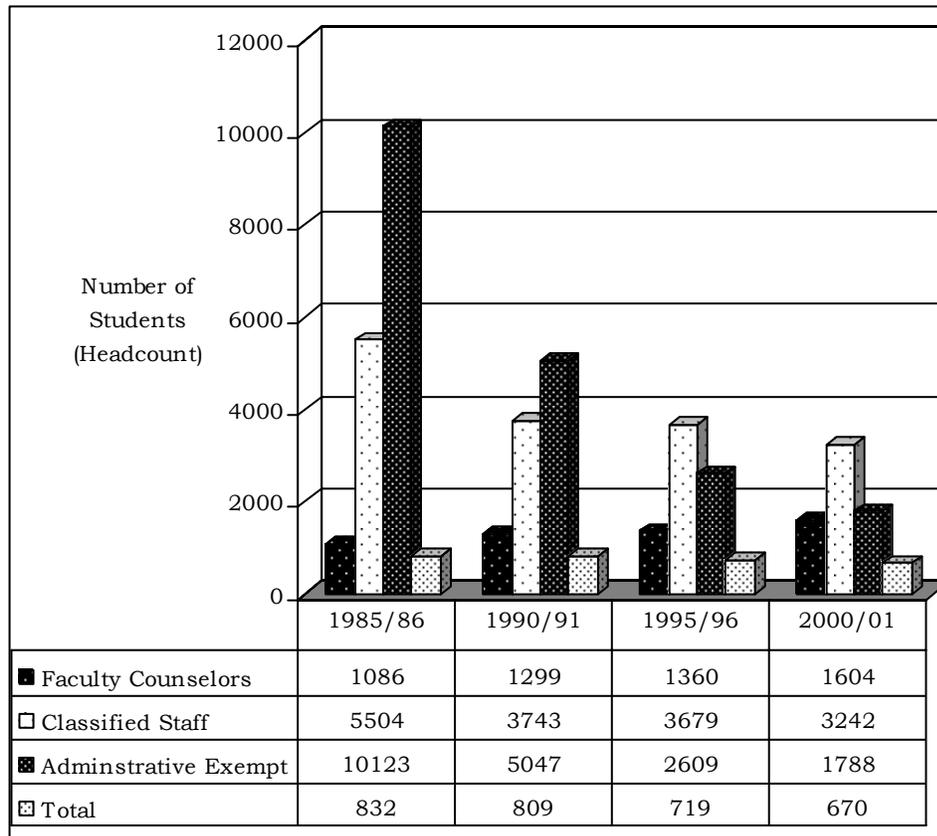


Figure 2: Employee-to-Student Ratios for Employee Groups Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 – 2000/01)

FTE Counseling and Advising Duties Performed by Each Employment

Classification from 1985/86 to 2000/01

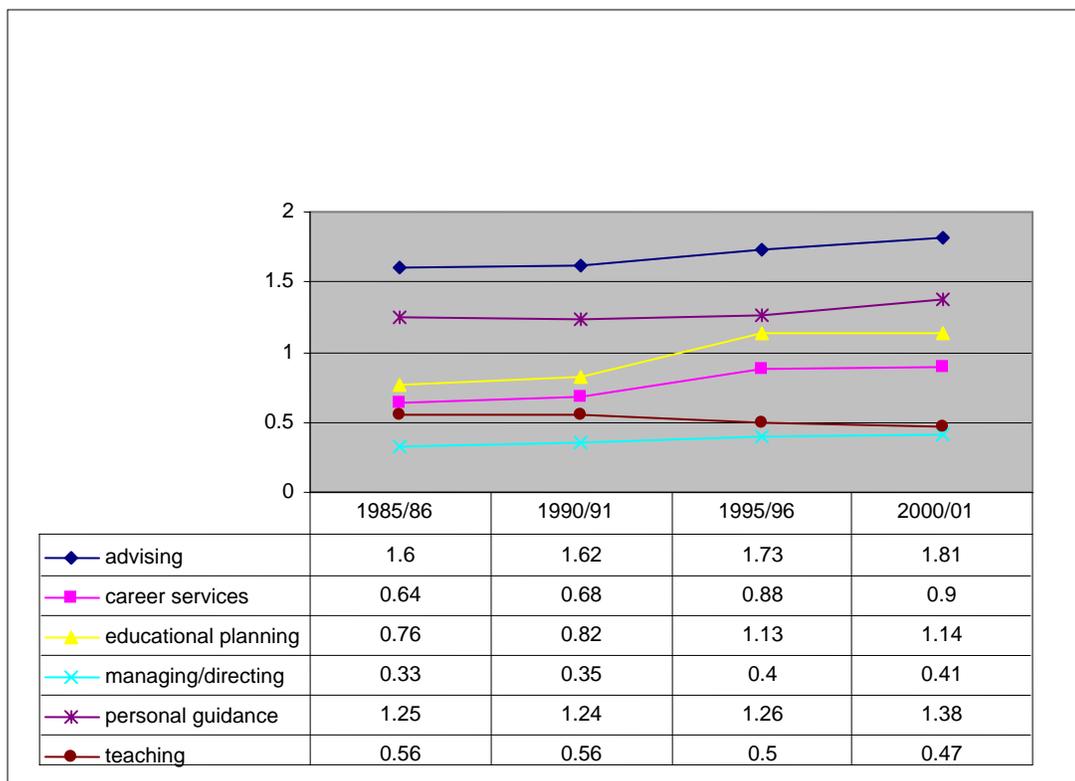


Figure 3: Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Counseling Faculty by Duties (1985/1986 – 2000/01)

The counseling and advising related duties performed by faculty counselors are listed in Figure 3. Over this fifteen-year period, each of the identified duties had increased, except teaching. Advising duties performed by counselors from 1985/86 to 2000/01 increased by 13%. Personal guidance, educational planning, career services and managing/directing duties increased by 10%, 50%, 41%, and 24%, respectively. Teaching duties performed by counseling had decreased 16% from 1985/86 to 2000/01. The academic year FTE totals for counselors providing counseling and advising related duties between 1985/86 and 2000/01 were 5.14, 5.27, 5.90, and 6.11, respectively.

Note that the totals for the combined duties per employment classifications in Figures 3 through 5 do not match the total FTE per

employment classification reported in Figure 2. This is due to some of the total FTE data listed by the respondents did not match their partitioned data for duties by employment classification and may be explained by the existence of other duties performed by these groups that are not measured in this study.

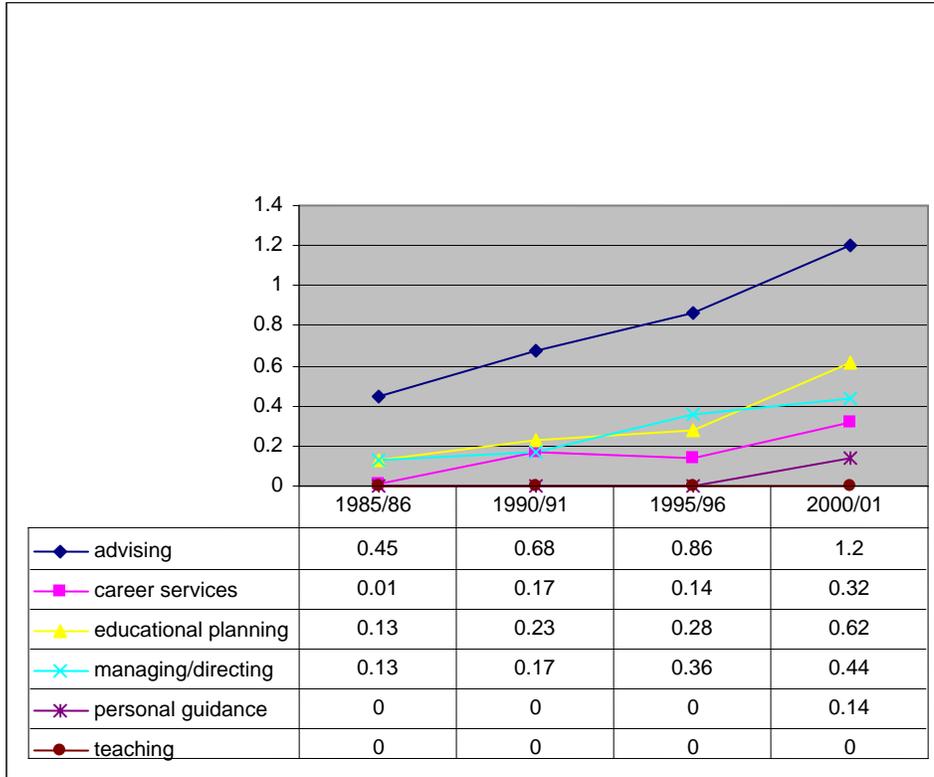


Figure 4: Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Classified Staff Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 - 2000/01)

The counseling and advising related duties performed by classified staff are listed in Figure 4. In 1985/86 classified staff employees were doing virtually no career services, but these duties increased 88% from 0.17 FTE per college in 1990/01 to 0.32 FTE per college in 2000/01. Classified staff identified in this survey did not provide teaching from 1985/86 to 2000-01. Classified staff did not provide personal guidance services from 1885/86 to 1995/96. However, 0.14 FTE classified staff per college performed personal

guidance services in 2000/01. Managing/directing duties performed by classified staff increased 238% over the fifteen year span. The duties performed most by classified staff were advising (167% increase) and educational planning (377% increase). The academic year FTE totals for classified staff providing counseling and advising related duties between 1985/86 and 2000/01 were 0.72, 1.25, 1.64, and 2.72, respectively.

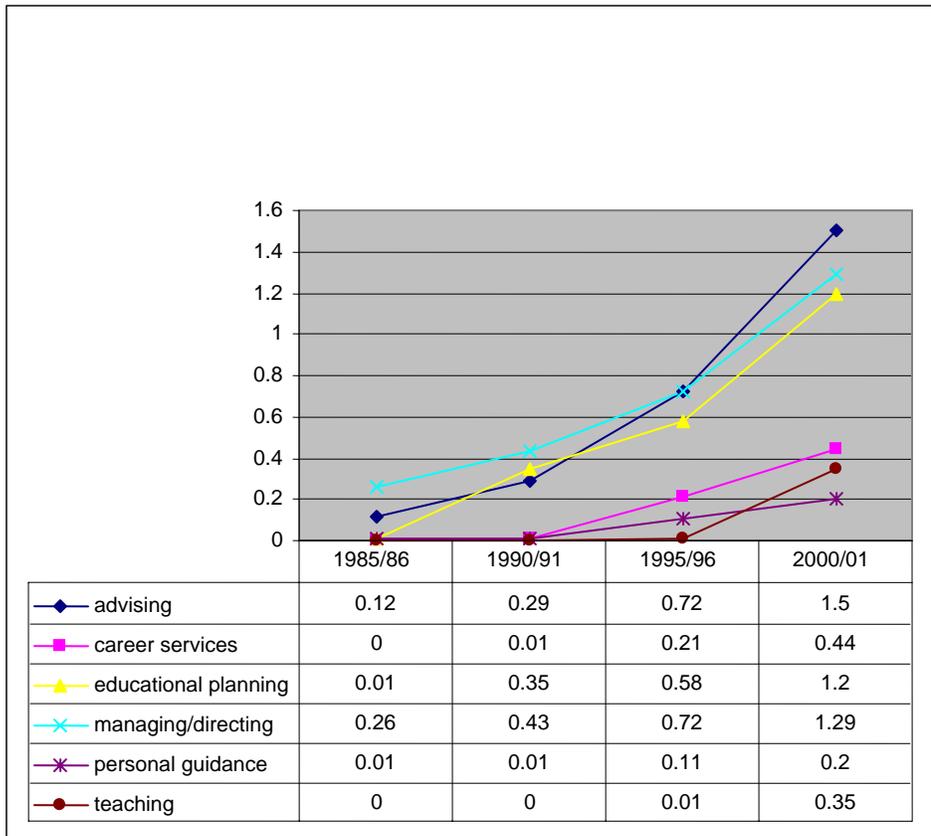


Figure 5: Average System-Wide FTE Staffing Per College for Administrative Exempt Employees Who Perform Advising and Counseling Duties (1985/86 - 2000/01)

The counseling and advising related duties performed by administrative exempt employees are listed in Figure 5. Administrative exempt employees did not begin performing career services and personal guidance until 1995/96 and in the last five years of the study those duties nearly doubled in FTE staffing

per college. Administrative exempt employees did not substantially perform teaching duties until 2000/01 when 0.35 FTE per college began teaching.

The three most common counseling and advising related duties performed by administrative exempt employees each saw dramatic FTE increases in the system. Advising duties rose 1,150% from 0.12 FTE per college in 1985-86 to 1.5 FTE per college in 2000/01. Managing/Directing duties rose 396% from 0.26 FTE per college in 1985/86 to 1.2 FTE per college in 2000/01. Educational planning dramatically increased from virtually non-existent in 1985/86 to 1.2 FTE per college in 2000/01. The academic year FTE totals for administrative exempt employees providing counseling and advising related duties between 1985/86 and 2000/01 were 0.4, 1.09, 2.35, and 4.89, respectively.

Ranked Counseling and Advising Duties Performed

by Each Employment Classification from 1985/86 to 2000/01

Counselor and advisor duties were ranked by order of FTE staffing of duties by employee classification (see Table 3). All three job classifications performed advising as their most frequent duty. Advising was the top duty for counselor and classified staff throughout the entire 1985/86 to 2000/01 span of this study. However, for administrators, advising duties only exceeded managing/directing duties as their top duty in the last five years.

Counseling faculty employees were more likely to provide personal guidance and less likely to perform managing/directing than administrative exempt and classified staff employees. Administrative exempt employees' duties were very similar to classified staff employees, with the exception of

administrative exempt doing more managing/directing and classified staff doing more educational planning (see Table 3).

Table 3: Counselors Duties Ranked by FTE Staffing Compared to Other Employee Group Classifications in 2000/01

2000/01 Duties	Counselors	Admin.	Classified
Advising	1	1	1
Personal Guidance	2	5	5
Educational Planning	3	3	2
Career Services	4	4	4
Teaching	5	6	6
Managing/Directing	6	2	3

From 1985/86 to 2000/01, the rank order of duties in the counselor classification was stable. However the administrative exempt and classified staff employees performing counseling and advising related duties did experience some shifts over this same time period. In the last five-year time period, 1995/96 to 2000/01, the educational planning duties by classified staff had surpassed the managing/directing duties as the second most performed duty of this group. Also, in the last five years, the advising duties done by administrative exempt employees surpassed the managing/directing duties as their most performed duty. Historically, administrative exempt positions have emphasized managing/directing duties in these positions and most certainly for other administrative exempt positions throughout the system.

Chapter Five: Current Data Results

This chapter reports the results of the survey related to research questions #2: “What are the current staffing data in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for minimum education required, actual education achieved, contract days, and pay rates for different

job classifications performing counseling and advising duties?” and #3 “What are the current funding alternatives in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for staffing faculty counselors during the summer quarter and between academic breaks?”

Minimum Education Required for Counseling and Advising Positions

Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents to separately list the employee titles of counseling and advising positions. The respondents were also instructed to list the positions’ current employee group classification (i.e. classified staff, faculty, administrative exempt), minimum education required, entry level salary and number of contract days for the year. The counselor section listed faculty counselor positions and the advisor section listed administrative exempt and classified staff positions.

In 2001, a majority (59%) of the current advisor positions in the Washington State community and technical college system required a baccalaureate degree (42%) or less (17%) as the minimum education required for hiring. Forty percent of the advisor positions required a master degree. Five percent of the advisor positions required an associate degree. One percent required a certificate and 7% percent required a high school diploma. Four percent of the advisor positions had no minimum education listed as a hiring qualification.

During the 2000/01 academic year, a large majority (83%) of the current counselor positions in the Washington State community and technical college system required a master degree as a minimum hiring requirement. Almost as many counselor positions require a bachelor degree (8%) as a doctorate (9%) as a minimum hiring requirement (see Figure 6).

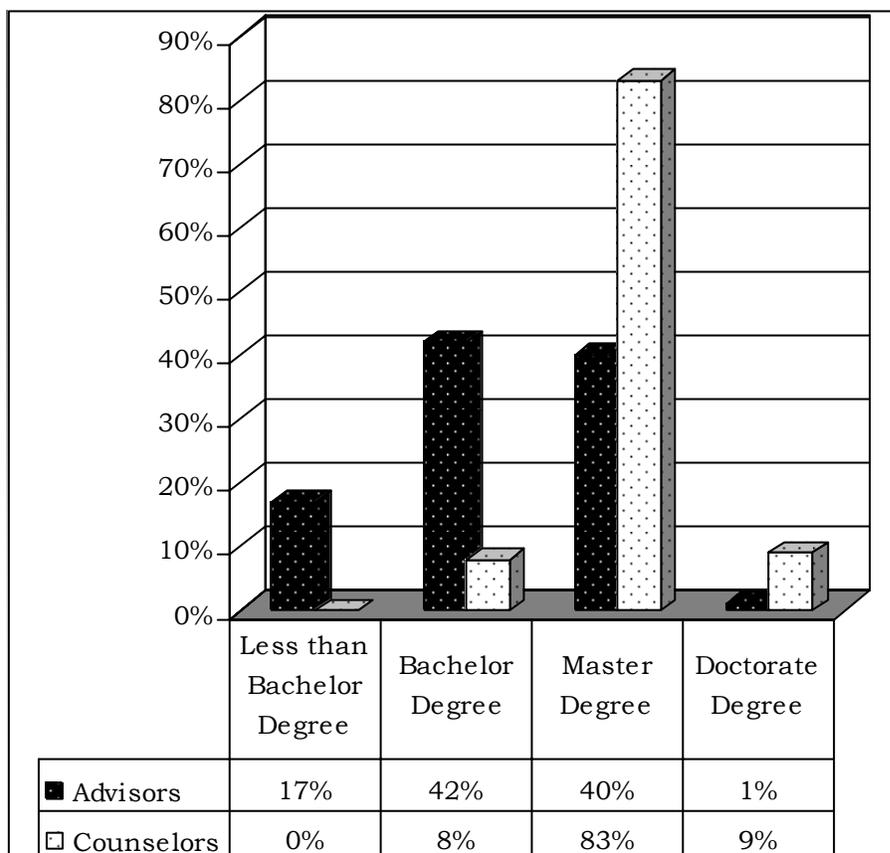


Figure 6: Minimum Education Required for Counseling and Advising Positions

Actual Education Achieved for Counseling and Advising Positions

Part 4 of the survey asked for the educational background for both the current non-faculty who advise and for the current faculty counselors who counsel and advise students. During the 2000/01 academic year, 95% of the faculty counselors possessed a master's degree or higher, while 59% of advisors had the same (Figure 7).

The survey distinguished between master's degree in counseling and non-counseling master's degree. Seventy percent of counselors had a master's degree in counseling as their highest degree, while 38% of advisors had a master's degree in counseling.

Forty-one percent of advisors had a completed a bachelor’s degree or less as their highest degree with 28% of the advisors completing a bachelor’s degree and 13% completing less than a bachelor degree. Five percent of counselors had completed a bachelor’s degree as their highest degree and no counselors reporting completing less than a bachelor’s degree.

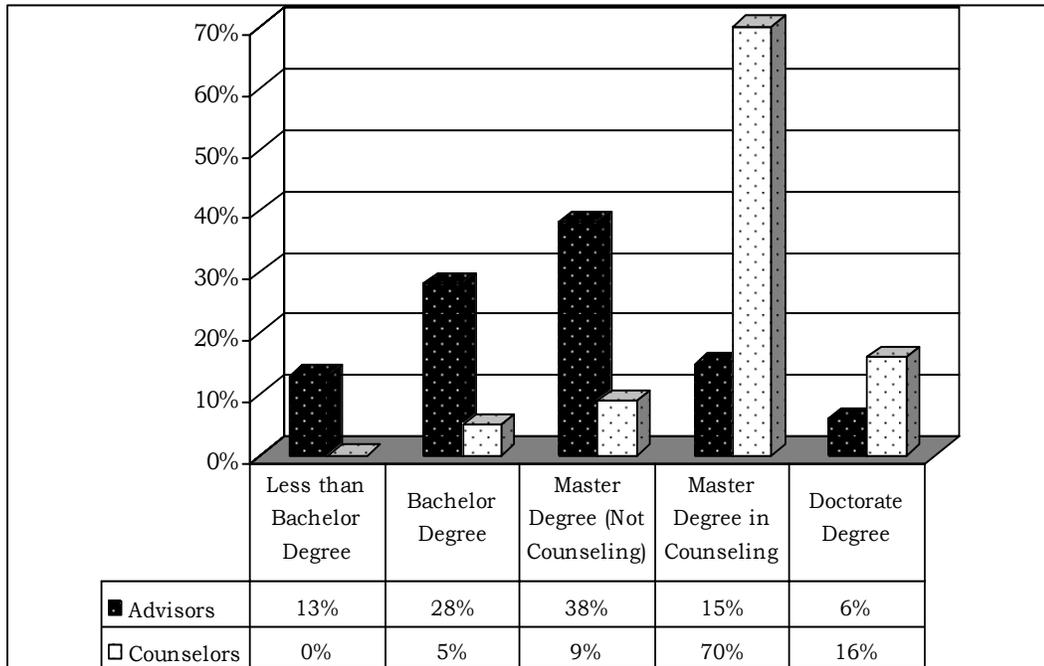


Figure 7: Actual Education Achieved for Counseling and Advising Positions

Contract Days by Job Classification

Part 2 of the survey instrument asked respondents to separately list the actual employee titles of counseling and advising positions. The respondents were also instructed to identify the positions’ current employee status (i.e. classified staff, faculty, administrative exempt), minimum education required, entry-level salary and number of contract days for the year. The counselor section listed faculty counselor positions and the advisor section listed administrative exempt and classified staff positions.

The results of the number of annual contract days for each employee classification are compiled in Table 4. In the 2000/01 academic year, the mean average of annual contract days was 250 for 25 Washington State community and technical college classified staff and 100 administrative exempt advisors. Fifty-eight identified faculty counselors averaged 175 contract days per year (see Table 4). The range data only includes employees who are listed as full-time by the annualized full-time equivalency (FTE) data listed in Part 2 of the survey.

Table 4: Annual Contract Days by Employee Classification

Employee Classification	Range (Minimum 1 FTE)	Mean Average	Median Average	# of Employees
Administrative Exempt	191-262	250	261	100
Classified Staff	220-263	250	260	25
Faculty Counselor	169-215	175	175	58

Annual Pay Rates by Employee Classification

The annual pay rates by the three various employee classifications are listed in Table 5. In the 2000/01 academic year, 107 administrative exempt advisors positions earned the highest annual salary (\$39,361) in Washington Community and Technical College system. The second highest salary was earned by 60 identified faculty counselors at a \$36,792 mean average. The employee classification having earned the least salary was the 29 identified classified staff advisors at \$26,028 per year. The range data only includes employees who are listed as full-time by the annualized full-time equivalency (FTE) data listed in Part 2 of the survey.

Table 5: Annual Pay Rates by Employee Classification

Employee Classification	Range (Minimum 1 FTE)	Mean Average	Median Average	# of Employees
Administrative Exempt	\$31,500 - \$58,000	\$39,361	\$39,250	107
Classified Staff	\$20,960 - \$32,880	\$26,382	\$26,028	29
Faculty Counselor	\$30,139 - \$50,179	\$36,792	\$38,750	60

Pay Rates per Day by Employee Classification

Pay rates per day data was derived by dividing the number of annual contracted days by annual salary for each position identified by the respondents. Note that the number of employees identified is different between contract days, annual pay and pay per day figures due to erroneous or incomplete answers by the respondents. Each employee classifications range, median and mean averages are listed in Table 6. Fifty-seven identified faculty counselors earned the most at \$208.62 per day, 97 administrative exempt advisors earned a mean average of \$155.19 per day and 24 classified staff advisors earned a mean average of \$107.68 per day. The range data only includes employees who are listed as full-time by the annualized full-time equivalency (FTE) data listed in Part 2 of the survey.

Table 6: Pay Rates Per Day by Employee Classification

Employee Classification	Range (Minimum 1 FTE)	Mean Average	Median Average	# of Employees
Administrative Exempt	\$122.14 - \$237.64	\$155.19	\$153.26	97
Classified Staff	\$99.24 - \$121.02	\$107.68	\$109.05	24
Faculty Counselor	\$161.17 - \$277.23	\$208.62	\$211.36	57

Funding Practices for Counseling Faculty Staffing during Academic Breaks and Summer Quarters

Counseling faculty employees typically have an annual contract that spans the standard academic year from fall quarter beginning in September to the end of spring quarter ending in June. Part 5 of the survey asked respondents to indicate if they compensate counselors for work during the academic breaks between the four academic quarters (fall, winter, spring and summer) and/or for summer quarter. Figures 8 and 9 show the proportions of these funding options used in the Washington Community and Technical College system for the academic breaks and summer quarter, respectively. Respondents were instructed to choose the counseling funding option that fit best for their institution. Multiple choices were accepted.

Academic Breaks

Statewide, the three most identified counseling funding options were compensatory flextime (12), daily rate (11) and part-time hourly rate (11). The second tier of counseling funding options for the academic breaks included an alternate work year (7), other (6), and extended annual contracts (5). Figure 8 displays the percentage proportion of the chosen counselor funding options during academic breaks.

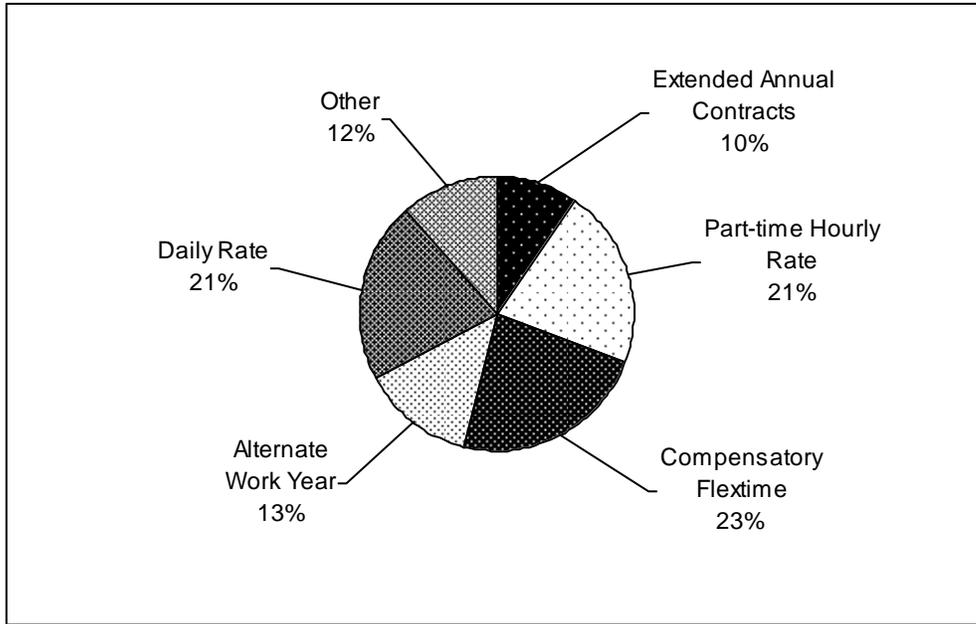


Figure 8: Funding Practices for Counselor Staffing during Academic Quarter Breaks

Summer Quarter

For summer quarter, respondents identified part-time hourly rate (13) and daily rate (12) as the top two counselor funding options. Alternative work year (8), extended annual contracts (6), compensatory/flextime (6) and other (6) were the remaining choices. Figure 9 displays the percentage proportion of the chosen counselor funding options during academic breaks.

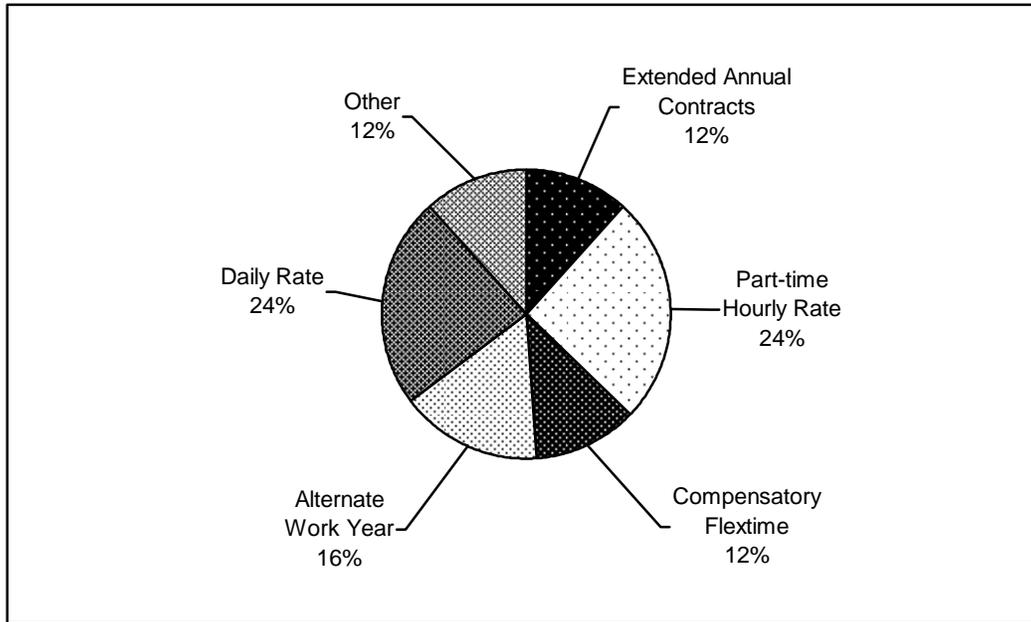


Figure 9: Funding Practices for Counselor Staffing during Summer Quarters

Summary of Findings

The summary of the trend and current data support that an increasingly significant amount of historically faculty counselor duties have been reassigned to newly created positions within non-faculty classified staff and administrative exempt employee classifications. Employees in these non-faculty employee classifications groups are paid less, have less job security, and have less educational training than faculty counselors.

The ratio of employees providing counseling and advising services to student enrollment has improved overall and dramatically so for those within the classified staff and administrative exempt employee classification. However, the ratio of faculty counselors had decreased over the span of this study.

Classified staff and administrative exempt employees are scheduled to work more days per year than faculty counselors. However, there are at least

five commonly used methods implemented statewide to provide faculty compensation during the academic breaks and summer quarter.

These findings are meaningful to educational professionals, state legislators, labor leaders, college administrators and college board of trustee members in the Washington State community and technical college system because they provide baseline data to better understand the staffing issues related to counseling and advising services in the system and thus inform policy decisions.

Chapter Six: Educational Leadership Considerations

This chapter addresses research question #4: What are the educational leadership implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions? Educational leadership literature is related to counseling and advising staffing issues in the Washington State community and technical college system.

In their influential and often cited book, Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership, Bolman and Deal (1997) outline four frames (or lenses) to examine leadership and organizational challenges. The four leadership frames are structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Bolman and Deal's four frame analysis is widely regarded by academic and professional policy analysts for challenging policy makers to see the leadership problems and solutions more broadly from new and diverse lenses. Each of these lenses is based on a set of basic assumptions and provides a different framework to examine leadership.

A potential limitation of using this framework, for the purpose of leadership analysis on the issues presented in this study, is that the four frames may be too restricted. However, Bowman and Deal's (1997) four frame analysis fits well given that many of the tensions related to these staffing issues closely relate to each of the four frames (structural, human resources, political and symbolic). This four-frame analysis is particularly well suited to analyze the complex and multi-faceted leadership challenges addressed in this study. Bolman and Deal's (1997) basic assumptions for each of the frames are listed and analyzed in relationship to these counseling and advising staffing issues for

counseling and advising staffing in the Washington State community and technical college system.

The Structural Frame

Organizations exist to achieve established goals and objectives.

A policy leadership challenge for leaders in the Washington State community and technical college system would be to establish a set of goals related to the counseling and advising needs of its students. Currently, there are no unifying goals for these matters. The absence of established goals and objectives for counselors and advisors contributes to the counseling and advising employee role confusion and lack of direction that exists in staffing these positions throughout the State.

Organizations work best when rationality prevails over personal preferences and external pressures.

The random statewide counseling and advising staffing patterns that are shaped by the prerogatives of individual administrators are a structural deficiency. In the structural frame of leadership, Bolman and Deal (1997) would encourage rational analysis over the personal whims of individuals in power. Contributing to the randomness of individually determined local staffing models is the well-documented fact that senior college administrators are prone to high levels of turnover. This high rate of senior leadership turnover contributes to the unsystematic “wild, wild, west” of counseling and advising staffing throughout the State.

Irrational external pressure is not the answer to resolve the randomness and confusion in the system. The formation of a rational system through a well-studied approach by a diverse group of leaders and practitioners informed

by the best research, theory and practice knowledge would be very useful toward addressing these staffing issues.

Structures must be designed to fit an organization's circumstance.

This structural leadership basic assumption could strengthen the position of local control advocates who argue that they are in the best position to design staffing models for their unique organizational circumstances. However, the state system of higher education, in general, and the state system of community and technical colleges are also organizations with their own circumstances and needs. In the classic state versus local control educational debate, it seems the leadership challenge would be to rationally determine if these needs are localized or systemic and which approach is best, local flexibility or system consistency. Ideally, both of these approaches can be balanced to ensure at least a minimum standard of quality and service within the system while maintaining a proper amount of flexibility.

Organizations increase efficiency and enhance performance through specialization and division of labor.

This structural leadership basic assumption is a paramount leadership challenge to address the issues addressed in this study. Administrators are responding to demands to be more cost efficient and student service professionals are seeking more job clarity and equity. An agreed upon division of labor that clearly delineates the unique roles of counselors and advisors would likely resolve many of the labor disputes, role confusion and resulting low morale problems in the field.

Appropriate forms of coordination and control are essential to ensuring that individuals and units work together in the service of organizational goals.

Coordination and control are missing at the state level on counseling and advising staffing. When a group of middle managers, the Advising and Counseling Council (ACC), who directly supervise counseling and advising services and report to WSSSC, recently decided on an organizational goal to work on clarifying counseling and staffing issues, the WSSSC leadership instructed the ACC to remove that specific goal from their organizational efforts. The ACC leadership was told by their WSSSC contacts that their organizational goal was “inappropriate” for ACC activity. The ACC leadership was told that these issues were best handled by the WSSSC. However, the WSSSC is not addressing these issues.

There is no state control or coordination being exercised and, as a result, educators are not working together to address the statewide inequities and role confusion in the counseling and advising profession. Ideally, multiple constituency groups would come together under the control of the state legislature and/or state board for community and technical colleges to find ways to coordinate and work together for increased efficiency, quality and equity.

Problems and performance gaps arise from structural deficiencies and can be remedied through restructuring.

The problems of reduced quality, professional role confusion, and labor inequities for essential counseling and advising services arise from structural deficiencies such as the absence of goals, definitions, coordination, and standards for hiring and staffing levels. A structural leadership goal to address these matters might be resolved through restructuring through the use of legal and effective directives that govern the state board and college administrator’s

activities. The state legislature or the court system would be the source of restructuring efforts by legal means. Ideally, the structural deficiencies can be remedied within the current organizational structures, but, given its history, that idealism relies on the wishful thinking that uncommon leadership will arise from the current structure.

The Human Resource Frame

Organizations exist to serve human needs rather than the reverse.

Because organizational leaders in education are deeply involved in human issues there are many human factors they are responsible for attending to such as the general needs of the citizens and the specific needs of students and staff that attend and work for these institutions. The general needs of the state citizens are to have an effective and efficient community and technical college system that meets the needs of society including promoting our American ideals of democracy and social mobility.

Naturally, the needs of the state citizens include the students and employees in the Washington State community and technical college system. However, the students and employees have more direct needs related to the system they operate in. The needs of the students include education to improve their personal, educational, and career development in order to maximize their human potential and enrich their lives. The needs of the employees are to be treated well while performing meaningful work that matches their abilities. According to this leadership frame, the leaders in the Washington State community and technical college system should prioritize the human needs of its citizens, students and employees over its organizational needs.

People and organizations need each other; organizations need ideas, energy, and talent; people need careers, salaries, and opportunities.

Counseling and advising professionals obviously are concerned about the career opportunities and salaries in the Washington State community and technical college system. In addition, it also seems obvious that the state organizations benefit from having talented professionals. However, there appears to be a lack of system clarity and accountability regarding definitions and standards that define this much needed talent who serve many at-risk populations. In the absence of system clarity and standards, this study shows a steady decline in overall compensation and training for the counseling and advising field from 1985/86 to 2000/01.

When the fit between individual and system is poor, one or both suffer:

Individuals will be exploited or will exploit the organization-or both will become victims.

Bolman and Deal (2000) report that:

Human resource theorists argue that the central task of managers is to build organizations and management systems that produce harmony between the needs of the individual and the needs of the organization. When they succeed, both the organization and the employees will benefit. When they fail, one or both sides will suffer. (p. 69)

Chris Argyris (1957, 1964), a founding contributor to human resources philosophy, stressed the importance of properly matching employees and organizations. He described some of the potential problems of mismatched

organizational structures and individuals as increased employee alienation, withdrawal, apathy, resistance and discontent.

Properly matching employees presupposes that the duties and role for certain positions are clear. In the State of Washington's community and technical college system, there is much overlap in the actual and the printed roles of advisors and counselors. These overlaps may likely generate role conflict for counselors and advisors. In their study of role conflict among community college counselors, Coll and Rice (1993) reported the potential adverse affects of role conflict as being employee distrust, negative attitudes toward role senders, lack of loyalty, turnover, absenteeism, low productivity, low job effectiveness, and job dissatisfaction.

The leadership challenge of meeting the needs of an organization's employees is very important to maximize both the individual employees and the system's effectiveness. If employees are confused about their role, feeling undervalued and/or mistreated there are many potential negative costs to system quality, equity and efficiency. It is imperative that Washington State community and technical college leaders assume their responsibility to sincerely and justly address the concerns of counseling and advising employees about unfair labor practices, reduced working conditions, and role confusion.

A good fit benefits both individuals and organizations: individuals find meaningful and satisfying work, and organizations get the talent and energy they need to succeed.

A "good fit" would include a match between tasks and the training needed to perform such tasks. This would necessitate a clear delineation of the skills sets needed to perform counseling and advising tasks. The result of

clarified definitions and delineation of duties will benefit the employees and the organization.

The Political Frame

Organizations are a coalition of various individuals and interest groups.

Clearly there are a variety of individuals and interest groups critical to addressing the leadership challenges addressed in this study. Throughout the State, there exist individual leaders within professional organizations, labor organizations, management organizations, state coordinating boards for education, and the state legislature. The engagement of these leaders and their respective interest groups are vital to the successful resolution of these staffing issues.

There are enduring differences among coalition members in values, beliefs, information, interest, and perceptions of reality.

This basic assumption may be the most relevant to leaders attempting to resolve the issues of equity, efficiency, and quality in the staffing of advising and counseling within the Washington community and technical college system. A concentrated collective commitment to reviewing and dialoging about the results of this study is desperately needed to create a larger shared reality based on the various perspectives. Without this commitment the equity and quality in the profession will likely continue to decline.

Most important decisions involve the allocation of scarce resources - who gets what?

Resource issues are at the heart of the issues identified in this study and most political topics. The community and technical college funding politics operate at both the system and institutional level. The colleges are funded

largely by a state allocation system based on a student enrollment. College presidents argue that the allocation is not enough to fund their colleges effectively and they compete for funding against state universities, K-12 education and other state agencies. The funding per student is significantly less for community and technical college students when compared to both K-12 and university students in the same state.

However, once the state funding allocation is made to community and technical colleges, the political themes on funding relate to internal organizational allocations. Professionals in college student service divisions often refer to themselves as the “step-children” in institutions that favor instructional divisions. Because funding is based on enrollment, a natural consequence is that recruiting and enrolling students into more classes is an institutional funding priority. The model rewards enrolling students but not necessary serving students through improving student success, graduating, or placing students in jobs or universities.

In effect, providing student services amounts to a business overhead expense akin to providing utilities, facilities and building maintenance. Often through legislative influence, public colleges are often asked to implement private business practices and constrain overhead costs. As we decrease our funding levels for quality advising and counseling services, our college environments are in danger of becoming increasingly more mechanical and less humanistic. While recruiting students is currently of little concern to a system that is over-enrolled and sees much future enrollment demand, the greater concern is that our one highly touted “open door” institutions will become

revolving door institutions for legions of poorly served first generation, disabled, economically disadvantaged, unemployed, and ethnic minority students.

Scarce resources and enduring differences give conflict a central role in organizational dynamics and make power the most important resource.

Scarce resource allocation and enduring differences certainly exist at the statewide and institutional level for counseling and advising staffing in the Washington State community and technical college system. The authority to resolve these issues is shared by the state legislature, the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, college trustees, and college presidents and vice presidents. While each school is somewhat unique in their power dynamics, vice presidents often make the final staffing recommendations for advising and counseling staffing and college presidents ultimately decide. The college trustees, the state board and legislature typically have not involved themselves with these staffing issues and have left that authority up to individual college administrators. Too often those administrators are not familiar with the counseling profession and feel constrained by state budget allocation formula thus leading to the random and inequitable staffing of these valuable services.

Counseling professionals have attempted to influence the power structures by a variety of approaches including dialog with administrators, union leaders and legislators, position papers, studies, formal union grievances and court cases, but have achieved sporadic to poor progress. Currently, it appears the agenda to reduce costs is more important to the power structure than creating staffing standards to address equity and quality issues.

Goals and decisions emerge from bargaining, negotiation, and jockeying for position among different stakeholders.

Ideally, this study will serve as a tool in the negotiations for accountable and clear standards for serving the counseling and advising needs of our community and technical college students. The system desperately needs goals and decisions on these counseling and advising staffing issues to combat the randomness and confusion that currently exists.

The Symbolic Frame

What is most important about any event is not what happened but what it means.

The various constituency groups coming together to implement this study was a symbolic gesture representing an ability to work together. A key member of the state legislature had urged these groups to work together and was pleased by this joint effort. Unfortunately, little progress has been made to come back together and address these issues beyond the study phase which was completed nearly three years ago.

Activity and meaning are loosely coupled: events have multiple meanings because people interpret experience differently.

There is a sense that the WSSSC administrators felt the activity of this study meant the end of the problem. While counselors and faculty labor leaders felt this study was just the discovery phase of a longer process. This sense is largely an interpretation of symbolic gestures by the WSSSC. After this study was completed the WSSSC independently authored and distributed an “Executive Summary” that many felt had sent an anti-counselor and anti-dialog message. The WSSSC has not yet reached out to the counseling professional or

faculty labor union groups to discuss the findings and their meanings. In addition, the WSSSC mandated its reporting administrators in the statewide Advising and Counseling Council (ACC) to discontinue efforts to address these matters. The ambiguous reason given for this mandate was simply that it was deemed “inappropriate”. Previously, the ACC had made the topic of addressing counseling and advising staffing issues a top organizational goal.

Most of life is ambiguous or uncertain-what happened, why it happened, or what will happen next are all puzzles.

The future state of counseling and advising staffing in the Washington State community and technical college system is uncertain. There is not agreement on why standards have not been made or what all accounts for the decreasing staffing quality and the increasing staffing inequalities. The employee role confusion is high and it is very uncertain if any progress will be made or if things will continue to be undefined, puzzling, and unaccountable in the “wild, wild, west” of counseling and advising staffing in the Washington State community and technical college system.

High levels of ambiguity and uncertainty undercut rational analysis, problem solving, and decision-making.

Bolman and Deal could not have said it better with this basic assumption of the symbolic leadership frame. The high levels of ambiguity and uncertainty has definitely contributed to an absence of rational analysis, problem solving, and decision making in the state system regarding the counseling and advising standards needed for needy students. The source of the frustrating absence of rational analysis, problem solving, and decision making on these core issues is difficult to determine. Reasons for the

ambiguity and confusion may include honest differences of opinion, ignorance, bias, funding shortages, apathy, other priorities, and/or simply a commitment to a state without system standards.

In the face of uncertainty and ambiguity, people create symbols to resolve confusion, increase predictability, provide direction, and anchor hope and faith.

There does not appear to any symbols in the system that provides hope and faith, provide direction, increase predictability, or help to resolve the confusion related to a more rational and systematic staffing approach to meet the counseling and advising needs of the community and technical college students in Washington State. The forces contributing to the ambiguity and uncertainty are very strong.

Many events and processes are more important for what is expressed than what is produced. They form a cultural tapestry of secular myths, rituals, ceremonies, and stories that help people find meaning, purpose, and passion.

Hopefully, this study and policy analysis will serve as a meaningful expression for educational leaders to consider as they seek meaning, purpose and passion in serving the students and citizens served by the Washington State community and technical college system. The primary expression of this study is the critical need for system leaders to work together to clarify and be accountable to higher and more uniform standards in the staffing of the counseling and advising needs of vulnerable Washington State community and technical college students.

Chapter 7: Educational Policy Considerations

This chapter addresses research question #5: What are the educational policy implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions? Education policy literature will be related to counseling and advising staffing issues in the Washington State community and technical college system.

Educational Policy Leadership Frames of Efficiency, Equity and Quality

One way to analyze the policy and leadership considerations related to staffing of advising and counseling services in the Washington State community and technical college system is by applying a classic triangle of highly valued organizational themes: quality, efficiency, and equity (Mitchell & Incarnation, 1984). Quality themes are related to increasing effectiveness. Efficiency themes are related to increasing resource productivity and equity themes are related to fairness and justice. When developing policy, it is a leadership challenge to find ways to develop mutually beneficial results amongst these themes or at least find the proper balance in this, often competing, trilogy of values.

For some time now, Washington State has been feeling the effects of a taxpayer's revolt with many citizens and their elected officials calling for reduced government taxes and expenditures through state initiatives and political platforms. However, the demand for the state's services is increasing, particularly in education, social and health services, employment services, transportation and our judicial system. In the minds of many government leaders, the reduction of funding coupled with increasing service demands requires greater resource efficiency.

The WSSSC administrators are proud of their leadership on the staffing of advising and counseling services because of their efficient use of state resources. Under a “get more bang for the buck” management philosophy, these administrators have collectively increased the advising capacity with less money by hiring less trained advisors without paying the higher faculty pay rates. As a result, these administrators would correctly argue that there are now more people available to meet the student’s growing needs. Many supervisors of these administrators, certain legislators and citizens would be very pleased with this development.

Counselors are sensitive to the need for efficient use of state funds, but are also very concerned about quality and equity themes. Counselors have made several appeals around the state for the establishment of staffing quality and equity standards with little response from the system leaders. Leaders in professional and labor organizations need to work jointly with state legislators, college presidents, college trustees and state community and technical college board members to not surrender quality and equity in the search of greater efficiency.

Quality counseling and advising can be measured different ways. Student evaluations and studies that assess student outcomes are common approaches to measuring quality, but are rife with methodological and resource challenges. A well-established approach to maintain service quality in many professions is to hire high quality staff through establishing quality standards for essential knowledge and skill sets. Assisting community and technical college students in reaching their educational, career and personal goals requires a well-educated and skilled group of employees. This study

demonstrates that the quality of staffing has gone down over the last fifteen years with the introduction of a rapidly growing class of less paid employees with lower and less uniform hiring standards.

Quality of staff is also an equity issue for students. Given that students in the community and technical colleges are very diverse in age, ability, culture, and economic class, the quality of advising and counseling staff provided is a measure of how our state leaders are treating some of our most at-risk and underprivileged citizens. What the Washington State system needs is a clear definition and adherence to a set of minimum knowledge and skills sets deemed necessary to provide effective holistic counseling and advising services in the community and technical college system. For many years, our primary and secondary schools have legislated detailed quality staffing criteria for school counselors, but our post-secondary system operates in unregulated fashion analogous to the lawless “wild, wild, west.” The cultural underpinnings of unfettered freedom and rugged individualism associated with the United States’ frontier best describes our system’s *laissez-faire* approach to providing advising and counseling services to generations of at-risk students.

Equity issues for the state’s employees are a key concern for both counselors and advisors. This study shows that advisors are working more and being paid less for doing very similar work. This is a violation of a core equity principle of “equal pay for equal work”. We also know that administrative exempt and classified staff advisors do not have the same job protections that faculty do under collectively bargained agreements and principles of academic freedom. As a result, advisors are less able to speak candidly about their inequitable treatment or poor treatment of students for fear of losing their job.

Working condition equity and fairness has been fought for and won on several campuses through court cases and labor grievance complaint procedures. However, these pursuits of justice and fairness have been emotionally damaging on those involved and have been, ironically, an inefficient use of state resources. Washington State would be better off with establishing and maintaining system standards versus fighting and most always losing, political battles on individual campuses while damaging employee relations and wasting tax-payer resources.

Local Control versus State Control

Local control versus state control has been a constant policy theme in public education for decades. Many of the debates and policy battles are described in the literature regarding K-12 education, but these themes also relate to the Washington State community and technical college system, which mostly emanated from the State's K-12 system. Because the responsibility of responding to these staffing issues is the shared responsibility of state and/or local leaders, understanding the history and philosophical differences rooted in these notorious educational debates can assist the policy analysis related to this study's finding and recommendations.

History and Trends in Public School Control.

Over the last four decades there has been a shift from local control to state control of public education. There are many contributing factors to this trend including a rapidly growing proportion of public school funding coming from states; incidents of waste and corruption in local governance; strengthened state organizations in both the state administrative and legislative branches; ideological support for limiting federal government powers; court

decisions addressing statewide educational inequities; government reports calling for greater state activism to improve educational quality; and state interventions to address conflicts between school faculty and administrators (Dayton, 2000; Fowler, 2000; Mitchell & Encarnation, 1984). As a result of these changes, several education policy analysts predict the increase in state government interventions in public education is likely to continue. (Dayton, 2000; Fowler, 2000)

It is important to emphasize that public schools are ultimately under state control. States have always had the legal authority to develop educational policies at the state level and require local school districts to adhere to them. States have the power to create, take over or abolish local school districts. Until the last few decades, states were content to let public education remain “a state authority locally administered” (Goertz, 1996, p.179). Today, however, they are no longer content to surrender their constitutional authority; instead, states are asserting their legal rights (Fowler, 2000).

Fowler (2000) reported that before the last four decades of the twentieth century, states had generally been weak and ineffective organizations. He asserts, “For this reason, federal and local control filled the power vacuum left by states. In public education, that meant school administrators and boards assumed responsibility and leadership roles they might not have if the states were more effective” (Fowler, 2000, p.131).

Support for Local Control.

McDermott (1999) reported that,

Support for local control may be motivated by a belief that decisions made closer to schools and classrooms are better than

those made and implemented by a hierarchical bureaucracy. It may also reflect a desire to tailor the schooling experience to the needs of particular (students) or communities, rather than to centralize interests or imperatives. (p.16)

Holmstedt (1940) explained a primary rationale for greater local control as, “There must be freedom in the school system to experiment, invent and adapt, and these are only possible when external restraints are absent. (p. 46).

An example of this strong support for local control can be found in the WSSSC Executive Summary printed after this study was conducted and which stated that advising and counseling services are “based on the judgment of local institutional leadership” and that “Determining the appropriate mix of advising and counseling resources is the responsibility of the local colleges and should be based on the history, culture and administrative structure of the college and the unique characteristics of the communities served” (WSSSC, 2001, p. 3).

Local control mantras are often cited from members of the system’s old guard when discussing the controversial issues addressed in this study. Even though he hails from the other side of country, one might think Fowler’s (2000) political observations in his chapter entitled “Converging forces: Understanding the growth of state authority over education” was written about the Washington State community and technical college system. Fowler (2000) states:

Local control has long been one of America education’s most sacred cows. Throughout most of the twentieth century, the invocation of its name in an argument has sufficed to throw worshippers of lesser deities into confusion. People who advocated such reasonable reforms as racial segregation, more

equitable school funding, or higher academic standards frequently found that their most carefully constructed rationales shattered when they encountered American devotion to local control. The simple observation, “But that would weaken local control” was enough to end a debate (p.123).

Support for State Control.

In support of certain sorts of state control of public education, Bull (2000) states that,

“Larger units of government – states and nations – have two sorts of responsibilities in the governance of schooling. First, they must protect the individual rights of (students) to develop in ways that will enable them to become their own persons and thus to hold and pursue their own visions of the good life regardless of what aspirations their parents and current communities have for them. Second, they must protect the rights of those affected by the long-term consequences of schooling decisions to participate in those decisions.” (p. 28)

Bull (2000) also identified seven legitimate and critical roles of central (state) authorities. The third role on his list was “Defining and prescribing any genuinely common learnings necessary for all (students) to have an informed choice about the visions of the good life and the related educational opportunities they will pursue”. Bull’s seventh listed role of central authorities was “Guaranteeing that localities will have access to sufficient resources to provide an education that meets the foregoing requirements” (p. 42-43). Bull (2000) also reported that states need to set standards and align their various

school policies to those standards - including staff certification, professional development, professional compensation, school accreditation, and school funding policies. McDermott (1999) concurred that the state should seek more uniform and equitable standards for its employees when she states, "The basics of collective bargaining should be centralized so the treatment of employees does not differ greatly from school to school" (p.124). Providing sufficient state funding for well-defined and prescribed standards for counseling and advising staffing in order to help students fully see their opportunities and achieve their potential, is precisely what this analysis is advocating.

McDermott (1999) explained that,

Some goals, in particular those related to equity, will also require a broader perspective than that of a single school. For these reasons, some exercises of centralized authority will be necessary in a decentralized system. This authority can be divided into three functional categories: regulation, support and resource allocation. To reiterate the point made earlier, centralized authority would be at the state and regional level, not at the level of local school districts as present" (p. 134).

Providing state regulations, support and resources relates precisely to Bull's (2000) comments and further supports state regulations and support for counseling and advising services in the Washington State community and technical college system.

Dayton (2000) describes the differences between state and local control advocates as a difference between the altruistic and the self-interested. He states that,

State constitutions establish a state-level duty to support public education, but citizens continue to insist on local liberty and assert ownership over local funds generated to support education. Within the ideological conflict between altruism and self-interest: the altruistic wish for educational opportunity for all children and an enhancement of the general welfare of the society versus the natural tendency to seek the best for one's own children and advance self-interests. Granting public education constitutional status was an altruistic gesture to set all children's educational interests above the political fray of self-interests. But egalitarian ideals are often frustrated by the realities of self-interests and limited resources. (p. 104)

The hurdles of limited resources and small groups of isolated individuals determining the staffing of counseling and advising staffing standards in Washington State's community and technical college system are certainly steep challenges. The challenges will most likely require a legal and/or political response if the inherent systematic inequity and funding problems are ever to be effectively addressed.

Conflicting Philosophies.

The conflict between advocates for either greater local or state control of public education is woven with conflicting philosophies. McDermott (1999) summarizes:

In general, both education policy makers and the American public have various and often conflicting concepts in mind when they speak of "democracy" or "equality" in public education. Local

control seems to be a time-honored form of democracy in public education governance, but its history has often been marked by controversy. The existing local institutions of school governance were not historically inevitable but instead were put in place to solve the problems that the reformers at the beginning of the twentieth century viewed as most pressing. Other institutions may in turn be better suited to meet the pressing challenges of the end of the twentieth century. (p.26)

McDermott (1999) challenged the philosophical arguments supporting local control based on democratic principles, as being an overly narrow definition of democracy. She reported, “Because the quest of equality of educational opportunity has frequently taken the form of limiting the prerogatives of local government ... many observers have seen it as a contest between “democracy” and “equality” (p.6) and “Such limiting of local autonomy is often criticized as “undemocratic”; however, so are the inequalities that centralized authority attempts to correct” (p. 25).

Dayton (2000) reviewed American’s history related to equity principles beginning with the Declaration of Independence statement in the U.S. Bill of Rights (1791) that “all men are created equal” and the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (1787) guarantees “the equal protection of the laws.” Dayton (2000) elaborated our country’s historic struggle for educational equity as reflected positively in several key civil rights legislative acts and historic court cases, such as Brown v. Board of Education (1954). However, Dayton (2000) also outlined the journey for equity as painful, slow and filled with errors. Some examples of those errors include African-American slavery,

Japanese-American internment camps and genocidal policies toward Native Americans. Many individuals in American history have been denied fundamental rights, protections, and opportunity because of irrational religious, ethnic, gender, age, disability, and other unfair prejudices.

Dayton (2000) concluded his historical review of our nation's uneven quest for equity by laying the responsibility squarely on us and our leaders for the inconsistent adherence to our nation's democratic principles of equality by stating:

But these failures in government actions are not due to the failures of democratic ideals. Instead, they are failures by government officials to fully comprehend, respect, and comply with these democratic ideals. Furthermore they are failures by the people at large, who failed either to fully comprehend these ideals, to live up to these ideals, or to require their elected representatives to respect these ideals. (p.108-9)

The tension of individual liberty versus group liberty is the heart of many political debates. The tension regarding local versus state control seems to revolve around deciding who would be the citizens' most trusted authority to respond to their needs. Local leaders claim intimate local knowledge that perhaps the state leaders would not fully understand. While state leaders claim holistic systemic knowledge that perhaps the locals would not fully understand. McDermott (1999) offers this analysis, "What a given reformer advocates can often be traced back to whether he or she places greater emphasis on how public schools for society as a whole or on how they function for particular individuals" (p. 20).

There are strong arguments made for local control that cite educational efficiencies and cost savings are more likely the result of unrestricted local individual interventions. McDermott (1999) stated that economic theory supports this position, but in less than flattering terms. She reported, “Economic theory argues that if schooling decisions were left up to individuals ...and if individuals had to bear the costs ... schooling would be produced and consumed at a socially less-than-optimal level” (McDermott, 1999, p.22). Generally speaking, local education decision-making made by individuals are more likely to seek local efficiencies at the expense of more comprehensive and thorough programs.

Many of the educational policy arguments surrounding centralized state control versus decentralized local control are based on differing views perspectives and value judgments. Local control advocates often cite the age-old American value of “liberty” from centralized restrictions that limit local decision-making. Going back as far as the Boston Tea Party, the desire of Americans to represent themselves locally continues to be an honored philosophical tradition in our country. However, Dayton (2000) pointed out, “While liberty creates the freedom to excel, it also allows the freedom to fail” (p.114).

Policy questions center on whom we want to authorize the responsibility of putting state citizens at risk of educational failure. Should state leaders develop some system standards and accountabilities to protect themes of quality and equity for all citizens or should individual institutional administrators have the liberty to determine counseling and advising staffing standards with inconsistent degrees of quality service to state citizens? Malen, Theobald and Bardzell (2000) stated that policy issues related to state and local

control themes “reveal a great deal about how society is currently defining liberty, efficiency, equity, and quality and how education policies may be affirming, neglecting, or ignoring critical dimensions of these core values” (p.327).

Balancing Local and State Control Perspectives.

As with many debates, there is often wisdom and truth coming from different perspectives. A challenge for policy leaders is to rationally mine the arguments for the nuggets of persuasive thought. Ideally, by listening carefully and fairly negotiating, perhaps compromises and agreements can be made by people with opposing perspectives. McDermott (1999) says, “Centralization and decentralization ought to be understood as forces between which a complementary balance can be struck, rather than as mutually exclusive alternatives” (p. 11).

McDermott’s (1999) thoughts on striking a balance between the necessary functions of state and local control includes identifying which functions need to be controlled at what level. She believes that equality of educational opportunity issues require that distribution of resources and equity-related issues need to happen at the state level, but to decentralize decision making to the local level when possible. The uneven levels of educational training required, working conditions and staffing of counseling and advising personnel in the Washington State community and technical college system is an equity issue for both the state citizens who attend these institutions as well as the employees who work in them. As Lorimer (1994) reported,

It is completely unacceptable to have such wide disparity in counseling and advising FTE ratios when funding for these services is similar throughout the state and students are assessed the same fees at each campus. Colleges need to be accountable for their ratios (p.13).

As educational policy analysts have struggled to find the proper balance and rational relationship between state and local control, one model has become rather prevalent. Wells and Oakes (1996) describe this well-regarded balanced model as one where states would create centralized standards and local schools would design and implement strategies for meeting the standards. However, establishing high quality system standards is another difficult challenge.

Establishing State Standards.

McDermott (1999) cited key educational equity court cases that emphasize developing a meaningful threshold when establishing state standards,

The precise terminology varies from state to state, but state constitutions can be interpreted as requiring a threshold level of education through their guarantees of a “thorough and efficient education” or “a free public education”. The content identified with the threshold is crucial. If set too low, it will be meaningless as a guide to policy; if set too high, attaining it may not be a reasonable goal for all.

Rather than attempting to specify the exact nature of the threshold here, I will simply assume one can be identified,

through either judicial action or the political process, and concentrate on identifying the institutional structures likeliest to provide and maintain it (p. 21).

Equity standards are often central to the mission and foundation of public education institutions. Some examples of the equity themes include statements addressing equality of opportunity, access, resources, and/or satisfaction (McDermott, 1999). In the original Washington State Community College Act of 1967 it says community colleges will "offer an open door to every citizen, regardless of his academic background or experience...and offer thoroughly comprehensive education, training and service programs" (State Board for Community College Education, n.d., p. 6). The Washington Community and Technical College Counselor's Association have argued that the system has not reached its legislated mission of providing thoroughly comprehensive service programs and cites specific language that outlines the importance of providing comprehensive counseling services in the foundational documents of the state act (WCTCCA, 2000).

The Policy Plan for Community College Education in the State of Washington was the central document that informed the 1967 Washington State legislation that ultimately formed the state's community and technical college system. In that historic state policy plan, its authors state,

The State must ensure that whatever the desirable variations between and among community colleges may be, there is a satisfactory level of community college educational services being provided by every institution in the system....In addition to seeing that community college services and facilities are available to all

its citizens, the State also has a responsibility to ensure that the programs being offered satisfy certain basic standards of quality and comprehensiveness. In other words, the range of programs offered in any college and the quality of the instruction and services being provided should not be fortuitous matters wholly dependent either upon local resources or local policies....The State therefore has an obligation ... to set guidelines, standards and criteria for defining what community college education should be so as to measure the adequacy of the programs and services being offered. (Arthur D. Little, Inc., 1966, p. 117-118)

Along with original Washington State commitments to equity and comprehensive service programs, there is also some evidence of system leaders calling for state standards for quality funding allocations for holistic counseling services. The WSSSC Student Services Manual formerly listed counselor-to-student staffing ratio standards of 1:500 (WSSSC, 1977). The current edition reports, "The institution and the state must provide adequate financial resources to ensure the provision of a broad range of counseling services. This requires strong institutional commitment to provide necessary facilities, staffing, and operational funding" (WSSSC, 1998, p. 17).

McDermott (1999) linked the importance of understanding the mechanics of school funding and state governance to the stated missions of the system. She emphasized that after establishing standards it is necessary to determine the costs and the governance responsibilities of managing standards. Understanding the funding mechanisms and politically advocating for the funds to meet the state standards are additional leadership challenges. McDermott

(1999) highlighted the importance of establishing a state entity to set and monitor standards as the two primary governance responsibilities necessary to maintain system standards. Matching the state system's legislated mission with its pragmatic funding and governance needs is essential for the system to operate with integrity and accountability.

Summary of Local versus State Control Policy Considerations.

Establishing greater system clarity through the creation of standards would be a sign of system maturation. Currently, there is a political culture amongst the college presidents that resists structured state direction, from our elected officials or the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, as meddling interference. The president's sentiments are understandable if the directions are poorly conceived or unfunded mandates. Clearly, there must be some issues that are systemic and should involve a state approach while other issues are more suited for local control. The wisdom of the system leaders is demonstrated by their ability to appropriately discern local from state control issues and develop meaningful standards.

Local administrators will often argue that each school has different populations, culture, and circumstances. However, one could easily argue that the students' needs for counseling and advising across the state are more alike than different. Career indecision, relationship problems, orientation to college, math anxiety, substance abuse, study skills, time management, self-esteem, stress and choosing a course of study are just a sample of the student success themes that sweep the nation's college students and are shared by Washington state's community and technical college students (U.S. House of Representatives, 2004).

The needs of the state employees are also an interest to the State. The employees' need to associate and share a profession with peers is circumvented by erratically assigned duties, job titles, and job classifications. With well-defined professional groups, the employees are better able to share ideas about contemporary challenges in the field, best practices, and professional development. More standardized working conditions across the profession also reduces the likelihood of labor discontent and role conflicts that decrease effectiveness and employee morale while increasing resentment, distrust, costly lawsuits and labor grievances throughout the State.

Chapter Eight: Summary

This purpose of this research was to provide some baseline empirical data regarding the staffing of counseling and advising in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01 to educational leaders in Washington State in order to better inform and create understanding of the state of counseling and advising staffing issues facing the state system. The ideal audience for this study includes Washington State legislators, state higher education coordinating board members, community and technical college administrators, labor union leaders, and employees providing counseling and advising in the community and technical college system.

In the spring of 2001, the chief student services officers from each of the 34 community and technical colleges in Washington State were asked to assemble a institutional team to examine research questions related to current and trend staffing data of counselors and related positions in the system. Specifically, the proposed research questions of this dissertation were:

1. What are the staffing trends for counselor and related positions in the Washington State community and technical college system from 1985/86 to 2000/01 in terms of full time equivalent (FTE) staffing, employment classification, duties performed, and employee-to-student ratios?
2. What are the current staffing data in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for minimum education required, actual education achieved, contract days, and pay rates for different job classifications performing counseling and advising duties?

3. What are the current funding alternatives in the Washington State community and technical college system in 2000/01 for staffing faculty counselors during the summer quarter and between academic breaks?
4. What are the educational leadership implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions?
5. What are the educational policy implications related to supporting student success and counseling personnel at these institutions?

Findings

Some of the key empirical findings include:

- Counseling and advising employees from different employment classifications (faculty, administrative exempt, classified staff) and working conditions (pay rates, job security) are providing extensively overlapping duties. Advising was the top duty performed by all three employee groups in 2000/01.
- Advising has always been the top performed duty of faculty counselors from 1985/86 to 2000/01.
- Only in the last five years of the study did advising become the most performed duty of administrative exempt employees who provide advising and counseling duties.
- Administrative exempt advisor FTE staffing that provides community college counseling and advising grew by 800% throughout Washington State, while faculty counselor FTE staffing rose less than 8% from 1985/86 to 2000/01.
- The dramatic percentage of growth for administrative exempt employees providing advising is due in part to small beginning numbers. However,

the last five years of the study counseling FTE staffing increased 4%, while classified staff and administrative exempt employees providing counseling and advising FTE duties increased 39% and 79%, respectively.

- Administrative exempt and classified staff advisors in the Washington State community and technical college system were hardly present in 1985/86 and now they outnumber the counselors in 2000/01.
- The total ratio of employees providing counseling and advising duties compared to students improved 19% from 1985/86 to 2000/01; however the counselor-to-student ratio was weakened 48%, while the employee-to-student ratios for classified staff (41%) and administrative exempt (82%) employees improved over the same time period.
- The minimum required education and actual education of administrative exempt and classified staff employees are considerably lower and have much greater variance than counselors.
- Administrative exempt and classified staff advisors are scheduled to work more days and are paid substantially less per day than counseling faculty.
- There are at least five commonly used methods implemented statewide to provide faculty compensation during the academic breaks and summer quarter.

The summary of this data supports that the total counseling and advising staffing ratio to student enrollment growth had improved overall from 1985/86 to 2000/01, however significant similar counseling and advising duties were assigned to lesser paid and lesser trained employees with less job

security. The result of these actions may have provided increased cost efficiency, but with a correlating reduction of quality and equity for the system. The quality reductions are in the reduced training and more limited abilities of the community and technical college employees who provide essential guidance to a vulnerable and needy population.

The reduction in quality also amounts to an equity issue for our diverse student populations who use the community and technical colleges in search of equal opportunity and the American dream of economic mobility. This erosion in quality is a dramatic departure from the system founder's dreams and early mission statements that repeatedly stated that due to its student demographics that this educational system depended on quality counseling and advising more than any other. Employee equity issues are the result of the chaos caused by a wide range of job titles and job classifications providing similar and overlapping duties with differing amounts of pay and job security.

A common explanation for the hiring of classified staff and administrative exempt employees instead of faculty counselors have centered on the notion that faculty members do not work during the academic breaks or summer quarter. The study demonstrated that there are a numerous ways currently used to hire counselors to work summers and academic breaks.

Another explanation for the hiring of classified staff and administrative exempt employees instead of faculty counselors is based on reduced state funding and/or institutional funding. However, in actuality, the share of funding for both the entire community and technical colleges and specifically for student services has grown in proportion to other parts of the state and institutional budgets over the time span of this study.

Weaknesses and Strengths of the Study

A weakness of the data in this survey is dependent on the quality of the respondent's institutional team and the reliability of their responses.

Respondents were instructed to collect and cross check multi-source data to increase reliability. On the survey instrument cover letter, all respondents were provided with a suggested list of people who can provide source information from various sources and perspectives. Respondents were also provided with information to contact the researchers to ask questions or seek consultation if needed. Respondents who worked at institutions without quality staffing records relied on the memory of individuals who might know. In effect, this survey was not a true longitudinal study, but instead relied on assembling data in retrospect from a variety of sources. Presumably, some of the data sources were more reliable than others.

A strength of the data is the high survey response rate. Of the 34 community and technical colleges in the sample, 31 responded for a 91% response rate. However, each of the respondents did not complete all the sections regarding their full-time equivalency (FTE) staffing for each of the sample periods. In some cases, this was due because the respondent's college did not exist at that particular time period under investigation. Twenty-seven respondents (79 %) completed all the survey sections. While these response rates are considered high for survey research, clearly the system data would be improved if all the chief student service officers had participated.

As a result of 21% of the respondents not completing and returning the entire survey, the employee-to-student data was calculated by comparing FTE staffing averages of 27 colleges to the system student enrollment of 34 colleges.

To the extent the FTE staffing per college figures represents a fair staffing average for the entire 34 colleges is not known. It would have been preferable to compare the FTE employee staffing of the 27 colleges to the same 27 college's student enrollment. However, individual school data was protected confidential data and was not available for this analysis.

Recommendations

Future Research

- Follow-up this study in 2005/06 and include an analysis of individual college data.

Replication of this study without confidentiality agreements for individual colleges would allow for comparisons of one staffing model to another.

California has regularly publicly reported individual school data for counselor-to-student ratios since the 1960's. This information is public institutional data and should not be confused with standard human subjects concerns regarding an individual respondent's well-being. There is speculation among professionals in the field that individuals who did not respond to this survey did not because the data was unflattering. There are compelling interests of the state citizens to know this information that outweigh the risk of embarrassing individual college officials. The concerns for institutional accountability to quality and equity standards are consistent with Lorimer's (1994) assertion that:

It is completely unacceptable to have such wide disparity in counseling and advising FTE ratios when funding for these services is similar throughout the state and students are assessed

the same fees at each campus. Colleges need to be accountable for their ratios. (p.13)

- Follow-up with research that compare employee effectiveness of counselors and non-counselors on a variety of quality student outcomes.

While it is methodologically challenging to control independent variables and difficult to determine quality dependent variable measures, the challenge of conducting meaningful research that compares the effects of faculty counselor staffing to non-counselor staffing on student outcomes would be a powerful addition to the field by informing education leaders and forwarding understanding. There is ample research indicating positive students outcomes from counseling services, but there are few studies that compare counselors' and non-counselors' effectiveness.

Policy Recommendations

- The State should establish clear statewide definitions of service terms, job titles, and job classifications.

There is little agreement on understanding the difference between service terms and job titles such as advisor, counselor, planner, and facilitator. The state law clearly states that counselors are faculty members but is silent regarding the definition of a counselor. There has been an explosion of counselor-like terms in recent years that appear to be, at worst, intentionally created synonyms for counselor work designed to circumvent the local faculty contracts or, at best, creating confusion in the field amongst practitioners, managers, and particularly students.

There is also confusion in the field regarding the role and definition of the three main employee classifications (administrative exempt, classified staff and faculty) in the Washington community and technical college system. Generally speaking, administrative exempt employees have been known mainly as management positions. Typically, they have management responsibilities such as coordinating, managing and supervising program staff and budgets, policy (Revised Code of Washington, 2004a). Administrative exempt positions typically serve at the discretion of the college president, do not belong to a labor union, and can be dismissed easily. Classified staff and faculty counselors both typically belong to labor unions and have negotiated working agreements. Faculty members have been known as professional workers with academic training who provide direct educational services to students. However, classified staff members generally are known as “support staff” that typically supports faculty and administrative efforts. Classified staff often includes secretarial, technical, and maintenance employees.

- The State should establish institutionally accountable hiring standards for counselors and advisors through a state legislated professional certification process.

Many professions have professional certification processes that often include definitive professional standards that often prescribe and measure minimum levels of training, experience and/or competencies. Washington State has medical professionals, accountants, real estate agents, insurance agents and many other professions that have professional certification procedures that ensure minimum competencies and quality standards. Many of these professional standards are designed to ensure a minimum level of public care.

Most notably, the Washington State community colleges mostly grew out of the public secondary school system and the secondary schools have certified their school counselors for decades with thorough quality standards for the good of the profession and the public.

- Legislatively clarify the state law that defines community and technical college faculty.

The state legislature is the body that has the ability to close the loophole regarding counselors being defined as faculty, but absent a definition of counselor duties. Currently, the state law lists instructors, librarians and counselors as faculty (Revised Code of Washington, 2004b). Perhaps the general duties of all three of these faculty titles need to be defined so that there is less confusion and overlap with the other two main employee classifications.

It is conceivable that proponents of a narrow definition of a faculty counselor, one that resembles a mental health therapist, would assert this minority view in this process. This minority view is opposed by state and national standards that describe counselors as holistic generalists whose service integrates the academic, personal and career needs of students.

Because of the demonstrated history of performed duties of counselors in the state system per this study, combined with state and national standards, it is easy to state that counselors are also advisors. However, the research data, state and national standards do not support that advisors are also counselors. Counselors distinguish themselves from advisors by being trained to do academic advising, as well as attend to the complex career and personal needs of students.

However, if there exists a compelling state interest to separate the holistic and integrated counseling services to better identify a more narrow group of employees who primarily provide academic advising without career and personal counseling, then perhaps the legislature should develop a fourth faculty category for professional advisors. Given that professional advisors are defined with clearly articulated minimum hiring standards that demonstrate sufficient professional competencies and they provide a direct educational service, professional advisors should be identified by state law as faculty along with counselors, librarians and instructors. The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education (CAS) states that an academic advisor “must hold an earned graduate degree or must possess an appropriate combination of education and experience (CAS, 2001). If the State were to adhere to these minimum hiring standards, they would be the equivalent of the existing professional standards required for other community and technical college faculty groups.

- If the Washington State community colleges continue to staff non-faculty advisor and faculty counselor positions, state leaders should not only clearly delineate their unique roles, but also clearly address the relationship of these two groups to each other.

California has several statewide reports that describe how support staff or “para-professionals” should assist and work closely with faculty counselors. Generally speaking, the main role distinctions are made between duties involving task and process. Where support staff advisors may help with the tasks of registering students, explaining procedures, distributing forms, and making referrals, they should not be involved with student goal exploration,

educational planning, career counseling, or addressing barriers to student success such as learning disabilities, career indecision, stress management, learning styles, math anxiety, etc. (Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, 1995).

- Re-establish minimum and preferred statewide employee-to-student staffing standards combined with a funding mechanism that will support them.

Years ago, the Student Services Manual published by WSSSC supported a research based recommendation of 1-to-500 ratio of counselors to students (Hughes, 1976; WSSSC, 1977). In 2001, the state counselor-to-student ratio was approximately one counselor for 1600 students. Over the years, many educational leaders have decried the need for counselor funding. It is now time for greater leadership given to addressing the counseling and advising needs of our community and technical college students. The State has a great interest in these students efficiently succeeding at school and participating fully as healthy contributors to society. Providing a chaotic system with limited and eroding standards is not the answer.

However, any attempt to develop state minimum standards for counseling and advising staffing standards will likely be met with fierce resistance from college administrators as an unfunded legislative mandate on already strained college budgets. The current funding model that treats student services as an overhead expense is detrimental to student success. Sandra Schroeder (2004), President of the Washington Federation of Teachers, said it best when recently commenting on the pressing educational and legislative reform emphasis on educational accountability in our colleges:

We have accrediting processes, program reviews, tenure, (and) student evaluations of most courses. In fact, many of the most pressing problems in higher education, such as lack of student persistence, come down to shrinking funding that impacts retention efforts, rather than results-reporting. (p. 11).

Ms. Schroeder is correct. The problems with the most revered higher education system on the planet do not center on business practices of measuring accountability outcomes and system efficiencies. This system needs more emphasis on funding and equity to unleash the full potential of its originator's vision of serving a wide range of students with high quality programs and services to the greater benefit of the citizenry.

- Coordinate a counseling and advising summit and invite legislators, Washington State community and technical college board members, college administrators, college accreditation representatives, college trustees, labor union leaders, state counselor professional organization leaders, state advisor professional organization leaders and students to identify the role of each of these groups towards actively addressing the staffing issues related to counseling and advising services in Washington State community and technical colleges.

Closing

The history of inequitable staffing, inadequate funding, and role confusion for the system's highly touted comprehensive counseling services for needy students in the very educational system that purports to manifest the fundamental American ideals of democracy, equality and opportunity is not new this system. Twenty years ago, Dr. John Terry, the Executive Director of the

State Board of Community College Education wrote a biting analysis in the preface of a state document that both praised the State's community college counseling professionals for clearly articulating their role and challenging state educational leaders to behave with greater integrity by funding comprehensive counseling services in harmony with their public words of support. In 1984, just one year before the fifteen-year period studied in this dissertation, he wrote,

I have read the statement "Counseling in Washington State Community Colleges." It is a timely statement.

There are several reasons for my conclusion. Counseling, in many cases, has lost its focus in recent years. The loss of focus has resulted in loss of support, including financial support. There is an urgent need for a clear statement on counseling which can be accepted and understood by everyone. The place to start is with the counselors themselves. This is what the statement does.

We who are in leadership positions in the community colleges give easy lip service to the importance of meeting student needs. Words – no matter how pious or how significant a role the speaker may hold – are meaningless unless they can be translated into action. At issue is the quality of student development. Student development cannot prosper without the participation of an effective and comprehensive counseling program.

Counseling from the historic perspective has been an integral part of the community college mission. Under the stresses of retrenchment the safe assumptions about the

centrality of counseling were found to be inadequate. Student services, including counseling, were not as central to the mission as many complacently assumed, as a consequence, they became too frequently the targets of opportunity for the surgery of retrenchment.

A new beginning with a new statement is needed. It has now been provided. I congratulate the counselors for providing us with a carefully developed statement. (p. 1-2)

Unfortunately, according to this research, it appears the “new beginning” of clarified counselor duties supported by adequate system funding envisioned by Dr. Terry, never happened. While the counseling professionals clearly defined their roles in response to concerns the profession had “lost its focus”, this study demonstrates that state leaders and college administrators did not provide the staff funding for comprehensive student counseling services and instead, as this research demonstrates, began a new era of decreased funding, increased role confusion, and labor disputes as the result of the systematic transfer of professional defined faculty counselor duties to less paid, less secure, less trained, and ironically, even less professionally defined state employees.

At the risk of appearing overly pessimistic, the results of this study are dire and provide empirical evidence of the community college system’s decline in meeting its purposes as they relate to quality open-door services that are designed to meet the equity and opportunity needs of our democratic society. The implications of the system’s decline of professional, comprehensive, and holistic student assistance is the tragic failure of not effectively addressing

untold volumes of citizen needs at complex and critically important junctures in their lives. This decline is also a failure of Washington State leaders' ability to effectively meet our society's ideals and values. We can do better.

References

- Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. (1995). The role of counseling faculty in the California community colleges. *Adopted by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, January, 1995.* (Online). Available: http://www.academicssenate.cc.ca.us/Publications/Papers/Role_counselingfaculty.html
- Academic Senate for California Community Colleges. (1997). Standards of practice for California community college counseling programs. *Adopted by the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, Spring, 1997.* (Online). Available: http://www.academicssenate.cc.ca.us/Publications/Papers/Standards_counseling_programs.html
- Ancheta, B. (1983). *The Community College Counselor's Role: A Review of the Literature.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No: ED 231 45).
- Argyris, C. (1957). *Personality and organization.* New York: Harper & Row.
- Argyris, C. (1964). *Integrating the individual and the organization.* New York: Wiley.
- Arthur D. Little, Inc. (1966). *A policy plan for community college education in the State of Washington: Report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.* Olympia, WA: Author.
- Big Bend Community College. (2004). *Washington State Community College Act of 1967 and Washington State Community and Technical College Act of 1991.* Available Online: <http://www.bigbend.edu/BOT%20Community%20College%20Act%20of%201967.htm>
- Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (2000). People and organizations. *In The Jossey-Bass Reader on Educational Leadership, Chapter 6.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bolman, L. G. & Deal, T. E. (1997). *Reframing organizations: Artistry, choice, and leadership* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U. S. 483 (1954).
- Bull, B. (2000). Political philosophy and the state-local power balance. *In N. D. Theobald and B. Malen (Eds.), Balancing local control and state responsibility for K-12 education, Chap. 2.* Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.

- Coats, R.Q., Ash, M., & Dorsey, C.J.H. (1998). *Washington State Guidelines for Comprehensive Counseling and Career Guidance Programs from Kindergarten through Community and Technical College*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. B. (1996). *The American community college* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Coll, K. M. & Rice, R. L. (1993). Role conflict among community college counselors. *Community College Review*. 21(1), 58-67.
- Counseling and Guidance Directors Association of Washington Community Colleges. (1984). *Counseling in Washington State community colleges*. Seattle: Seattle Central Community College.
- Cvancara, K. J. (1997). Counselors face the challenges of dwindling resources, greater demands, and "damaged goods." *Community College Journal*, 47 (4), 8-14.
- Dayton, J. (2000). Recent litigation and its impact on the state-local power balance: Liberty and equity in governance, litigation, and the school finance debate. In N. D. Theobald and B. Malen (Eds.), *Balancing local control and state responsibility for K-12 education*, Chap. 4. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Drakulich, J. S. (1992). *The role and function of New Jersey community college counselors: What is and what should be*. New Jersey Community College Counselors Association. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No: ED 374 358).
- Durodoye, B. A., Harris, H. L., & Bolden, V. L. (2000). Personal counseling as a function of the community college counseling experience. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 24, 455-468.
- Fowler, F. C. (2000). Converging forces: Understanding the growth of state authority over education. In N. D. Theobald and B. Malen (Eds.), *Balancing local control and state responsibility for K-12 education*, Ch. 5. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Galant, R. L. (1978). Priority for future role activities of counselors in Michigan community colleges. *Community/Junior College Research Quarterly*, 3(1), 61-73.
- Girdner, J. H. (1972). *Counselor-counselee ratios in California junior colleges 1965-1971*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No: ED 059 712).
- Goertz, M. E. (1996). State education policy in the 1990s. In C. E. Van Horn (Ed.), *The state of the states* (pp. 179-208). Washington, DC: CQ Press.

- Goodman, L. H., & Beard, R. L. (1976). An analysis of reported counseling services in selected public community colleges in the Southeastern United States. *Community/Junior College Research Quarterly*, 1, 81-90.
- Grubb, N. W. (2001). *Getting in the world: Guidance and counseling in community colleges*. (Working Paper #1). New York: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.
- Hughes, D. (1976). What do counselors do? *NASPA Journal*, 14, 29-34.
- Holmstedt, R. W. (1940). *State control of public school finance*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Bureau of Cooperative Research.
- Jones, T. (1969). *Some comments on the role of junior college counselors*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No: ED 034 541).
- Keim, M. (1988). Two-year college counselors: Who are they and what do they do? *Community College Review*, 16(1), 39-46.
- Lorimer, S. (1994). *California community college counselors association report on the results of the 1992-93 statewide counseling and advising survey*. Sacramento: California Community College Counselors Association.
- Malen, B., Theobald, N. & Bardzell, J. (2000). Achieving a "just balance" between local control and state responsibility for K-12 education: Summary observations and research agendas. In N. D. Theobald and B. Malen (Eds.), *Balancing local control and state responsibility for K-12 education*, Chap. 10. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Matson, J. E. (1983). Primary Roles for Community College Counselors. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 11(3), 19-28.
- Miller, T. K. (2001). *The book of professional standards for higher education*. (2nd ed.) Washington: Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education.
- Mitchell, D. & Encarnation, D. (1984). Alternative state policy mechanisms for influencing school performance. *Educational Researcher*, 13, 4-11.
- McDermott, K. A. (1999). *Controlling public education: Localism versus equality*. Lawrence, KS: University Press.
- National Committee for Appraisal and Development of Junior College Student Personnel Programs. (1965). *Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York*. New York.
- Raines, M. R. (1968). *Junior college student personnel service: Appraisal and development*. Washington, D.C.: American Association of Colleges.

- Revised Code of Washington. (2004a). RCW 28B.52.020 and RCW 41.06.070. (Online). Available: (long URL)
- Revised Code of Washington. (2004b). Title 28B.50.851. (Online). Available: (long URL)
- Reykdal, C. (2004). *January 12 email correspondence*. Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Olympia, WA.
- Richart, V. M. (2004). *Letter from the president: The college for the 21st century*. Cascadia Community College, Bothell, WA. [Online]. Available:
<http://www.cascadia.ctc.edu/LearningForTheFuture/letterfromthepres.asp>
- Schroeder, S. (2004). College by the numbers: Does the new demand for accountability threaten the mission of higher education? *On Campus, December 2003/January 2004*, pg. 11.
- Short, S. E. (1998). Priorities of counseling programs and outcomes within the Virginia community college system. *Inquiry*, 2(1), 62-67.
- State Board for Community College Education. (n.d.). *Design for excellence: Washington State community college system master plan*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Superintendent of Public Instruction. (1961). *A confidential report on the finance and operation of Washington community-junior colleges*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Thurston, A. S., & Robbins, W. A. (1983). *Counseling: A Crucial Function for the 1980s. New Directions for Community Colleges, Number 43*. Los Angeles: ERIC Clearinghouse for Junior Colleges.
- U.S. Bill of Rights. (1791).
- U.S. Constitution. (1787).
- U.S. House of Representatives. (2004). *Campus Care and Counseling Act. House Resolution #3593*, November 21, 2003, 108th Congress, Washington. Available Online:
<http://www.theorator.com/bills108/hr3593.html>
- Washington Community & Technical College Counselors' Association. (2000). *Position paper: On professional staffing standards of counselors in community and technical colleges*. Washington State: Author.
- Washington State Board for Community College Education. (1977). *A manual for student services*. Olympia, WA: Author.

- Washington State Board of Education. (1961). *Report of junior college education in the 1959-61 biennium to the 1961 legislature*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Washington State Board of Education. (1965). *Long-range development plan for community colleges*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Washington State Junior College Study Committee. (1957). *Report of the Washington State Junior College Study Committee to the Washington State Board of Education*. Olympia, WA: Washington State Board of Education.
- Washington State Student Services Commission. (1998). *Washington State student services manual*. Olympia, WA: Author.
- Washington State Student Services Commission. (2001). *Survey of advising and counseling executive summary*. Olympia, WA.
- Wells, A. S., & Oakes, J. (1996). Potential pitfalls of systemic reform: Early lessons from research on detracking. *Sociology of Education*, extra issue, 135-143.
- Whittaker, D. (2003). *August 18 email correspondence*. Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges Olympia, WA.

Appendix A: Survey

*Washington State Student Services Commission
Survey of Advising and Counseling Services
April 2001*

The Washington State Student Services Commission (WSSSC) is studying current and past practices regarding student advising and counseling services within the Washington Community and Technical College system. Our interest in these services is complemented by similar interests recently expressed by academic advisors, faculty counselors, and the Washington Federation of Teachers. The intent of this survey is to obtain information regarding how these services are currently being provided, and to identify what changes in service provision may have occurred over time—changes in focus, role differentiation, staffing patterns, funding, etc.

Your participation in this survey is critical to its success, and we sincerely hope that you will take the time to respond. Our goal is to receive information from each of the colleges within our system. The questions on the survey are comprehensive and require both “institutional memory” and multiple perspectives. For that reason, we ask that you convene a small group of key individuals to help complete the survey. “Key individuals” would likely include counselors, local union representatives, educational planners and advisors as well as human resource personnel and institutional researchers. On April 25 at 1:30 p.m., we will hold a videoconference to explain the survey to campus teams, helping them understand the intent of each question and answering any questions they might have.

We ask that you complete one survey per college, and that you do so no later than Monday, May18, 2001. Send completed surveys to Dan Weinstein, Director of Research, Assessment and Planning at Lower Columbia College, PO Box 3010, Longview, WA 98632-0310 (dweinstein@lcc.ctc.edu). The survey task force will compile and disseminate a draft copy of the results. Interested parties will have the opportunity to discuss and verify the draft results before a final report is prepared for discussion at one of the quarterly meetings of WSSSC in the 2001-02 academic year.

Thank you very much for your cooperation in this important effort!

College:	
Please list the name and title of all of those who contributed to this process.	
Name	Title

Part 1: FTE Allocation and Funding Source

Please identify how your college has organized the identified employee types to accomplish the identified duties during the specified years. We recognize that the identified employee types might be performing other duties, and likewise that other employee types might perform the identified duties. However, for this table we are interested in only the specified duties for the specified employee types. Begin by identifying the total annual FTE each identified employee type spends on the combination of the six identified duties. Then, for each employee type, identify how much of the total FTE was allocated to each individual duty. Please also identify funding sources. An example is provided.

(We understand that you will have to rely on “institutional memory” to complete the portion of the matrix going back five, ten and fifteen years. Whatever records you can acquire for this purpose should be helpful. We are asking for your best estimates for those areas that you cannot acquire records.)

Employee Types	Duties Performed	Example			2000-01			1995-96		
		Classified staff	Admin. exempt	Counseling faculty	Classified staff	Admin. exempt	Counseling faculty	Classified staff	Admin. exempt	Counseling faculty
Total Academic Year FTE		1.3	1.8	2.6						
	Advising	0.7	0.5							
	Career Services		0.7							
	Educational Planning	0.6		0.8						
	Managing/Directing			0.4						
	Personal Guidance			0.4						
	Teaching		0.6	1.0						
	Grant Money (ie. TRIO)	15%	10%	0%						
	State Money (operating budget)	85%	70%	100%						
	Contract Money (ie. Running Start)		20%							
Staff Funding Source (%)										

Part 1, continued: FTE Allocation and Funding Source

	<i>Example</i>			1990-91			1985-86		
	<i>Classified staff</i>	<i>Admin. exempt</i>	<i>Counseling faculty</i>	Classified staff	Admin. exempt	Counseling faculty	Classified staff	Admin. exempt	Counseling faculty
Total Academic Year FTE	1.3	1.8	2.6						
Duties Performed									
Advising	0.7	0.5							
Career Services		0.7							
Educational Planning	0.6		0.8						
Managing/Directing			0.4						
Personal Guidance			0.4						
Teaching		0.6	1.0						
Staff Funding Source (%)									
Grant Money (i.e. TRIO)	15%	10%	0%						
State Money (operating budget)	85%	70%	100%						
Contract Money (i.e. Running Start)		20%							

Do you have any comments or caveats regarding the matrix you just completed for Part 1? Please state those here.

Part 2: Organizational Structure

Please indicate for us the organizational structure at your college as it relates to the advising and counseling functions.

Place a check in the box of the position that best describes who is currently managing/directing **advising services** on your campus (and complete the title).

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinator of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (other than counselor) | <input type="checkbox"/> College President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Place a check in the box of the position that best describes who the **manager/director of advising currently reports to** on your campus (and complete the title).

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinator of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (other than counselor) | <input type="checkbox"/> College President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Place a check in the box of the position that best describes who is currently managing/directing **counseling services** on your campus (and complete the title).

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinator of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (other than counselor) | <input type="checkbox"/> College President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Place a check in the box of the position that best describes who the **manager/director of counseling currently reports to** on your campus (and complete the title).

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Director of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinator of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate Dean of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Associate VP of _____ | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counselor | <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty (other than counselor) | <input type="checkbox"/> College President |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manager of _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

Part 3: Advising Policies

Please indicate for us your advising policies. Place a check in the box of the response that best describes your college’s position. If you indicate “sometimes,” please briefly describe your caveat.

Our college requires all new students to be advised.

- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Our college requires all returning students to be advised.

- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Our college requires all undecided (no major declared) students to be advised.

- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Teaching faculty advise students at our college.

- Yes (indicate the number of teaching faculty who advise: _____)
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Our college uses part-time employees for advising.

- Yes (indicate the number of part-time employees who advise: _____)
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Faculty advising is part of the faculty contract at our college.

- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Our college sets aside designated days exclusively for advising.

- Yes
 - No
 - Sometimes: _____
-

Part 4: Educational Background

In 2000-01, our college has a total of _____ non-faculty employees (both part-time and full-time) who **advise**. Please indicate the highest degree held by these non-faculty employees (both part-time and full-time) who advise by writing the number on the line of the degree designation. (For example, if three of your non-faculty advisors have a Master degree, write “3” on the line next to “Master degree.”)

_____ Doctoral or Professional degree	_____ Master degree
_____ Bachelor degree	_____ Associate degree
_____ Trade certification	_____ High school diploma

In 2000-01, our college has a total of _____ employees (both part-time and full-time) who **counsel students**. Please indicate the highest degree held by these employees (both part-time and full-time) who counsel students by writing the number on the line of the degree designation. (For example, if three of your counselors have a Master degree in counseling or related field, write “3” on the line next to “Master degree in counseling or related field.”)

_____ Doctoral or Professional degree	_____ Bachelor degree
_____ Master degree (in counseling with a practicum)	_____ Associate degree
_____ Master degree (not in counseling or related field)	_____ Trade certification
_____ High school diploma	

Part 5: Funding for Counselors

How do you pay counselors for work **during academic breaks**? Place a check in the box of the response that is the best fit.

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended annual contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time hourly rate | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compensatory time or flextime | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate work year | <input type="checkbox"/> Daily rate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe): _____ | | |

How do you pay counselors for work **during the summer**? Place a check in the box of the response that is the best fit.

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extended annual contracts | <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time hourly rate | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Compensatory time or flextime | <input type="checkbox"/> Alternate work year | <input type="checkbox"/> Daily rate |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe): _____ | | |

Part 6: Appraisal of Advising Services

Please indicate for us how well, or not, the **advising services** at your college is working. *As a group, please reflect as best you can on your college's campus-wide opinion.* For each of the items below, place the number of the response in the box to the left of the statement that best describes how the given function is working on your campus. Choose only one number per item.

- 1 = Not working well at all
- 2 = Not working well most of the time
- 3 = Works well most of the time
- 4 = Works well all of the time

	Space allocated for advising.		Classified staff who do advising.
	The number of those who advise on campus.		Available funding for advising.
	Advisors' knowledge of graduation/degree requirements.		Reporting relationship of those who advise.
	Student satisfaction, in general, with advising.		Hours of availability for advising.
	"Customer service" orientation of those who advise.		Advising training.
	Instructional faculty who do advising.		"Division of labor" among those who advise.
	Exempt staff who do advising.		Advising program overall.

Did we miss anything regarding advising? Please list anything else below along with an assigned number and a brief explanation.

Please indicate what evidence you used to qualify what is working, or not, in your **advising services**. *Place a check* in the box to the left of the artifact you used. Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Student satisfaction data about advising, in general (i.e. CCSEQ, college evaluation forms).	<input type="checkbox"/>	Faculty/staff comments or feedback regarding advising, in general.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The observation of the people completing this survey.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graduation rates.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transfer rates.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student timeliness to graduation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	First instruction week shuffle of students into the “right” classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	General efficiency of student placement into English and math classes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comments or feedback from advisors themselves regarding their work on campus.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Comments or feedback from transfer institutions or employers regarding advising, in general.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Comments or feedback from students regarding advising, in general (i.e. discussions, remarks).	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Did we miss anything here? Please list anything else below along with a brief explanation.

Part 6, continued: Appraisal of Counseling Services

Please indicate for us how well, or not, the **counseling services** at your college is working. *As a group, please reflect as best you can on your college's campus-wide opinion.* For each of the items below, place the number of the response in the box to the left of the statement that best describes how the given function is working on your campus. Choose only one number per item.

- 1 = Not working well at all
- 2 = Not working well most of the time
- 3 = Works well most of the time
- 4 = Works well all of the time

	Space allocated for counseling.			Teaching duties of counseling faculty.
	The number of those who counsel students on campus.			Available funding for counseling.
	Overall workload of counselors.			Reporting relationship of those who counsel students.
	Student satisfaction, in general, with counseling.			Hours of availability for counseling.
	“Customer service” orientation of those who counsel students.			Counseling training/professional development.
	Managing duties of counseling faculty.			“Division of labor” among those who counsel students.
	Advising duties of counseling faculty.			Counseling program overall.

Did we miss anything regarding counseling? Please list anything else below along with an assigned number and a brief explanation.

Please indicate what evidence you used to qualify what is working, or not, in your **counseling services**. *Place a check* in the box to the left of the artifact you used. Check all that apply.

	Student satisfaction data about counseling, in general (i.e. CCSEQ, college evaluation forms).			Faculty/staff comments or feedback regarding counseling, in general.
	The observation of the people completing this survey.			Student comments or feedback regarding classes taught by counselors (i.e. discussions, remarks).
	Frequency of student visits with counselors.			Student drop-out (or “stop-out”) rate.
	Frequency (or nature) of problems associated with troubled students.			Student comments or feedback regarding counseling, in general (i.e. discussions, remarks).
	Comments or feedback from counselors themselves regarding their work on campus.			Comments or feedback from faculty/staff who are managed by counselors.
	Comments or feedback from the mental health community			

Did we miss anything here? Please list anything else below along with a brief explanation.

Thank you very much for taking your time to complete this important inquiry!

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

EXPLANATION OF PERSONNEL TERMS

ADMINISTRATIVE/EXEMPT: Personnel not covered by civil service rules or collective bargaining agreements and as defined by WAC 251-04-040 (1-11).

CLASSIFIED STAFF: Personnel at community colleges who are covered by civil service rules as defined by RCW 41.06 and at technical colleges covered by collective bargaining agreements as provided by RCW 41.56.

COUNSELING FACULTY: Personnel who receive a faculty contract and are considered an “academic employee” as defined by RCW 28B.52.020 but whose primary duty is counseling.

FTE: Full time equivalent personnel. If you employ several part-time staff, calculate hours to equal full-time employment.

TEACHING FACULTY: Personnel who receive a faculty contract and are considered an “academic employee” as defined by RCW 28B.52.020 but whose primary duty is classroom teaching.

EXPLANATION OF TASKS

ADVISING: Advising includes academic and professional technical program tasks such as choosing and scheduling courses, degree and certification planning, transfer procedures and information, interpreting federal, state, and college policies and procedures regarding curriculum, funding, and student status.

CAREER SERVICES: Provide and interpret career assessment tools, help students with career decision-making, goal setting, placement, and research of careers.

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING: Identify and address educational barriers to student success. Topics may include learning styles, learning disabilities, study skills, orientation to college, test anxiety, math anxiety, time management, and related retention strategies. Assist students with developing educational plans designed to further these goals.

MANAGING/DIRECTING: Coordinate and supervise a program area such as a Career Center, Advising Center, Women’s Programs, Multicultural Services, Worker Retraining, WorkFirst, and Disability Support Services. Includes budget tracking and supervising or directing the work of others.

PERSONAL GUIDANCE: Address psychological and social barriers to student success such as stress, anxiety, loss and grief, anger management, interpersonal relationships, personal identity, depression, substance abuse, and health and wellness. Generally, this would include assessment, evaluation, and interventions

TEACHING: Research, plan, and carry out instruction of workshops, seminars, or credit courses on subjects related to student success strategies.

VITA

Earl Eugene Martin, Jr. was born February 17, 1964 in Oakland, California in a traveling military family, but considers Western Washington his home. As a proud descendent of Cree, French, and Scottish ancestry, Earl has strived to learn more about his ancestral roots through active participation in his family and community.

After traveling through many homes and elementary schools around the nation, Earl's family made Renton, Washington their home for the completion of his middle and high school education. Immediately after high school graduation, Earl attended Highline Community College in Des Moines, Washington and in 1984 received his Associate in Arts and Sciences Degree. He earned two bachelor's degrees from Central Washington University while graduating Summa Cum Laude, a Bachelor in Arts in Psychology in 1986 and a Bachelor of Science in Pedagogical Studies in 1990. Also, in 1990, Earl earned a Master in Science degree in Counseling Psychology from Central Washington University.

Earl's professional career started in 1987 at Central Washington University as the Coordinator of the Minority Retention Program, the chief academic officer for minority affairs. In 1990, he accepted a Counseling Faculty and Human Relations Instructor position at Everett Community College. In 1993, he received tenured faculty status and in 1999 he was appointed Director of the Counseling, Advising and Career Center and Chair of the Human Development Department. Throughout his career, Earl has been active with multicultural student activities with an emphasis on mentoring and strengthening the success of Native American and Alaskan Native students. In addition, he has been a longtime advocate for community college counseling profession.