Student Organizations on Community College Campuses:

An Examination of Engagement Levels of Community College Students

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

BY
Ellen Carmody Roster

IN PARTIAL FULFULLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Melissa S. Anderson, Advisor

September 2013

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my husband, Thomas W. Roster, and my children, Thomas Patrick Roster, and Kathleen Carmody Roster. Thank you for the many sacrifices you have made in support of my quest. I am eternally grateful for your unwavering faith, humor, patience, support and encouragement.

ABSTRACT

This study uses data from the 2011 Community College Survey of Student Engagement [CCSSE] to compare students' engagement in academic pursuits and their relationships to fellow students, faculty, and administrators at community colleges that host highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters, with students' perceptions of these attributes at community colleges that do not host Phi Theta Kappa chapters or have less involved chapters. The questions explored are: (a) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus and (b) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students' views of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel?

The findings indicate that students' enrollment status, age, gender, first-generation status, and race impact students' level of engagement and their relationships with others on campus. The presence and involvement level of Phi Theta Kappa chapters were not statistically significant in explaining students' engagement levels or perceptions of campus relationships.

Community college officials should consider an evaluation of student groups on their campuses to determine how closely the groups' missions match and enhance the college's mission and goals, when budgets are allocated.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

As a staff member of Phi Theta Kappa, the honor society for community college students, I often had an opportunity to visit community colleges campuses. During these visits and over the course of 20 years, time and time again I would witness small groups of dedicated Phi Theta Kappa members provide academically-focused, campus-wide activities and initiatives that I believed increased the engagement levels of all students on campus. Active Phi Theta Kappa chapters enlivened their campuses by coordinating tutoring services for other students; serving as college ambassadors; offering debates, speakers, and discussions of academic and current events; and engaging in yearlong projects dedicated to improving the academic climate of their community. Their purposeful dedication to their colleges and fellow students often brought to mind Margaret Mead's quote, "Never underestimate the power of a small group of committed people to change the world ®.[1] In fact, it is the only thing that ever has." Their actions have inspired this research into possible associations between student engagement on community college campuses and small bands of scholars.

Years of high unemployment rates, uninspiring job growth, and long-term unemployment have had a devastating toll on America's workforce, and many other nations now outperform this country in educational attainment and economic mobility (The White House, 2013). Amid this chaos, community colleges have emerged as vital

---

[1] *Note*. Used with permission from the Institute for Intercultural Studies.

weapons in the war on unemployment and a critical instrument in preparing our workforce for a new economy, either through workforce training or preparation for transfer and baccalaureate degree attainment. Students are flocking to community colleges for skills training, vocational credentials, and access to economical postsecondary education. Unfortunately, student success at these institutions is not guaranteed. The transfer, graduation, and credentialing rates of community colleges are dismal. Only 18 percent of those who start out in a community college earn their bachelors' degrees within eight years (Bailey & Morest, 2006). Fifteen percent achieve their associates' degrees and six percent earn certificates (Bailey & Morest, 2006). While promising upward mobility and a chance at the American Dream, in too many cases community colleges are failing their students, leaving behind broken promises and perpetuating a cycle of opportunity inequity.

Much work and study are needed in a variety of areas to reverse this disheartening situation. Collaboration between community colleges and four-year institutions is needed to boost successful student transfers (Pascarella, 1999). Strategic partnerships between community colleges and corporations that match workforce needs with graduates' skills are critical (Gordon, 2009). Further research is needed to determine what elements contribute to increased student engagement on community college campuses, as such engagement is known to enhance the student experience and lead to persistence toward educational goals (Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005).

Scholars agree that the more engaged students are in academically purposeful activities, the more they will gain from their college experience and the more likely they are to stay in college until they fulfill their educational aspirations (Astin, 1993; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). The value and necessity of fully engaging in the academic and social life of the campus are not always understood and appreciated by community college students. Many times these students are the first in their family to attend college. They do not have family or peer role models to teach them how to get the most from their college experience. They may not have experienced academic success or engagement in the past, and the value of becoming involved in their college, beyond attending classes, is not apparent. In fact, many have competing, off-campus responsibilities that hamper their ability to participate in the life of the college.

To combat this apathy, Kuh (1993) recommends that colleges create an affirming and inclusive campus environment that welcomes and encourages participation in in- and out-of-class activities. Considering the diversity of situations and pre-college characteristics of community college students, this requirement may be especially important on community college campuses.

While most community college administrators understand the urgency and benefit of achieving increased levels of student involvement, little research exists to inform decisions related to this goal. Better utilization of campus student organizations might well be part of the answer. These organizations, working in harmony with the college

administration and faculty, may prove to be a budget-friendly resource that can be used to promote engagement.

A student organization found on nearly every community college campus is Phi Theta Kappa. Recognized by the American Association of Community Colleges as the honor society for community colleges ("Phi Theta Kappa History", n.d.), Phi Theta Kappa's mission is to recognize the academic excellence of community college students and to provide opportunities for engagement in leadership, service, scholarship, and fellowship ("Phi Theta Kappa Constitution", n.d.). Highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters share a commitment with community college leaders to promote and sponsor campus-wide initiatives that provide opportunities for active engagement in purposeful educational activities to all students on campus. While anecdotal evidence suggests that community college officials value the positive contributions that highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters make, no research has been done to measure quantitatively the impact of such chapters on the engagement levels of students on campus or the influence that such chapters have on campus relationships.

A number of instruments exist that are designed to measure campus-wide student engagement. One such instrument, specific to community colleges, is the Community College Survey of Student Engagement [CCSSE]. The CCSSE measures students' perceptions of their colleges' participation in educational practices known to promote student engagement ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.). Student perceptions of the degree of friendliness, helpfulness and supportiveness of other students, instructors, and administrative personnel on campus are also surveyed.

Research Questions

This study uses the CCSSE survey to compare students' perceptions of engagement and relationships at community colleges that host highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters with students' perceptions of these factors at community colleges that do not host Phi Theta Kappa chapters or have less-involved chapters. The overarching query to be answered is: To what extent are engagement levels and students' relationships with other students, faculty, and administrates, as measured by the CCSSE, influenced by the presence or absence of a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter? Specifically this study will address the following questions:

1. Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus?

2. Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students' views of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel?

Background

Almost every aspect of community colleges has changed since their inception in 1901, even their name. They began as junior colleges, established to provide the first two years of postsecondary education and vocational training to predominately White men (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005). With the passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act (GI Bill), junior college enrollment surged as World War II veterans sought job training and career advancement through subsidized educational benefits (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Soon after, the term "junior college" lost favor in the literature and higher

education arena. This appellation was replaced by "community college" in the *Truman*

Commission Report (United States & Zook, 1947) to describe two-year colleges designed

to serve the areas in which they are located (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005).

Further changes occurred at community colleges during the 1970's as new public

policies such as need-based financial aid and guaranteed equal access attracted minorities

and women to higher education. Low tuition, open access, and accessible geographic

locations made community colleges the institutional choice for many of these students,

creating a significant shift in the community college student population (Metzner &

Bean, 1987; Vaughan, 2006). Community college enrollment continued to grow through

2010 as displaced workers sought retraining and skills development, traditional-aged

students sought low-cost entrance to baccalaureate degrees, and community members

sought life-long learning opportunities (Levin & Montero-Hernandez, 2009). Today,

community colleges enroll 48 percent of all undergraduates (Berkner & Choy, 2008).

Their mission has expanded to include: "serving all segments of society through an open-

access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students;

comprehensive educational programs; teaching and lifelong learning" (American

Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2010).

As are all segments of public education, community colleges are struggling with

shrinking state and local appropriations while answering demands for increased

accountability in expenditures and student outcomes. Community college officials face

the added challenge of efficiently meeting the growing needs of their nontraditional, at-

risk student population. This population often needs basic support services such as child-

care, tutoring, advisement, developmental classes, validation of their learning abilities, and a host of student services to shore up the weak educational, financial, and social foundations upon which they stand. Many community college officials are intent on improving accountability measures while efficiently meeting the needs of their students. To accomplish this goal, they are turning to student engagement theory as a key to increasing positive student outcomes.

Student engagement has its roots in Pace's (1984) theory that the best predictor of student success is the quality of their effort. Astin's (1984) work on student involvement, which he defines as "the amount of physical and psychological energy a student devotes to their academic experience" (p. 518), builds on Pace's theory by suggesting that the college has a role in and responsibility for encouraging students to spend time and effort on their academic endeavors. Tinto (1992) suggests that while the attributes and previous school experiences of students entering college have an influence on their persistence and success, the daily interactions between students, faculty and staff also affects success. Student engagement theorists combine elements of these doctrines. They suggest that engagement occurs when students put effort into their studies and colleges put effort into eliciting greater student effort (Harper & Quaye, 2009; Kuh, 2009; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Rendón, 1994, 2002; Rendón, Jalomo & Nora, 2000). Kuh (2009) explains, "Student engagement represents the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities" (p. 683).

For community college students, many of whom enter college challenged by attributes known to negatively affect completion, the day-to-day college interactions with peers, faculty, and administration are important influences on their commitment to complete their educational goals. A challenge for community college officials interested in increasing student success is how to shape those interactions so that students feel included, involvement in academic endeavors is encouraged, and student effort is affirmed. Rendón (1994, 2002) suggests that colleges must make a particular effort to reach out to nontraditional students. Nontraditional students, women, minorities, first-generation, and low-income students are not familiar with the systems and social structures of higher education. They have not had the social experiences nor developed the skill sets needed to take advantage of activities that lead to engagement. Additionally, some students may have been treated as incompetent learners in the past and many lack the confidence to participate fully in the college experience, making inclusion and affirmation especially important. Thus, Rendón argues, the first step to involvement is a validating culture where the college initiates contact with the student and encourages involvement by affirming the student's right to be an involved participant in the college (Rendón, 1994).

There is no doubt that increasing student success, whether through enhanced efforts to improve student engagement or through other educational practices, has become a critical issue on community college campuses. Research links completion of a postsecondary degree to longer life expectancy, improved quality of life, and improved economic status (Institute for Higher Education Policy [IHEP], 1998). Associate's

degree graduates earn nearly $.4 million more over their lifetimes than high school graduates (AACC, 2010a). Unfortunately, research on the probability of a completing a degree is disheartening. Before the end of their first semester, 14 percent of community college students will leave school without earning a credit (McClenney, 2009); and, within three years only 16 percent will have earned a degree or certificate, and 42 percent will have left without credentials (Berkner & Choy, 2008).

These data reflect a staggering, pervasive, and discouraging dilemma facing community colleges: how to increase retention, persistence, and credentialing rates in the face of shrinking budgets and burgeoning enrollment. As policy makers and economists point out, these lackluster retention and degree and credential completion rates underscore a disturbing and growing gap in American education between workforce needs and Americans prepared for the available jobs. Experts note the social benefits that result from the pursuit of higher education, including reduced crime rates, higher voter participation, higher contributions to tax revenue (IHEP, 1998), and push for accountability in graduation rates. President Barack Obama has signaled the significance of producing an educated workforce by issuing a call to action to community colleges to increase the number of graduates by 5 million by 2020 (The White House, 2009). In 2012 he proposed the $8 billion Community College to Career Fund, an initiative intended to train two-million workers for high-demand industries (The White House, 2012).

Community college educators are quick to point out that attaining Obama's goal will be extremely difficult. Community colleges' open admission policy, which attracts

students who have delayed postsecondary enrollment, are less academically and financially prepared than students attending four-year schools, and are more likely to enroll part-time, is viewed as a primary obstacle in increasing student success rates. Almost 60 percent of traditional-aged students entering community college need at least one remedial course (Adelman, 2005), 62 percent are enrolled part-time (Provasnik & Planty, 2008), and 84 percent of students are employed at least part-time (Wirt, Choy, Provasnik, Rooney, Sen, & Tobin, 2003). Community college students are more likely to be of minority descent and from families of lower socioeconomic status than students at public four-year institutions. Provasnik and Planty (2008) indicate that while the majority of community college students are White, 15 percent are Black as compared to 10 percent at public four-year institutions, and 14 percent are Hispanic as compared to 9 percent at public four-year institutions. The percentage of community college students who are financially independent of their parents is 29 percent as compared to 11 percent at four-year institutions. Twenty-eight percent of dependent community college students come from families with parental annual incomes below $32,000. The researchers also discovered that only 28 percent of community college students in their study had a parent with at least a bachelor's degree.

Given recent and relentless budget cuts, an open-admission mission, and an at-risk commuter population, student groups and organizations might provide one tool community college leaders can use to raise student success rates. Campus student groups that encourage engagement in the social and academic activities of a campus, such as honor societies, bands, and student government, can be a positive influence on the student

body. Through thoughtful and strategic support of such groups, community college officials may be able to stretch their resources and gain student partners in their commitment to student success.

Phi Theta Kappa may be such a group. Established in 1918 ("Phi Theta Kappa History", n.d.), the organization offers programs that encourage campus-wide engagement of all students ("Phi Theta Kappa Programs", n.d.). In pursuit of this mission, local Phi Theta Kappa chapters work with college officials to provide opportunities for all students to become engaged in educationally purposeful campus activities.

Past activities of highly-involved chapters include: educational activities to inform all students of the value of completing their educational goals; working with college officials to determine and complete a project for the college to enhance the campus ("Phi Theta Kappa College Projects", n.d.); peer-to-peer mentoring activities to introduce students to student support services on campus; hosting welcoming and information booths for new students; planning campus and community service days; and acting as student mentors and academic tutors ("Phi Theta Kappa Honors in Action", n.d.). All these activities are thought to increase levels of student engagement. Such activities are optional and so there are Phi Theta Kappa chapters that do not engage in campus-wide activities.

This study examines the extent to which highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters influence the level of campus engagement of all students and if the presence of a

highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter affects how students perceive their relationships with other students, faculty and administrative staff.

The study uses data from the CCSSE survey, which asks students to report the extent of their involvement in activities known to enhance learning ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.). The five areas of activities measured by the survey are: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. All students' scores are used to create national benchmark measurements for each area. Benchmarks are used by institutions to pinpoint areas of improvement and allow for comparisons across peer colleges ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.). The CCSSE survey also asks students to report the degree of friendliness, helpfulness and supportiveness of other students, instructors and administrative personnel on campus. ("The Community College Student Report", n.d.).

The CCSSE is a companion to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which was designed to measure student engagement in four-year institutions ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.). Approximately 440,000 students at 700 colleges in 48 states and five Canadian provinces, Bermuda and the Northern Mariana Islands have participated in the CCSSE survey in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Using the 2011 CCSSE data, student engagement levels at campuses with highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters are compared to the engagement levels of students at community college campuses not hosting Phi Theta Kappa chapters or chapters that are not engaged in Phi Theta Kappa programming, as well as the engagement level of students at campuses with chapters that are moderately involved in programming. This

comparative study provides vital information for community college leaders charged with making financial and policy decisions regarding student organizations.

Methods

This quantitative study examines the relationship between the level of involvement in Phi Theta Kappa programming exhibited by chapters and the student engagement levels demonstrated at the hosting community colleges. This study also examines students perceive in their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrators on campuses with highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters.

In 2011 students completed the CCSSE survey in paper format in classroom settings at CCSSE member colleges. The participants were selected to complete the CCSSE based on enrollment in randomly selected credit-bearing classes ("CCSSE: Cohort data overview, n.d.).

Data from the Phi Theta Kappa database are used to rank the involvement levels of chapters in Phi Theta Kappa programming. Chapters are classified as not involved in programming, moderately involved, and highly-involved. Colleges not hosting Phi Theta Kappa chapters are also categorized as not involved in programming.

Overview of the Study

Generally, Phi Theta Kappa chapters are comprised of honor students with a grade point average of 3.5 or better. Members are recognized for their academic prowess and are provided opportunities to develop leadership and scholarship skills. ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Programs", n.d.). Local chapters are advised by faculty members.

The number of students that accept membership into Phi Theta Kappa, and the involvement level of chapters, varies from campus to campus.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Background

The American middle class is adrift, listing aimlessly in despair amidst a sea of broken promises and disillusionment. Squeezed by a stagnant economy, crushed by debt, and pinched by a global labor auction, middle class Americans feel used, without hope, finalized. For the first time in our nation's history, our children will face downward mobility. Median income in the United States has declined 7 percent since 1999 and the number of people working full-time has decreased by 9.4 million since 2007 (DeNavas-Walt, Proctor, & Smith, 2011). Outsourcing and automation have decreased the number of U.S. jobs available to unskilled laborers by 40 percent since the 1950s (Gordon, 2009). Today approximately 70 percent of all jobs require specialized skills (Gordon, 2009). In the past 40 years, the percentage of the nation's income allotted to the middle class has decreased by 7 percent and now the top 20 percent of households collect 50 percent of the income (Bellow & Overberg, 2011).

There can be no doubt that in this drastically reshaped reality, higher education remains a lifeline, a towrope, a ladder to a better life. During the recent recession, the unemployment rate for high school graduates was 32 percent higher than for those with associates' degrees and almost 50 percent higher than for workers with bachelors' degrees (United States Department of Labor, 2012). Bachelor's degree holders earn $1 million more over their lifetime than those with only high school diplomas (United States Census Bureau, 2011) and $ .6 million more than those with associates' degrees (AACC,

2010a). A postsecondary degree has also been linked to better health and pension benefits, a healthier lifestyle, and longer life expectancy (IHEP, 1998; The College Board, 2010).

For low- and middle-class Americans, community colleges, the jewels of the American higher education system, offer a glimmer of hope and a pathway to prosperity. By providing open, inexpensive, geographically-convenient access to higher education, community colleges can retrain and reenergize our workforce, offer affordable lower-division classes, and in some fields, the opportunity to earn bachelors' degrees while remaining at a local community college (Floyd, Skolnik, & Walker, 2005). Whether for skills training or bachelor's degree attainment, community colleges could play a pivotal role in reawakening the American Dream, destroying a cycle of income inequity, and restoring the middle class.

Unfortunately, nearly one-half of all community college students leave within one year. (American College Testing, 2010a). Six years after enrolling only 46 percent of community college students pursuing degrees or certificates have attained that goal or transferred to a four-year institution (Radford, Berkner, Wheeless, & Shepherd, 2010). Low-income and minority community college students fare even worse (Bailey & Morest, 2006). After eight years, less than 30 percent of low-income and 20 percent of Black community college students have completed either a degree or certificate (Bailey & Morest, 2006). This held true even after controlling for academic preparedness (Alfonso, Bailey, & Scott, 2005). As a result, some legislatures, such as Ohio's, are

considering higher education funding formulas based on colleges' ability to retain and graduate students rather than on enrollment numbers (Moltz, 2009).

For those community colleges students who do achieve either a credential or degree, 11 percent are "deficiently" prepared for entry level jobs and only 10 percent are "more than adequately prepared" (Casner-Lotto, Barrington, & Wright, 2006) for employment. In a 1996 survey by the Conference Board, employers found community college graduates deficient in seven areas of "very important" workforce readiness skills, including written communications, oral communication, lifelong learning/self-direction and critical thinking (Casner-Lotto, Barrington, & Wright, 2006). These discouraging results have led some pundits to suggest that community college funding should be based on gains in student learning, graduation and job placement rates (Dougherty and Hong, 2005).

These public cries for change coupled with alarming statistics of failing students, classrooms bursting with new enrollees, a diverse and vulnerable student population, and deep budget cuts as a result of a sputtering economy, have community college educators scrambling for answers. How can the success, graduation and credentialing rates of community college students be increased? What economical and effective tools and resources exist to assist community colleges in battling and overcoming these disappointing results?

Many higher education researchers and theorists would suggest that community college administrators and faculty answer these questions by exploring student

engagement and organizational culture theories. Tinto (1993) insists that institutional

cultures can be altered to enhance retention and argues:

> Individual departure from institutions can be viewed as arising out of a
>
> longitudinal process of interactions between an individual with given attributes,
>
> skills, financial resources, prior educational experiences, and dispositions
>
> (intentions and commitments) and other members of the academic and social
>
> systems of the institution. (p. 113)

 He suggests that if institutions are serious about retaining students they must nurture an

institutional culture that prioritizes academic, social, and personal support as well as

empowers students to seek out that support. Astin (1993) points out that although

community colleges are somewhat hampered by their institutional type and structure

from creating cultures emphasizing involvement, an institution may still discover

practices, policies, and leadership priorities that offset the disadvantages of these

institutional structures and create cultures that foster student involvement.

Clear evidence exists that efforts to encourage student effort toward learning,

personal development, and involvement in the campus community, will produce greater

positive student outcomes. Pace (1984) emphasized the need for students to invest in

their education by dedicating time and effort to the endeavor. He writes, "Quality of

experience and quality of effort are similar concepts, connected with one another in that

the likelihood of having high quality experience depends on investing high quality effort"

(p. 6). Astin's (1984) theory of involvement focuses on the impact students' experiences

have on their development in college. He postulates that the quality and quantity of

student involvement in their educational experience are the most important factors contributing to student learning and personal development. Kuh (1994) encourages an examination of college cultures to determine if they foster or discourage such involvement in learning. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) examine the research on the role of the institution in fostering student effort and write:

> But if, as it appears, individual effort or engagement is the critical determinant of the impact of college, then it is important to focus on the ways in which an institution can shape its academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings to encourage student engagement. (p. 602)

Pascarella and Terenzini also report that "the level of student involvement and integration in any of the components of an institution's academic and social systems can be a critical factor in students' persistence decisions" (p. 426).

This link between engagement and persistence and graduation rates is well documented and has been extensively studied at four-year institutions (Astin, 1993; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 1991; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). Less literature is available on community college students (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), especially regarding research devoted to their engagement and academic success. In an age of unremitting budget cuts that slash student services, increase class sizes, and encourage the hiring of part-time adjunct faculty, more study of the successful engagement of community college students may identify best practices as a key to increasing student success, persistence, and credentialing.

History of Community Colleges

Championed by William Rainey Harper, H. Stanley Brown, and other prominent nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century educators, community colleges trace their history to the first junior college founded in Joliet, Illinois, in 1901 (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Convinced by Harper that freshman and sophomore classes could be successfully taught as an extension of secondary education, Brown opened Joliet Junior College by adding two years of courses to the high school curriculum (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005). The concept was that junior colleges were to focus on the first two years of general and vocational education, serve as a bridge between high schools and senior colleges, professional schools and universities (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005), and leave universities to concentrate on research and professional development (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

By 1940, 575 junior colleges were located in the United States (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The passage of the Servicemen's Readjustment Act [GI Bill] in 1944, which provided financial assistance for veterans of World War II to pursue higher education, created demand for more options in pursuing a degree and brought more students to junior colleges, as did the need for skilled workers to assist in the transition from armament production to consumer goods (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

Junior colleges enjoyed another surge of support from public policy when the Truman Commission Report of 1948 called for the establishment of a network of public community colleges that would serve the areas in which they were located (AACC, 2010b). The report introduced the term "community college" and the network of public, community-based colleges envisioned by the Commission came to fruition by the 1960s

with the opening of 457 new community colleges, doubling the number operating prior to that decade (Phillippe & Sullivan, 2005).

Both the National Defense Education Act of 1958 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 called for direct financial support of higher education institutions by the federal government and advanced the theory that increased federal and state support of higher education was necessary for the security and welfare of the nation (Altbach, Berdahl, & Gumport, 1999). The 1972 amendments to the Higher Education Act focused on increasing access to higher education by providing aid to students based on financial need through Basic Educational Opportunity Grants (Altbach et al., 1999). Access to higher education was also expanded through Title IX of the 1972 amendments, which increased the federal government's control over higher education and guaranteed equal access to minorities and women (Altbach et al., 1999). As a result, the number of low-income, minority, and women students in higher education increased, especially at the geographically and financially accessible community colleges.

Through the next decades, older students living at home and attending college part-time, baby boomers reaching college age, and young men seeking draft deferments from the Vietnam War through full-time college enrollment (Vaughan, 2006) fueled enrollment in community colleges. This rapid growth changed the higher education landscape and led to 600 new community colleges with expanded missions of occupational and vocational programs, remedial programs, adult education, and community education (Vaughan, 2006). While the rate of enrollment in community colleges slowed in the 1980s and 1990s (Wirt et al., 2003), the decline in blue-collar jobs

in these decades led employees to higher education for advanced education or skills

retraining (Metzner & Bean, 1987). By 2007, 1,045 mostly moderate-sized community

colleges were located in urban, rural, and suburban communities across the nation,

enrolling 6.2 million students (AACC, 2010a) whose tuition was less than half of that at

public senior institutions and one-tenth of that at private four-year colleges and

universities (Provasnik & Planty, 2008).

Since 2007 full-time enrollment in community colleges has increased by 24

percent and the percentage of students enrolled in credit-bearing courses has increased by

17 percent (Mullins and Phillippe, 2009). Enrollment is being fueled by 7-12 percent

increases in tuition at public, four-year institutions as compared to 4-9 percent increases

at community colleges (Fleming, 2004); the continued economic pressure on middle class

families, which results in more traditional-aged students beginning their postsecondary

education at community colleges; the expanded role of the community college in

remedial education; and an increase in dual enrollment programs that offer students the

opportunity to enrollment in community colleges while still in high school (Bailey &

Morest, 2006).

Community College Students

While enrollment is climbing, the new entrants, including many displaced

workers returning to school for skills training, credentials and degrees, are as diverse as

their social background, work history, educational preparation, and aspirations.

Community colleges "often have the neediest students, the most academically

underprepared, and the economically disenfranchised" (Hobek, 2003). Minorities make up 40 percent of the community college population (AACC, 2010a).

Provasnik and Planty (2008) report that for the academic year 2003-04, the median age of community college students was 24, three years higher than the median age of students attending four-year colleges and universities. Approximately 35 percent of community college students are 30 years old or older as compared with 13 percent of students at public four-year institutions (Provasnik and Planty, 2008). Forty percent of part-time community college students are employed full-time (AACC, 2010a). More than half, 60 percent, of full-time community college students work part-time (AACC, 2010a). First-generation students account for 42 percent of the community college population and 16 percent of the community college enrollees are single parents (AACC, 2010a).

In increasingly large numbers, community college students are academically under-prepared for college level work (AACC, 2000). Community colleges, as part of their open access mission, must accept these students and address this issue in order to help students succeed and to improve their institutions' success rates (AACC, 2000). In fall 2000, 76 percent of postsecondary institutions offered at least one remedial reading, writing, or mathematics course; (Parsad & Lewis, 2003) and, remedial courses existed on "virtually every community college campus" (AACC, 2000).

The National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES] (2009) projects that from 2007 to 2018 the number of students enrolled in higher education who are 25 to 34 years old will increase by 25 percent, while the number of traditionally-aged students will

increase by only nine percent. During this same time period, the number of women enrolled will increase by 16 percent, as compared to a nine percent increase in the number of men enrolled. Full-time enrollment will increase by 15 percent, while part-time enrollment will increase by 10 percent. The percentage of Hispanics enrolled in community colleges is projected to increase by 38 percent, Black student enrollment by 26 percent, Asian and Pacific Islanders by 29 percent, American Indian or Alaska Native by 32 percent and White enrollment by four percent (NCES, 2009).

The increased diversity of college students was first noticed by Cross (1981). He identified a new type of student: an adult returning to school full- or part-time while maintaining such responsibilities as employment and family and "whose performance at academic tasks in the past has been below average" (p. 12). Stewart and Rue (1983) built on Cross's portrayal by noting that these new students are at least 25 years old. Using the term "nontraditional", Bean and Metzner (1985) completed the definition:

> Age alone does not seem to reflect completely what we would consider
> nontraditional. If one defines traditional students as residing on campus, 18-24
> years old, and attending college full-time, it is easiest, though not completely
> satisfactory, to consider as nontraditional students those who lack one or more of
> these characteristics. (p. 488)

Horn (1996) identified the nontraditional student as one possessing at least one of seven characteristics: has delayed enrollment into postsecondary education, attends part-time, is financially independent, works full-time while enrolled, has dependents other than a spouse, is a single parent, or did not obtain a standard high school diploma. Among

"highly" nontraditional students, those students having four or more nontraditional characteristics, 64 percent attended a community college. Further, 89 percent of community college students were at least minimally nontraditional (Horn, 1996). These nontraditional characteristics make it more difficult to achieve educational aspirations (Horn, 1996).

Pascarella and Terenzini (1998) describe community colleges as consisting of "disproportionate numbers of non-resident, part-time, older, non-white, and working class students" (p. 155). Their review of the literature revealed that poor academic achievement in high school, attendance interrupted either by delaying entry into college after graduating from high school or stopping out of higher education, being a first-generation student, lack of involvement and integration in the institution's academic and social systems, working more than 15 hours a week while enrolled, and beginning at a community college rather than a four-year institution have an adverse effect on student persistence and degree attainment (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

In all aspects, community college officials will need creativity, imagination, tenacity, and perseverance to encourage this diverse population to persist to its educational goals, especially as research shows that the path will be strewn with obstacles and challenges.

<div align="center">**Theories of Student Success**</div>

Quality of Effort

Early efforts to determine what led to student success in higher education included Pace's (1984) work to measure the quality of student effort. Pace's theory

argues that the quality of student effort is the best predictor of student progress toward

the attainment of educational goals. He posits that students who capitalize on the

resources and opportunities in the college setting will gain more than students who do not

take full advantage of their college's offerings. He writes, "The more students put into

their college experience the more they get out of it" (p. 96). Pace theorizes that although

a student's background attributes may be useful in determining potential, it is the quality

of a student's effort that transforms potential to learning outcomes. He notes that

colleges have a responsibility to encourage and provide resources devoted to enhancing

student effort and that it is the college's role to promote a higher quality of effort from its

students. Pace writes, "It is the college that sets the intellectual standards, the quality of

performance it expects from students, and exemplifies its values by the quality of the

facilities it provides" (p. 97).

Theory of Involvement

Replacing Pace's quality of effort with the more expansive term "involvement",

Astin's (1984) theory suggests that students who are involved in campus academic

activities will show more gains in learning and development and are more likely to persist

in their educational goals. There are five basic postulates to involvement theory:

Involvement means the investment of physical and psychological energy in different

activities; involvement occurs along a continuum, with different students investing

different amounts of energy toward different objects at different times; involvement can

be measured quantitatively and qualitatively; the amount of learning and personal

development resulting from any educational program is proportional to the quality and

quantity of student involvement in that program; and that "the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement" (p. 519). Astin's (1993) theory has its roots in research developed around his inputs-environment-outcomes (I-E-O) model, which he describes as:

> *Inputs* refers to the characteristics of the student at the time of initial entry to the institution; e*nvironment* refers to the various programs, policies, faculty, peers, and educational experiences to which the student is exposed; and *outcomes* refers to the student's characteristics after exposure to the environment. Change or growth in the student during college is determined by comparing outcome characteristics with input characteristics. (p. 7)

Astin found that frequent interactions with other students, especially regarding academic issues, are positively related to growth in a number of developmental areas including leadership abilities, overall academic development, knowledge of a field, analytical and problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills, and cultural awareness (Astin, 1993). Likewise, frequent interaction with faculty leads to gains in student satisfaction with faculty, quality of instruction and overall college experience, GPA, degree attainment, and graduating with honors. Not surprisingly, Astin's research indicates that the time students spent on family, work, and other non-academic activities detracts from their involvement on campus and thus negatively impacts their educational development, persistence, and learning (Astin, 1993). This does not bode well for the older, working, first-generation, part-time student population of community colleges.

Theory of Validation

Rendón's (1994) theory of validation may contain a missing link between nontraditional students and Astin's (1993) theory of involvement. She posits that while involvement through time and energy devoted to academic tasks is critical to successful student outcomes, nontraditional students do not know how to become involved in activities that promote involvement. Nontraditional students lack self-confidence, are not familiar with the systems and social structures of higher education, have not had the social experiences nor developed the skill sets needed to take advantage of activities that lead to involvement. Rendón (1994) suggests that validating experiences such as encouragement, affirmation, and support have a significant impact on student development and that for nontraditional students, both academic and social validation is necessary before they can become involved with the life of the college. Academic validation occurs when "in- and out-of-class agents take action to assist students to trust their innate capacity to learn and to acquire confidence in being a college student" (Rendón, 2002, p. 40). Social, or interpersonal validation, occurs when college officials encourage student development and social adjustment (Rendón, 2002).

Rendón (2002) believes that nontraditional students, and their stories, knowledge and learning techniques are underappreciated by some faculty members and staff:

Some faculty and staff view certain kinds of students as incapable of learning, assault students with information or withhold information, install doubt and fear in students, distance themselves from students, silence and oppress students,

and/or create fiercely competitive learning environments that pit students against

each other. (p. 644).

She argues that nontraditional students do not do well in this environment and that the

institution is responsible for mitigating these challenges by providing an academic and

interpersonal climate that validates, affirms, supports, and enables these students,

reinforcing the belief that these students can develop fully as students and individuals

(Rendón, 1994). This concept, that it is the responsibility of the institution to initiate

contact with students, is the first of six critical elements that make up Rendón's theory of

validation. The second element states that when validation is present, students thrive.

They believe they can learn, their self-esteem and self-worth increases, and they believe

that "they and everything that they bring to the college experience, are accepted and

recognized as valuable" (p. 44). Without validation students become silent and may feel

mistrusted and subordinate. Third, involvement and student development cannot occur

until validation has occurred. Fourth, validation occurs inside and outside the classroom.

The fifth element to the theory of validation states that the more students experience

validation the richer their college experience. Finally, validation is especially important

during the first year of college and the first few weeks of class (Rendón, 1994).

In 2002, Rendón interviewed staff, co-directors, instructors, counselors, students

and mentors of the Community College Puente project to examine the culture of the

Puente:

Institutional agents, not students, are expected to take the first step to not only

promote involvement but to affirm students as knowers and valuable members of

the college learning community. Validation theory poses that college faculty, counselors, and administrative staff take a proactive role in reaching out to students to affirm them as being capable of doing academic work and to support them in their academic endeavors and social adjustments. (p. 645)

The Community College Puente project provides specific mentoring, skills development, and counseling to Latino community college students to assure their successful transfer to four-year colleges. Rendón found that validating in- and out-of-class experiences, as well as efforts to explain the college experience and degree paths, fostered academic success and personal growth for the students in the project (Rendón, 2002).

Tinto's Interactionalist Theory of Student Departure

Tinto (1993) suggests that the college experience, and the social and academic communities of the college, can influence the willingness of a student to continue at a college. He writes of his longitudinal model of departure:

[The model] argues that individual departure from institutions can be viewed as arising out of a longitudinal process of interactions between an individual with given attributes, skills, financial resources, prior educational experiences, and dispositions (intentions and commitments) and other members of the academic and social systems of the institution. The individual's experience in those systems, as indicated by his/her intellectual (academic) and social (personal) integration, continually modifies his or her intentions and commitments. Positive experiences – that is, integrative ones – reinforce persistence through their impact

upon heightened intentions and commitments both to the goal of college

completion and to the institutions in which the person finds him/herself. (p. 115)

Tinto (1993) argues that students whose past experiences have not provided the social

and intellectual skills needed for successful participation in the new college community

will have difficulty transitioning and becoming incorporated into the college culture. As

Tinto notes, "In the 'typical' institution, this means that disadvantaged students, persons

of minority origins, older students and the physically handicapped are more likely to

experience such problems than are other students " (p. 97). Tinto cautions that students

attending local colleges, such as community colleges, may not have the full experience of

immersion into a new culture that comes with attending college away from home.

Further, students attending community colleges face external forces such as family,

friends, and communities that may not support the students' decision to attend college.

These external influences pull students away from full integration into the college

community.

Applying Tinto's model to examine the long-term persistence of community

college students, Pascarella, Smart, and Ethington (1986) sampled 825 students who

initially enrolled in 85 community colleges. They followed these students for a nine-year

period and found that students who initially enroll in community colleges are

significantly more likely to persist in the pursuit of bachelors' degrees if they became

successfully integrated into the academic and social systems of the institutions they

attend. They conclude:

In short, the student's experience of college may have an important, unique

influence on system persistence beyond that of differences in family background,

secondary-school experiences, individual attributes, and the initial commitments

with which he or she enters college. Thus, it may be possible to enhance student

persistence in postsecondary education through purposeful institutional policies

and practices designed to enhance student social and academic integration. (p. 66)

Tinto's theory that less academically and socially integrated students are more

likely to depart from college early is supported by Chapman and Pascarella's (1983)

findings concerning higher departure rates at community colleges. The researchers

studied first-time freshmen entering college in the fall of 1978 at 11 higher education

institutions and intending to graduate with either associates' or bachelors' degrees. Four

of these institutions were four-year residential colleges, three were community colleges,

two were commuter four-year institutions and two were private liberal arts colleges. The

study results indicated that community college students were less socially integrated into

their colleges than any other student group. Community college students participated in

fewer organized extracurricular activities, had less informal contact with other students,

and participated in fewer informal social activities than the university students in the

study. Students also differed significantly in their level of academic integration across

institutional types, with residential students showing the greatest academic integration

and involvement, and four-year commuter students and community college students

showing less involvement. Community college students had less informal contact with

faculty on academic matters and participated less in honors programs than liberal arts and four-year college students (Chapman & Pascarella, 1983).

Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) generally affirm the effectiveness of Tito's model in terms of academic and social integration in university settings. Further, their review indicates that research shows that frequent, informal contacts between students and faculty concerning intellectual matters are important to the successful academic integration of students, which in turn assists students in persisting in their studies (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Theories of Nontraditional Student Departure

Research on nontraditional students indicates that they are less likely to have high levels of academic and social integration into college society and that this may affect their persistence in higher education.

Chickering (1974) found that students living on campus are more highly integrated, socially and academically, into the college campus. Bean and Metzner (1985) posit that older students, who have already developed self-control and values typically identified with maturity, are less susceptible to socialization or integration than their traditional counterparts, especially since the personal development described by Chickering (1969) for undergraduates may not occur for the older student.

Bean and Metzner (1985) propose that because nontraditional students have more pressure from external environmental and social factors, such as work and family, than traditional students have, a model of nontraditional student departure should weigh external pressures heavily. Accordingly the Bean and Metzner model, built on Tinto's

(1975) model, recognizes the influence of external factors in pulling students away from campus involvement and preventing nontraditional students from spending time with other students and faculty, thus preventing them from experiencing the full influence of the college experience.

As predicted, Metzner and Bean's (1987) study of 624 nontraditional freshmen students at a primarily commuter university found that nontraditional students had less interaction with peers, faculty, extracurricular activities, and campus services and greater interaction with the non-collegiate, external environment.

Theory of Engagement

Blending aspects of Pace's quality of effort theory (1984), Astin's theory of involvement (1984), and Chickering and Gamson's best practices for undergraduate education (1987), student engagement theory suggests two elements as critical to student success: (a) the more time and effort a student spends on academic tasks, the more valuable their learning and experience will be and (b) the institution must exhibit a culture that is "inclusive and affirming" and where expectations for performance are "clearly communicated and set at reasonably high levels" (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 2005, p. 8). Kuh, et al. (2005) postulate that such an institutional culture will naturally accept and encourage teaching practices such as those suggested by Chickering and Gamson (1987): student-faculty contact, cooperation among students, active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, high expectations, and respect for diverse talents and ways of learning. These practices elicit greater effort and time on task from students, encouraging involvement and engendering student success, all cultural elements that have

been shown to be positively related to student satisfaction, learning and development and persistence (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh & Whitt, 2005). Kuh (2009) explains, "Student engagement represents the time and effort students devote to activities that are empirically linked to desired outcomes of college and what institutions do to induce students to participate in these activities" (p. 683). Student engagement then is a blending of student effort to take advantage of the college environment to achieve successful educational outcomes and the institution's effort to allocate resources and arrange its curricula, learning opportunities, and support services to encourage student involvement and increased quality of effort contributing to collegiate success (Kuh, 2009).

Kuh, et al. (2005), studied 20 colleges and universities, referred to as Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) schools. These colleges, selected for their higher than expected levels of student engagement and graduation rates, were found to have inclusive and affirming cultures where academic expectations were reasonably high and clearly communicated. DEEP colleges exhibited six features that foster student engagement and success (a) a "living" mission and "lived" educational philosophy (p. 24), (b) a focus on learning, (c) a physical environment that enhances scholarly activities, (d) clearly defined paths for student success, (e) a commitment to constant improvement, and (f) a shared responsibility for quality and student success.

DEEP schools believe that students need to be taught how to engage in active and collaborative academic activities. Thus, these schools emphasize a supportive environment, with high-quality relationships between students, faculty and

administration, where students are introduced to and prompted to use resources that will enhance their academic and social life (Kuh, et al., 2005). Teachers and administrators are committed to "talent development", the idea that "every student can learn under the right conditions" (p. 77) and faculty and staff make spending time with students a priority, especially in research and academic activities. Students at DEEP schools are actively involved in the teaching and learning of their peers. Peers help other students understand faculty expectations and standards, how to balance academic and social commitment, and how to connect to other students and the institution (Kuh, et al., 2005).

Organizational Culture and Climate

The evidence is clear that student success can be enhanced by a campus culture that proactively supports, affirms and includes students in the academic and social life of the college (Rendón, 1994; Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates, 1991; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, & Associates, 2005; Pascarella & Terenzini (2005)).

Some critics contend that community colleges have an organizational culture that dissuades students from pursuing their initial educational goals. Clark (1960, 1980) contends that rather than raise aspirations, community colleges serve a "cooling out" function within higher education, curtailing the ambitions of their students to divert them from the higher education track. Other critics suggest that community colleges have a culture of "vocationalizing" education. That is, community college students are offered shorter, vocationally-focused paths of study that redirect them from longer-term educational goals and provide more immediate employment choices (Bailey & Morest, 2006). Under this system, community college students receive training but life-long

learning skills are not developed and there is no real long-term economic advancement.

Thus critics contend, while some tout community colleges as "democracy's colleges"

(Boggs, 2012), in reality students who attend community college "secure for themselves

positions on the same low-status social rungs as their parents" (Bailey & Morest, 2006, p.

31).

Organizational culture is the story, history, and expressed beliefs of an institution

and its members (Clark, 1970). It is demonstrated in "what is done, how it is done, and

who is involved in doing it" (Tierney, 1988, p. 24). Berger and Milem (2000) emphasize

that organizational culture is deeply ingrained within an institution and strengthened by

behaviors repeated by cultural agents and values held and maintained by organizational

members. Culture can be changed but only through time and repeated effort to embed the

new belief into the story and history of the organization.

Levin and Montero-Hernandez (2009) propose that the day-to-day interactions of

members of a community interact with the core components of an institution's culture to

shape its institutional climate. In a field study of 13 community colleges, the researchers

examined the interactions of faculty, administrators and students and found that "culture

capacities" can be developed and used as tools to create vibrant "caring institutions" (p.

29). Caring institutions design and engage in organizational behaviors that enhance the

organization's understanding of students and focuses on responding to those needs. To

assist students succeed through engagement in the life of the college, caring institutions'

social agents (faculty, staff) establish respectful, affirming relations with students and

provide opportunities for the students to become culturally competent (Levin and

Montero-Hernandez, 2009).

Elements of Organizational Culture

Peer environment.

A critical element and influencer of organizational culture are the perceptions of

the organization's members (Berger & Milem, 2000). At community colleges this

includes the perceptions of the students: what they value and believe, what they

understand the faculty and staff to expect, and what they believe their peers value. The

peer environment conveys to students "what other students value and of what one's peers

expect behaviorally, whether in a student's social or academic world" (Terenzini and

Reason, 2005, p. 11). In organizations, the peer environment is distinct from the peer

group in that it represents the dominant beliefs, values, and behaviors of prevailing peers,

not necessary the values and beliefs of an individual's peer group. Thus, especially at a

college, faculty and administrators can influence and modify the peer environment by

supporting and encouraging groups that exemplify and strengthen the culture and mission

of the college. For community college administrators interested in improving student

success rates, this could mean examining the level of engagement in academic activities

found in the peer environment and examining students' perceptions of their relationships

with others within the peer environment.

Out-of-class experiences.

Boyer (1990) described the ideal campus climate as emphasizing learning in all

experiences and advocates for "a shared sense of intellectual excitement" (Boyer, 1997,

p. 14) in both in- and out-of class activities, especially activities that emphasize service and that connect students to new people and ideas. Terenzini and Reason (2005) identify the individual student classroom experiences, curricular, and out-of-class experiences as the most immediate set of influences in shaping student success. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) echo this theory when they conclude:

> What matters is the nature of the experiences students have after matriculation: the courses they take…the interactions they have with their peers and faculty members outside the classroom, the variety of people and ideas they encounter, and the extent of their active involvement in the academic and social systems of their institutions. (p. 642)

Noting that learning occurs both in and out of class and that students spend the majority of their time out of class, Kuh, Schuh, Whitt, and Associates (1991) emphasize the influence and value of out-of-class experiences. They advocate for institutional policies and practices that provide high quality out-of-class experiences that complement the institution's educational mission, promote engagement, provide a sense of community and address skills not taught in class (Kuh et al., 1991). The researchers studied the impact of out-of-class experiences at 14 "involving colleges" (p. 25), so named because they exhibited best practices in encouraging student involvement.   Involving colleges exhibited a culture of caring and recognized the value of the total student experience, making no distinctions between the value of in-class and out-of-class learning experiences. Such colleges envision "what the total student experience ought to be, and

resolve to use the institution's educational resources – curricular and non-curricular, formal and informal – to full advantage to enable that experience." (p. 347)

Kuh, et al. (1991) found that the policies and practices of involving colleges allow faculty, staff and administrators to work together to highlight and focus on the academic purpose of the institution. At these colleges, student learning is enhanced because faculty members engage students intellectually in out-of-class discussions and activities; "heroines and heroes" (p. 87) on campus are acknowledged to demonstrate that students matter; high expectations of academic and social behavior are set; achievements are acknowledged; and those contributing to a high-quality campus life are rewarded. Kuh, et al., conclude:

> When all members of a college or university community, including faculty, administrators, trustees, staff and students, believe that all aspects of the institution's environment contribute to student learning and personal development, the institution can take another step toward realizing its potential and fulfilling its obligation to be a community committed to learning in all forms and forums. (p. 374)

Student Organizations.

Boyer (1990) notes that student groups can contribute to the campus culture in a positive manner by providing opportunities for students to feel a part of the community and by generating out-of-class activities that bring energy to the campus. He suggests that student groups, lectures, debates, and all out-of-class activities, promote a

community of learning and honor students in ways that increase and emphasize the academic nature of the institution.

Through their active involvement in and support for student organizations, community college administrators can establish rich opportunities for students to move beyond the traditional classroom experience and interact with college officials and peers in ways that make them feel welcome, affirmed, and connected to the college. While student organizations can provide enriching opportunities that lead to higher levels of engagement for their members, they may also be a tool useful in raising the engagement levels of the entire student body. When community college faculty and staff reward, publically acknowledge, and support student organizations dedicated to the shared commitment of academic excellence these actions may provide ways to influence the peer environment and strengthen the campus climate.

Phi Theta Kappa

Phi Theta Kappa is found on nearly every community college in the United States. Local Phi Theta Kappa chapters recognize the academic achievements of the top scholars on campus and engage the student body in educationally purposeful activities that assist the campus administration and community with furthering the mission of the institution ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Programs", n.d.). According to Dr. Humphrey Lee, president of Northwest-Shoals Community College:

> If you have the Phi Theta Kappa structure in place on your campus, especially with the Honors in Action component, you have a student development program – you don't need to re-invent the wheel. (Phi Theta Kappa, 2010)

Phi Theta Kappa's mission is two-fold: As membership eligibility is determined by academic criteria, the society recognizes scholarship by validating its members as proven scholars committed to learning and to achieving their educational goals ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Constitution", n.d.). And, the society provides opportunities for sustained academic progress, leadership development, and service learning ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Constitution", n.d.).

For many community college students, their invitation to join an international academic honor society is a watermark in their higher education career. For many, it is their first validation as learners and scholars. This validation provides the encouragement that many need to set higher goals, and acknowledges and rewards their determination. Local chapters of Phi Theta Kappa, each led by a faculty member, provide opportunities for students to meet and to interact with an academically-focused, friendship group.

Student organizations such as Phi Theta Kappa afford community college administrators an opportunity to encourage student involvement in educationally purposeful activities. When these student organizations engage in campus-wide initiatives, the benefits may extend beyond the group membership and may raise the engagement level of all students. Measuring the impact of student organizations is especially significant within the current context of budget cuts. Some presidents may cut funding to student programs, when indeed these organizations may offer a low-cost alternative and a high-energy solution to building student engagement throughout the campus.

Phi Theta Kappa's programs bring members together to examine scholarly topics, cultivate leadership skills, and provide timely and beneficial services to campus and civic life ("Phi Theta Kappa Programs", n.d.). Members work with college administrators, community members, and fellow students to solve problems and to raise consciousness about critical issues such as college completion, high school drop-out rates, cyber bullying and social network concerns, protecting the environment, and raising funds for cancer research ("Phi Theta Kappa Society Entry Excerpts: Honors in Action", n.d.; "Phi Theta Kappa Society Entry Excerpts: College Projects", n.d.).

Chapters form intellectually vibrant communities that enliven the campus and form effective peer mentoring groups which contribute millions of leadership and volunteer hours to their colleges and communities ("Phi Theta Kappa Programs", n.d.). Phi Theta Kappa programs are designed to encourage the student body to commit to learn, develop critical thinking, sharpen their leadership skills, and learn through service. That is, Phi Theta Kappa programs are designed to engage the entire campus in activities that foster persistence toward educational goals ("Phi Theta Kappa Programs", n.d.).

In a partnership with the American Association of Community Colleges, the Association of Community College Trustees, the Center for Community College Student Engagement, the League for Innovation in the Community College, and the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development, Phi Theta Kappa chapters work with other campus groups to initiate "commit to complete" events and promote retention and completion (Community College Completion Corps, 2010). Chapters have developed mentoring programs, provided tutoring, and developed career counseling to offer a

network of support for at-risk students. Many chapters have funded academic and textbook scholarships on their campuses (Community College Completion Corps – PTK, 2010). Chapters have conducted research to determine leading causes of failure to complete on their campuses, shared results, and tailored resources based on their findings. Members have distributed information on campus services targeting retention, and tracked completion rates at their colleges (Community College Completion Corps – PTK, 2010). Many chapters work together to plan and promote statewide completion events, involving multiple colleges in a single initiative that raises public awareness of community colleges and commands the attention of legislators and policymakers (Community College Completion Corps – PTK, 2010).

Measuring Engagement

There are many instruments designed to measure student engagement, including the Community College Survey of Student Engagement [CSSE], which was designed specifically for community colleges. The CCSSE measures levels of campus-wide engagement and students' perceptions of their relationships with other members of the college community (CCSSE: "About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.).

The CCSSE is modeled from the National Survey of Student Engagement [NSSE], which measures student engagement at four-year institutions (Kuh, 2001). As a student survey, the NSSE "assesses the extent to which students at four-year colleges and universities are participating in educational practices that are strongly associated with high levels of learning and personal development" (Kuh, 2001, p. 12). While the NSSE does not assess student learning outcomes directly, it does measure levels of academic

challenge, time on task, and participation in other educationally purposeful activities, which directly influence the quality of students' learning and their overall educational experience. Additionally, by asking students to report how they spend their time, the quality of their experience, and how they use the resources for learning that their school provides, the NSSE questions focus not on the amount of resources a school has but rather on the level of student use of an institution's resources and the extent to which institutions use good educational practices (Kuh, 2001). The NSSE is administered to students at a representative cross-section of senior institutions each year in order to establish national benchmarks of good educational practices (Kuh, 2001).

The CCSSE was developed for community colleges by a team at the Center for Community College Student Engagement [CCCSE] at the University of Texas at Austin in 2001 (CCCSE, 2010a). The survey provides information on student engagement as a key indicator of learning and quality of community colleges (CCCSE, 2010a). As previously mentioned, the CCSSE is administered to community college students and asks questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention (CCCSE, 2010a). The CCSSE survey attempts to discover how often students engage in rigorous academic activities that promote student success and how they take advantage of learning opportunities. It is administered annually and sets national benchmarks for the use of active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. To assess the level of active and collaborative learning taking place, it asks students about their class participation, the frequency with which they work with

or tutor other students, and their participation in community-based projects as part of their courses. Student effort is assessed by asking students about the amount of time they spend preparing for class, working on class assignments, and reading books for enjoyment and enrichment (CCCSE, 2010b). To gauge academic challenge, the CCSSE asks students about the quality and quantity of reading, synthesizing, organizing, and writing they have been assigned during the current year and students are asked to rate their examinations according to difficulty (CCCSE, 2010b). Responses to questions related to the frequency of students' use of academic and student support services, their degree of satisfaction with such services, and the quality of support provided by their friends and family are used to judge support for learners (CCCSE, 2010b). The level of student-faculty interaction is derived from questions related to the frequency with which faculty and students communicate, discuss career plans, and work together on activities other than coursework (CCCSE, 2010b).

Porter (2011) has questioned the validity and usefulness of all college student surveys and specifically the NSSE and CCSSE. He writes, "[the surveys] assume the college students can easily report information about their behaviors and attitudes, when the standard model of human cognition and survey response clearly suggests they cannot" (p. 45).

To illustrate that college students and other survey takers cannot easily and consistently describe their actions and feelings, Porter (2011) points out that even simple questions containing terms such as "your" and "income" can be interpreted in a variety of ways, making the validity of the responses suspect. The survey results are made even less

reliable because the NSSE uses "vague" response options such as "occasionally",
"often", and "very often", and research clearly indicates that different students assign
different values to these non-numeric, non-specific response options (Porter, 2011). In a
final argument regarding students' ability to report their behaviors accurately in surveys,
Porter points out that recent research on memory retrieval shows that students cannot
quickly and accurate recall and report the frequency of their activities, especially when
asked to recall mundane behaviors such as the number of books they read or how often
they asked questions in class. As a result, students may use different estimating
techniques to determine their final answers and may also be influenced by social bias in
determining their final answers (Porter, 2011).

Questioning the usefulness of student surveys, Porter (2011) argues that the NSSE
has an overly broad domain definition and lacks an underlying theory specifying why
certain items should be included in the instrument, making it of little practical value. He
states that the domain is so widely defined that almost any student survey question could
be included under the areas of "engagement," "student outcomes," and "institutional
quality." As an example of the lack of research and theory tying the inclusion of specific
questions to student engagement, he questions how the frequency item: "Used email to
communication with an instructor" can be a judge of student outcomes as there is no
theory or research indicating that more or less use of email is tied to increases or
decreases in student engagement (Porter, 2011). According to Porter, the all-
encompassing area of content that the NSSE attempts to cover, along with the lack of
justification for the questions asked, calls into question the validity of the instrument.

McCormick and McClenney, directors of the NSSE and CCSSE programs, respectively, argue that the usefulness of the surveys is undeniable. The first-hand information on students' campus experiences, activities, and behaviors furnished by the surveys bridges the gap between higher education research and practice and provides administrators and faculty members with tools to measure educational practices on their campuses and among different student populations (McCormick & McClenney, 2012).

According to McCormick and McClenney (2012), the surveys are useful because they also add dimension to the national conversation on college quality: "the national understanding of college quality is dominated by beauty contests that privilege reputation and resources over teaching and learning" (McCormick & McClenney, 2012, p. 308). The directors point out that the NSSE and CCSSE results add valuable data to this conversation, moving the focus from resources and reputation to successful learning and teaching behavior and methods.

Regarding the validity of the surveys, McCormick and McClenney (2012) argue that measures of validity are tied to the interpretations and uses of the data. To that end, while Porter is concerned with the exact numeric matching of responses to reality, the NSSE and CSSE are designed to provide administrators and faculty with relative comparisons between groups of students. That is, the survey does not measure exactly how many papers students at each college wrote, but rather whether certain groups of students wrote more than others. In this way the survey is useful and the information provided is valid for practitioners to examine differences between groups of students, relative to other groups of students or peer institutions (McCormick & McClenney,

2012). For example, the surveys are useful in determining if first-generation students report less student-faculty interaction relative to other groups of students.

McCormick and McClenney agree with Porter that "vague" response options have limitations and that individual students do apply different values to the scales. However, citing evidence from the Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement, they argue that the discrepancies in how individuals and groups interpret and use these scales "do not meaningfully limit how the data are typically used" (McCormick & McClenney, 2012, p. 315).

Summary

Community colleges have been instrumental in increasing access to higher education over the past 50 years, especially for first-generation, nontraditional, and low-income students. The open-access policy of these institutions does not guarantee success. An unacceptable gap exists between the percentage of students who are interested in completing a credential and those who are fortunate enough to succeed at that goal. Research indicates that community colleges that engender student engagement produce more successful students. Additionally, colleges that support out-of-class experiences that promote academically purposeful activities report higher than expected student engagement scores and graduation rates.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

This study compares the 2011 Community College Survey of Student Engagement [CCSSE] responses of students attending community colleges that host highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters to those of students attending community colleges with moderately-involved chapters and responses of students at colleges that do not host Phi Theta Kappa chapters or do not have Phi Theta Kappa chapters that are involved with programming. The relationship between the presence of highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters and the overall level of student engagement, as measured by the five CCSSE benchmarks, as well as students' views of their relationships with staff, faculty, and other students in their college communities, are examined.

This study explores the following questions: (a) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus and (b) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students' views of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel? This chapter presents the research design, conceptual framework, sampling procedures, measures, and analysis.

Research design

This study uses responses from the 2011 CCSSE to examine the level of academic engagement demonstrated by community college students and their perceptions of their relationships to fellow students, faculty, and administrators. In order to examine relationships between Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level and students' responses

on the CCSSE, only responses from students attending colleges that administered the

survey on a campus-level basis were used. Students' enrollment status, age, gender, first-

generation status, and race are also examined in relation to engagement levels and their

perceptions of their relationships with others on campus. An examination of possible

relationships among college size, Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level, and student

engagement levels and perceptions was also conducted.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 diagrams the relationships explored in this

study.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Independent Variable   **Dependent Variables**

Level of involvement of Phi
Theta Kappa Chapter

    .

National benchmarks of effective
educational practices:

    Active and Collaborative
    Learning
    Student Effort
    Academic Challenge
    Student-Faculty Interaction
    Support for Learners

Students' relationships with other
students, faculty, and
administrators

Student characteristics:

    Enrollment status
    Age
    Gender
    First-generation student status
    Race

College Size

Students' levels of engagement in effective educational practices and their perceptions of their relationships with others on campus constitute the dependent variables to be examined. Students' levels of engagement are measured in five CCSSE-designated benchmark areas: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction and support for learners. The benchmark areas are reflective of best teaching practices identified by Chickering and Gamson (1987) as leading to increased student learning and engagement.

As research indicates a relationship between students' characteristics and their self-reported levels of engagement in academic endeavors (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), those relationships are examined in this study.

Of particular interest to this study is the extent to which engagement levels and students' relationships with fellow students, faculty, and administrators are related to (a) the existence and measure of involvement in programming of the Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus, (b) students' characteristics, and (c) the size of the college.

The existence of a Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus and the level at which a chapter participates in Phi Theta Kappa programming are of interest because a chapter may influence the engagement levels of all students on campus. Phi Theta Kappa programming is designed to create campus-wide opportunities for collaborative, out-of-classroom academic experiences involving all students and faculty. Activities such as those suggested by Phi Theta Kappa programming are known to promote the academic nature of institutions (Boyer, 1990). Thus, chapters that engage their communities in programs suggested by Phi Theta Kappa may assist their administrations in increasing

student and faculty engagement in the best practices in education as outlined by
Chickering and Gamson (1987).

While it is true that the ratio of Phi Theta Kappa chapter members to non-Phi
Theta Kappa members on any campus is small, a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa
chapter has influence beyond the number of its chapter members. A small but vocal and
involved group of Phi Theta Kappa members who create and implement programming
that involves large numbers of their fellow students in academically purposeful activies
may have the potential to significantly affect the levels of engagement on campus, much
more so than a large group of uninvoved Phi Theta Kappa members who are not involved
on campus. The effect of an engaged chapter will not be measured in terms of involved
members, but in their ability to raise the level of involvement on the entire campus.

Finally, connections between college size and students' levels of engagement and
perceptions of campus relationships are investigated. Research shows that smaller
colleges are more likely and more able to increase engagement and foster positive
relationships between students and faculty and administrators. (Astin, 1993; Chickering
& Gamson, 1987). College size takes on significant importance in this study because
researchers have determined that among colleges participating in the CCSSE survey "the
highest-performing small colleges on each benchmark significantly outperform the
highest-performing large colleges" ("Institutional Location and Size", n.d.).

Methods

The purpose of this study is to examine students' level of engagement and their
perceptions of their relationships with other students, faculty, and administrators at

community colleges, with attention paid to the role of Phi Theta Kappa chapters in

influencing these aspects of the student experience on campus. College size and student

characteristics known to affect students' engagement in academic endeavors are included

to provide an in-depth analysis of factors influencing engagement levels.

The independent variable is the degree to which a college's Phi Theta Kappa chapter

is involved in programming designed by the organization. Highly-involved chapters are

defined as those that in 2011 conducted exemplary, extensive, campus-wide projects

based on Phi Theta Kappa international programming, resulting in the chapters winning

Hallmark Awards, being named to the Top 100 Chapters, or achieving the Five Star level

of the organization's Five Star Chapter Development Plan. Chapters participating in the

Five Star Chapter Development Plan and either setting a goal or reaching a One, Two,

Three, or Four Star level are identified in this study as moderately involved in Phi Theta

Kappa programming. Chapters that did not set a goal or reach any level of the Five Star

Plan in 2011 are identified as uninvolved in Phi Theta Kappa international programming.

As these chapters do not offer activities for members or others on campus, these chapters

are grouped with colleges that do not host Phi Theta Kappa chapters.

Phi Theta Kappa Five Star Chapter Development Plan

The Five Star Chapter Development Plan provides a roadmap for chapters to progress

from a One Star level to a Five Star level as they increase involvement in Phi Theta

Kappa programming ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Five Star Chapter Development",

n.d.). Chapters reach Five Star level only by becoming highly-involved in Honors in

Action and College Project activities, the cornerstones of Phi Theta Kappa programming

("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Five Star Chapter Development, n.d."), and by

submitting entries in the organization's annual Hallmark Awards competition ("Phi Theta

Kappa Honor Society Five Star Chapter Development Requirements, n.d.").

Phi Theta Kappa Hallmark Awards

Phi Theta Kappa Hallmark Awards are given annually to members, faculty advisors,

college administrators, chapters, and regions ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Hallmark

Awards", n.d.). The Honors in Action and College Project award categories specifically

reward the work of the chapter in educationally purposeful activities ("Phi Theta Kappa

Honor Society Hallmark Award Categories", n.d.). Award-winning projects in these

categories involved extensive long-term planning, programming, and multiple events

occurring between January 2011 and December 2011 ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Hallmark Awards", n.d.).

Phi Theta Kappa Honors in Action Awards

Honors in Action Awards recognize outstanding chapter projects related to the Phi

Theta Kappa Honors Study Topic ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Hallmark Award

Categories", n.d.). The Honors Study Topic is a biennial, interdisciplinary, contemporary

topic of interest related to global challenges and the human experience (Phi Theta Kappa,

2010a). The Topic is designed to foster "a stimulating environment for intellectual

growth and challenge" (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012a, p. 2) on campuses hosting Phi Theta

Kappa chapters. For the calendar year of 2010 and 2011, the Honors Study Topic was

"The Democratization of Information" (Phi Theta Kappa, 2010a). This Topic was

subdivided into 10 areas of interest or issues to allow chapters to investigate the Topic

within a specific field of study (Phi Theta Kappa, 2010a). Chapters eligible for Honors in

Action and Honors in Action – Issue Awards research an area of the Honors Study Topic

and use their findings and their leadership skills to develop an in-depth, action-oriented

project related to their research that benefits the college or community (Phi Theta Kappa,

2010a). Examples of 2011 Honors in Action projects include:

- hosting a campus forum, surveying students and organizing a Town Hall Meeting

  on the democratization of information and the Civil Rights Movement;

- hosting lectures at six community colleges on the importance of selecting a major,

  filling out a degree plan and choosing a career;

- distributing non-partisan voter information, holding voter registration drives, and

  hosting guest speakers to address the issue of voter apathy;

- conducting a public campus debate on whether the benefits of online screening for

  employers outweighed the risks of privacy invasion for potential job candidates

  on social media sites (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012b).

These very different endeavors and their shared origin illustrate the commonality of

all Honors in Action projects. The efforts of award-winning chapters are highly visible

on campus, and non-members, faculty and administrators participate by contributing to

research, by volunteering for service initiatives and by playing key roles in the activities.

A new Honors Study Topic is introduced every two years. "The Democratization of

Information" topic was introduced in January of 2010 and so many chapters continued

their 2010 research, involvement, and Honors in Action projects into 2011. Other

chapters continued with their investigation of the Topic, but shifted their area of focus to a new issue within the Topic.

Phi Theta Kappa College Project Awards

College Project Awards recognize outstanding partnerships between a Phi Theta Kappa chapter and the college ("Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society College Project Ideas", n.d.). Successful College Projects include collaboration between chapter leaders and college administrators to determine how chapter members can meet a specific and usually urgent campus need. College Projects have included:

- determining a cost-effective solution to the need for a student communications portal;

- determining the needs of, and the college's responsibility to, military veterans who are now enrolled in college;

- determining reasons particular to the local college that cause students to drop out, and effecting solutions to encourage retention;

- creating and stocking a food pantry for students in an area of economic decline (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012b).

Phi Theta Kappa Awards Process

Award entries are scored by Phi Theta Kappa staff members through a rubric-based judging process. Honors in Action, Honors in Action – Issue, and College Project awards are presented to chapters with the highest score in each category. Additionally, the Top 100 Chapters are identified by the highest combined scores from Honors in Action and College Project entries ("Phi Theta Kappa Society 2011 Top 100 Chapters", n.d.). It is

possible for a chapter to receive Hallmark Awards in multiple categories, and it is

possible for a chapter to be a multi-year winner. It is possible to be a Top 100 Chapter

and not win either an Honors in Action or College Project award.

Highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa Chapters

At the Phi Theta Kappa 2012 Annual Convention, 25 chapters were recognized with

College Project Awards for work completed during the 2011 calendar year (Phi Theta

Kappa, 2012). Honors in Action Awards were presented to 50 chapters for their

exceptional 2011 Honors in Action projects (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012). Honors in

Action – Issue Awards were presented to 30 chapters that demonstrated outstanding

Honors in Action projects related to a specific issue within the Honors Study Topic (Phi

Theta Kappa, 2012). The 103 chapters in this study designated as highly-involved Phi

Theta Kappa chapters were among those recognized with Honors in Action Awards,

College Project Awards, or named as a Top 100 Chapter for their work during the 2011

calendar year (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012). Almost 70 percent of these chapters earned a

Hallmark Award or were named to the Top 100 Chapters in either 2009, 2010, or both,

indicating a strong, multi-year presence on campus (Phi Theta Kappa, 2012d).

Moderately Involved Chapters

Chapters were categorized as moderately involved if they participated in the Five

Star Chapter Development Plan and achieved a Level 1-4 status. In 2011, a chapter

achieving Level 1 completed basic activities related to recognizing academic excellence

by inviting students to membership and completing a Chapter Annual Report. At Level 2,

a chapter would have begun exploration of Phi Theta Kappa program offerings, elected

local student officers, and met with the college administration to discuss campus needs in

order to conceptualize a College Project. Chapters participating in the Plan in 2011 began

their Honors in Actions research and implemented College Projects at Level 3. To

achieve a Level 3 status, chapters would have planned an Honors in Action project that

included leadership and service components and involved working with another campus

group or community organization to implement the project. Chapters that fulfilled all the

requirements of Levels 1-3 and participated in regional Phi Theta Kappa activities by

running for a regional student leadership position, hosting a regional meeting,

participating in a Regional Honors in Action Project, or entering regional awards

programs, were designated as Level 4 chapters. There are 126 chapters designated as

moderately involved in this study.

No Chapters or Not Involved Chapters

This study identified 132 CCSSE colleges that did not have Phi Theta Kappa chapters

or had chapters that were not involved in Phi Theta Kappa programming, as evidenced by

their lack of progress in the Five Star Chapter Development Plan.

Data Collection

Community colleges in this study are defined as higher education institutions that

provide curricula that can lead to an associate's degree. Technical colleges are defined as

community colleges.

The study uses data from the spring 2011 administration of the CCSSE survey.

Administered by the Center for Community College Engagement, the CCSSE survey

asks questions related to students' educational practices, with an emphasis on educational

practices known to enhance involvement ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.).

Based on their answers to survey questions, each student is assigned a score for each of

five areas of activities: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic

challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners. The scores of all students

are examined to create national benchmark measurements for each area of activity. The

CCSSE survey also asks students about their relationships with other students, faculty

and administrators, and these answers are examined in this study.

The CCSSE survey was adapted from the National Survey of Student

Engagement (NSSE) instrument (Center for Community College Student Engagement,

2008) and originated as project of the Community College Leadership Program at the

University of Texas at Austin ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.). The CCSSE

is administered in a classroom setting to students in randomly selected credit-bearing

classes at CCSSE member colleges ("CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey", n.d.).

Of the 435 community colleges that participated in the 2011 CCSSE survey, 361 were

surveyed at the campus level and are included in this study. Colleges that administered

and identified survey responses on a multi-campus or district level were excluded from

the study because Phi Theta Kappa chapters operate at the campus level.

The colleges in this study include 132 colleges that either had an uninvolved Phi

Theta Kappa chapter or no chapter; 126 colleges with chapters that were moderately

involved in Phi Theta Kappa programming, as measured by their achievement of a Star

Level of 1-4 in the Five Star Plan; and 103 highly-involved chapters that reached a Five

Star level or were named a Top 100 Chapter, or won a Hallmark Award.

The data for this study were provided by Phi Theta Kappa and the Center for Community College Engagement. The Phi Theta Kappa data were used to determine the involvement level demonstrated by each college's chapter. The CCSSE dataset includes responses from the 175,627 students who participated in the survey at the 361 colleges included in this study. The Center for Community College Engagement excludes respondents for the following reasons:

- the enrollment status of the student, whether full- or part-time, cannot be determined;

- the student does not answer, or answers "very often" or "never" to all 21 sub-questions of question 4;

- the respondent is under 18 years old;

- it is known that the respondent has already taken the survey or the respondent did not affirm in question 3 that he or she had not previously taken the survey ("Understanding Survey Results", 2012).

Measurements

A summary of the variables used in this study is presented in Table 1.

The dependent variables are the five CCSSE measures of student engagement: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners.

The active and collaborative learning benchmark is made up of responses to seven survey items aimed at measuring activities known to enhance learning such as collaboration, problem solving, and mastering academically challenging content

("CCSSE: Active and collaborative learning", n.d.). Students are asked how often they contribute in class; how often they work with other students in and out-of class; how often they discuss ideas and readings outside of class; and if they participate in community-based projects as part of regular class assignments.

Eight items on the CCSSE make up the student effort benchmark. The survey questions related to this benchmark ask about the time and effort students put into their academic work. Students are asked such questions as: how many drafts of papers they prepare; how often they come to class unprepared; and the number of hours per week they spend preparing for class.

Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories

Variable	Description	Response Category
Active and Collaborative Learning Benchmark	Survey Questions:	
	4a Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	1=Never 2=Sometimes 3=Often 4=Very Often
	4b Made a class presentation	
	4f Worked with other students on projects during class	
	4g Worked with other classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	
	4h Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	
	4i Participated in a community-based project as part of a regular course	
	4r Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	
Student Effort Benchmark	Survey Questions:	
	4c Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	1=Never 2=Sometimes 3=Often 4=Very Often
	4d Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	
	4e Came to class without completing readings or assignments	
	6b Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	1=None 2= 1 to 4 3= 5 to 10 4= 11 to 20 5=More than 20

Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories *(continued)*

Variable	Description	Response Category
Student Effort Benchmark *(continued)*	Survey Questions:	
	10a Hours spent per week: Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)	0=None 1= 1-5 hours 2=6-10 hours 3=11-20 hours 4=21-30 hours 5=More than 30 hours
	13d1 Frequency of use: Peer or other tutoring	
	13e1 Frequency of use: Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	
	13h1 Frequency of use: Computer lab	0=Don't Know/N.A. 1=Rarely/never 2=Sometimes 3=Often
Academic Challenge Benchmark	Survey Questions:	
	4p Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	1=Never 2=Sometimes 3=Often 4=Very Often
	5b Amount of emphasis in coursework: Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	1=Very little 2=Some 3=Quite a bit 4=Very much
	5c Amount of emphasis in coursework: Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	
	5d Amount of emphasis in coursework: Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods	

Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories *(continued)*

Variable	Description		Response Category
Academic Challenge Benchmark *(continued)*	5e	Amount of emphasis in coursework: Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	1=Very little 2=Some 3=Quite a bit 4=Very much
	5f	Amount of emphasis in coursework: Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill	
	6a	Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings	1=None; 2= 1 to 4 3= 5 to 10 4= 11 to 20 5=More than 20
	6c	Number of written papers or reports of any length	
	7	Rate the extent to which your examinations have challenged you to do your best work	
	9a	Amount of emphasis by college: Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying	1=Very little 2=Some 3=Quite a bit 4=Very much
Student-Faculty Interaction Benchmark	Survey Questions:		
	4k	Used email to communicate with an instructor	1=Never 2=Sometimes 3=Often 4=Very Often
	4l	Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	
	4m	Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor	
	4n	Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class	
	4o	Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance	
	4q	Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	

Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories *(continued)*

Variable	Description	Response Category
Support for Learners Benchmark	Survey Questions: How much does this college emphasize:	
	9b Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college	1=Very little 2=Some 3=Quite a bit
	9c Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	4=Very much
	9d Helping you cope with your nonacademic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	
	9e Providing the support you need to thrive socially	
	9f Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	
	13a1 How often did you use academic advising/planning services	0=Don't Know/N.A. 1=Rarely/never 2=Sometimes
	13b1 How often did you use career counseling services	3=Often
Quality of relationship with other students	11 Mark the number that best represents the quality of your relationships with people at this college. Your relationship with: a. Other Students	Scaled from: 1=Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation to: 7=Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging
Quality of relationship with instructors	b. Instructors	Scaled from: 1=Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic to: 7=Available, helpful, sympathetic

Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories *(continued)*

Variable	Description	Response Category
Quality of relationship with administrative personnel and offices	c. Administrative Personnel & Offices	Scaled from: 1=Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid to: 7=Helpful, considerate, flexible
Level of involvement of Phi Theta Kappa Chapter	Extent of involvement of the local Phi Theta Kappa chapter in activities known to encourage student engagement of student body	No Chapter/No involvement = 0; Moderate involvement = 1; Highly-involved = 2
College Size	CCSSE classification of college size. Small is less than 4,499 students; medium colleges are those with 4,500 – 7,999 students; large colleges are those with between 8,000 and 14,999 students. Extra-large colleges are greater than or equal to 15,000 students.	1 Small 2 Medium 3 Large 4 Extra-Large
Student Characteristics	2 Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment at this college?	1 Less than full-time 2 Full-time
	29 Mark your age group	Under 18 18-19 20-21 22-24 25-29 30-39 40-49 50-64 65+
	30 Your sex:	Male Female

Variable		Description	Response Category
Table 1: Variables, Descriptions, and Response Categories *(continued)*			
Student Characteristics *(continued)*	34	What is your racial identification?	American Indian Asian Native Hawaiian Black White Hispanic Other
	36	What is the highest level of education obtained by your father/mother: *(Question allows student to specify highest education level obtained by father and mother)*	Not high school graduate; High school; Some college; Associate; Bachelor; Masters; Unknown

Note. The questions and response categories for benchmark variables, quality of relationship variables, and student characteristics and are reproduced with permission from the Center for Community College Student Engagement, Community College Survey of Student Engagement 2012. The University of Texas at Austin.

Ten survey items address the academic challenge benchmark. The survey asks students to rate the complexity of the cognitive tasks that they are asked to perform.

Students are asked how much their coursework emphasizes applying theories to practical problems; how often they are required to analyze, synthesize, and organize new ideas in order to perform new skills; and how many textbooks and papers they are assigned.

The student-faculty interaction benchmark comprises six questions from the survey. Questions relate to the frequency with which students discuss grades, career, and ideas with faculty outside of class. Students are also asked how often they work with faculty on non-coursework activities.

The fifth CCSSE benchmark, support for learners, is made up of seven survey items and asks students how satisfied they are with their college's commitment to their success and college's support services.

Three scaled dependent variables measuring students' perceptions of their relationship with other students, faculty, and administrators are examined. Each of these variables is given a value based on students' responses to a question regarding the quality of their relationships with other students, faculty, and administrators.

The independent variable is the degree of involvement in programming exhibited by the Phi Theta Kappa chapter. A chapter is defined as highly-involved if it conducted exemplary, extensive, campus-wide projects based on Phi Theta Kappa programming in 2011, resulting in the chapter achieving Five Star level, winning a Phi Theta Kappa Hallmark Award or being named a Top 100 Chapter. Chapters defined as moderately

involved in programming achieved a level from 1-4 in the Five Star Chapter

Development Plan. Chapters not participating in the Five Star Chapter Development Plan

are defined as not involved in programming.

College size was also considered. The college size variable is based on the

Carnegie classifications of community colleges and indicates the size of the student body

of the college. Small colleges are those with fewer than 4,499 students; medium colleges

are those with 4,500 – 7,999 students; and large colleges are those with between 8,000

and 14,999 students. Extra-large colleges have 15,000 or more students.

Student characteristics thought to impact student engagement levels were also

included in this study. They are: enrollment status, first-generation student status, gender,

age, and self-disclosed racial identity.

The enrollment variable is based on students' responses to a question as to

whether they were enrolled full-time or less than full-time during the spring semester of

2011. Students indicating that they were enrolled less than full-time are flagged as part-

time in this study. Prior to analysis, weights, as assigned by CCSSE, were applied to each

student response to correct for known oversampling of full-time students in the survey

administration. As the CCSSE is administered by class, full-time students who by

definition are enrolled in more classes than part-time students are more likely to be

sampled. To adjust for this bias, CCSSE calculates a weight for each institution based on

the most recent publicly available Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

[IPEDS] enrollment figures ("Understanding Survey Results", 2012.).

Students who indicated that neither their mother nor father had not progressed past high school were given the classification of first-generation. Students who indicated that they are at least 25 years old are described as nontraditional-aged in this study. Students can identify their race as American Indian, Asian, Native Hawaiian, Black, White, Hispanic, or Other. In this analysis, students not indicating Black, Hispanic, or White are grouped with Other. The first three categories were combined with Other because of the relatively small number of respondents within each of these categories.

Analysis

A descriptive analysis was conducted on the categorical variables that describe the characteristics of the colleges and students involved in this study.

Next, the mean student response was computed per college for (a) each of the five CCSSE benchmarks: active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners, (b) survey questions related to relationships on with other students, administrators, and faculty on campus, and, (c) responses to individual survey items related to each of the benchmarks.

"Chapter-involvement-level" groups were then established based on the presence and involvement level of Phi Theta Kappa chapters. Colleges without chapters or with a chapter that did not participate in Phi Theta Kappa programming were placed into the "No Chapter/Not Involved" group. Colleges with chapters exhibiting a moderate level of involvement in Phi Theta Kappa programming, as indicated by their achievement of a Level 1-4 in the organization's Five Star Chapter Development Program were labeled "Moderately Involved". The third group was comprised of colleges with "Highly-

Involved" chapters, as demonstrated by their achievement of a Five Star level, Top 100

Chapter distinction, or Hallmark Award. Analysis of variance tests were used to compare

the student engagement levels and perceptions of campus reported by students across the

three chapter-involvement-level groups.

Correlations were calculated to determine if statistically significant relationships

exist between student engagement levels and their perceptions of relationships with

others on campus.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed to determine a model for

explaining the values of the CCSSE benchmarks and students' perceptions of their

relationships with fellow students, faculty, and administrators. Students' enrollment

status, age, gender, first-generation status, and race were entered into the regression,

followed by the Phi Theta Kappa chapter-involvement-level ranking. A final series of

regression analyses examined the impact of college size on student engagement levels

and perceptions of their relationships with others on campus.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

The purpose of this study is to examine students' level of engagement and their

relationships with fellow students, faculty, and administrators at community colleges,

with attention paid to the role of Phi Theta Kappa chapters in influencing these aspects of

the student experience on campus. The research questions addressed are: (a) Does having

a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of

all students on campus and (b) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter

on campus influence students' views of their relationships with fellow students, faculty

and administrative personnel?

To answer these questions, this chapter presents an analysis of Community

College Survey of Student Engagement [CCSSE] data from 2011, examining the

influence of Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement and student and college characteristics

on the engagement levels of students and their perceptions of their relationships with

others on campus.

Profile of Respondents

This study used 175,627 student responses to the 2011 CCSSE survey from the

361 colleges selected for this study. Table 2 describes the level of chapter involvement

and size of the colleges in this study's sample.

There are 132 colleges without Phi Theta Kappa chapters, or with chapters that do

not participate in Phi Theta Kappa programming. These colleges comprise 37 percent of

the study's sample. Colleges hosting Phi Theta Kappa chapters that are moderately

involved in programming total 126, or 35 percent of the sample. Highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters are found at 103, or 29 percent, of the colleges in this study.

Small colleges, having fewer than 4,500 students, comprise 48 percent of the colleges in this study. Schools with 4,500 – 7,999 students, defined as medium-sized colleges, make up 27 percent of the colleges. Large schools, those with between 8,000 and 14,999 students, comprise 17 percent of the colleges included in the study, and extra-large colleges, those having 15,000 or more students, make up 8 percent of study's colleges.

Table 2: College Characteristics   (N=361)

Characteristic	Number	Percentage
Phi Theta Kappa Involvement Level		
No Chapter/No Involvement	132	36.57%
Moderate Involvement	126	34.90
High Involvement	103	28.53
Size		
Small (fewer than 4,500 students)	172	47.65
Medium (between 4,500 – 7,999 students)	97	26.87
Large (between 8,000 – 14,999 students)	63	17.45
Extra-large (15,000 or more students)	29	8.03

Table 3: Student Characteristics (N=175,627)

Characteristic	Percentage
Student enrollment status(n=175,627)	
Part-time	58.1%
Full-time	41.9
Age (n=171,122)	
18-19	21.6
20-21	20.5
22-24	14.7
25-29	14.6
30-39	14.9
40-49	8.6
50-64	4.5
65+	0.5
Gender (n=171,918)	
Male	41.0
Female	59.0
First-generation (n=175,627)	
No	71.7
Yes	28.3
Race (n = 168,959)	
American Indian	2.1
Asian	4.2
Hawaiian	0.2
Black	11.4
White	63.3
Hispanic	14.8
Other	4.1

As seen in Table 3, the majority of students in this study, 58 percent, characterized themselves as enrolled part-time in the spring of 2011, and 42 percent reported they were enrolled full-time. Traditional-aged students, those under 25 years of age, comprise 57 percent of the study's sample, and 43 percent are nontraditional aged students. The gender composition of the study's sample is 59 percent female and 41 percent male. The majority of the students in the sample, 72 percent are not first-generation students; 28 percent of the students are first-generation students. The racial identification of 63 percent of the sample's students is White, 15 percent of students identified themselves as Hispanic, and 11 percent as Black. Additional racial identifications include American Indian, 2 percent; Asian, 4 percent; Hawaiian, .2 percent; and Other, 4 percent. In the inferential statistics presented in this study, students identifying their race as American Indian, Asian, Hawaiian, or Other are categorized as Other.

Results of Analysis of Variance of Scales

One-way analysis of variance tests were conducted to examine associations between the level of involvement of a Phi Theta Kappa chapter and (a) mean scores on the five CCSSE benchmarks, and (b) responses to questions regarding students' perceptions of their relationships with others on campus. CCSSE computes benchmark scores by: (a) reverse coding survey items, where necessary, so that a high score represents a desirable academic practice or behavior, (b) converting all survey items to a common scale with a range of 0-1, and (c) computing the average score of the items that

compose the benchmark. The analysis of variance technique allowed for comparisons of mean scores in these areas across the three chapter-involvement-level groups.

Table 4 shows the results of an analysis of variance test of mean scores on the CCSSE benchmarks and the quality of relationship variables by level of chapter involvement. There were statistically significant differences between the chapter-involvement-level groups on two of the five CCSSE benchmarks: student-faculty interaction levels and support for learners.

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of Engagement Benchmarks and Quality of Relationships Measures by Chapter Involvement Level (N=361)

Benchmark/Quality of Relationships Measures	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	F
Active and Collaborative Learning	0.37	0.03	0.37	0.03	0.36	0.02	0.36	0.03	2.39
Student Effort	0.47	0.02	0.47	0.03	0.46	0.02	0.46	0.03	0.96
Academic Challenge	0.57	0.03	0.57	0.03	0.57	0.03	0.57	0.02	0.93
Student-Faculty Interaction	0.41	0.03	0.41	0.03	0.40	0.03	0.40	0.28	5.45**
Support for Learners	0.44	0.04	0.44	0.04	0.43	0.03	0.43	0.03	4.09*
Relations with Other Students	5.53	0.19	5.58	0.20	5.52	0.19	5.48	0.16	8.87***
Relations with Instructors	5.69	0.19	5.73	0.23	5.68	0.17	5.65	0.14	4.70*
Relations with Administration	5.03	0.31	5.11	0.34	5.02	0.30	4.94	0.25	8.41***

Significance: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$
Range = 0 to 1

Statistically significant differences among the chapter-involvement-level groups were found in the perceptions of students regarding their relationships with other students, with faculty, and with administrators.

Results of Analysis of Variance of Individual Survey Items

To examine more closely the differences in CCSSE benchmark scores between chapter-involvement-level groups, analysis of variance tests were performed on the 38 individual survey questions that make up the benchmarks. As each survey question is designed to discover one aspect of students' specific educational practices, these tests pinpoint the variability in students' answers to specific survey questions across the chapter-involvement-level groups. Responses to each survey item are coded so that a high score on the item represents a desirable academic practice or behavior: the survey question regarding coming to class unprepared was reverse-coded. The results are reported in Tables 5 – 9.

Table 5: Means and Standard Deviations of Active and Collaborative Learning Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level
(N=361)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	F
How often have you asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions? (1-4)	2.96	0.13	2.98	0.15	2.96	0.12	2.93	0.10	4.01*
How often have you made a class presentation? (1-4)	2.08	0.17	2.08	0.20	2.09	0.15	2.08	0.13	0.10
How often have you worked with other students on projects during class? (1-4)	2.52	0.15	2.54	0.18	2.51	0.13	2.50	0.14	2.28
How often have you worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments? (1-4)	1.91	0.17	1.93	0.18	1.89	0.17	1.91	0.15	1.98
How often have you tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)? (1-4)	1.38	0.11	1.40	0.09	1.36	0.09	1.39	0.13	4.56*
How often have you participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course? (1-4)	1.32	0.12	1.34	0.12	1.31	0.09	1.32	0.15	1.81
How often have you discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class? (1-4)	2.57	0.11	2.57	0.13	2.57	0.11	2.57	0.10	0.22

Significance: * p < .05   ** p < .01   *** p < .001

Table 6: Means and Standard Deviations of Student Effort Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level (N=361)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		F
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	
How often have you prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment? (1-4)	2.51	0.15	2.51	0.17	2.51	0.14	2.52	0.12	0.08
How often have you worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources? (1-4)	2.77	0.14	2.76	0.17	2.77	0.13	2.77	0.11	0.27
How often have you come to class without completing readings or assignments? (1-4)	3.20	0.10	3.21	0.11	3.20	0.09	3.18	0.11	2.23
Number of books read on own? (1-4)	2.08	0.11	2.07	0.13	2.08	0.10	2.09	0.09	0.38
About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week preparing for class? (1-5)	2.03	0.21	2.03	0.21	2.06	0.22	2.00	0.18	2.85
How often have you used peer or other tutoring? (1-5)	1.10	0.14	1.10	0.13	1.09	0.13	1.12	0.14	0.89
How often have you used skill labs? (1-5)	1.36	0.18	1.39	0.17	1.33	0.17	1.35	0.19	3.16*
How often have you used the computer lab? (0-3)	1.83	0.21	1.85	0.20	1.81	0.22	1.83	0.20	1.29

Significance: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations of Academic Challenge Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level (N=361)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		F
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	
How often have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet instructors' expectations? (1-4)	2.60	0.11	2.61	0.12	2.61	0.10	2.58	0.10	1.60
How much has your coursework emphasized analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory? (1-4)	2.89	0.11	2.88	0.12	2.89	0.11	2.90	0.09	0.74
How much has your coursework emphasized synthesizing and organizing ideas and information in new ways? (1-4)	2.76	0.11	2.76	0.12	2.77	0.11	2.76	0.09	0.21
How much has your coursework emphasized making judgments about the soundness of information, arguments, or methods? (1-4)	2.59	0.10	2.59	0.12	2.60	0.10	2.59	0.09	0.43
How much has your coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or new situations? (1-4)	2.70	0.11	2.70	0.12	2.70	0.11	2.69	0.09	0.17

Significance: * p < .05   ** p < .01   *** p < .001

Table 7: Means and Standard Deviations of Academic Challenge Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level (*continued*)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	F
How much has your coursework emphasized using information you have read/heard to perform a new skill? (1-4)	2.82	0.12	2.85	0.13	2.83	0.11	2.80	0.11	4.99**
Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings? (1-5)	2.92	0.16	2.95	0.19	2.92	0.13	2.89	0.13	4.03*
Number of written papers or reports of any length? (1-5)	2.89	0.22	2.91	0.25	2.87	0.20	2.88	0.19	1.47
Exams challenge you to do your best work? (1-4)	5.01	0.18	5.01	0.20	5.04	0.19	4.99	0.15	2.41
College encourages you to spend significant amounts of time studying? (1-4)	3.02	0.14	3.02	0.16	3.04	0.15	3.01	0.10	1.30

Significance: * p < .05   ** p < .01   *** p < .001

Table 8: Means and Standard Deviations of Student-Faculty Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level (N=361)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		F
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	
How often have you used email to communicate with an instructor? (1-4)	2.78	0.18	2.78	0.21	2.80	0.17	2.78	0.15	0.41
How often have you discussed grades or assignments with an instructor? (1-4)	2.59	0.11	2.61	0.13	2.59	0.09	2.57	0.09	3.92*
How often have you talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor? (1-4)	2.08	0.14	2.11	0.16	2.07	0.12	2.05	0.13	5.81**
How often have you discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class? (1-4)	1.77	0.12	1.80	0.13	1.76	0.10	1.75	0.12	6.28**
How often have you received prompt feedback from instructors on your performance? (1-4)	2.69	0.11	2.70	0.12	2.70	0.12	2.67	0.08	2.98
How often have you worked with instructors on activities other than coursework? (1-4)	1.43	0.12	1.46	0.12	1.41	0.09	1.41	0.13	8.69***

Significance: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Table 9: Means and Standard Deviations of Support for Learners Survey Items by Chapter Involvement Level (N=361)

Survey Question	All		No Chapter/Not Involved		Moderately Involved		Highly-Involved		
	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	Mean	s.d.	F
How much does college emphasize providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college? (1-4)	2.99	0.13	3.01	0.14	2.99	0.13	2.97	0.10	2.64
How much does college emphasize encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, racial or ethnic backgrounds? (1-4)	2.53	0.16	2.55	0.18	2.52	0.15	2.54	0.15	1.11
How much does college emphasize helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities? (1-4)	1.97	0.14	2.00	0.15	1.95	0.13	1.95	0.12	5.32**
How much does college emphasize providing the support you need to thrive socially? (1-4)	2.19	0.14	2.22	0.17	2.17	0.13	2.17	0.12	5.45**
How much does the college emphasize providing the financial support you need to afford your education? (1-4)	2.60	0.18	2.61	0.22	2.61	0.16	2.56	0.16	2.36
How often do you use academic advising/planning? (0-3)	1.64	0.14	1.65	0.15	1.64	0.13	1.62	0.15	1.66
How often do you use career counseling? 0-3)	1.13	0.13	1.14	0.13	1.12	0.13	1.13	0.13	1.33

Significance: * p < .05 ** p <. 01 *** p < .001

Table 5 shows that the chapter-involvement-level groups demonstrate statistically significant different behavior in two areas of the active and collaborative learning benchmark: (a) how often they ask questions or contribute to class discussions, and (b) in how often they tutor or teach other students. Students at colleges that do not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters were more likely to report that they asked questions in class. Students attending colleges with moderately involved chapters were less likely to report participating in tutoring activities.

As can be seen in Table 6, the frequency with which students use skills labs is the only behavior related to the student effort benchmark that is statistically significant across the chapter-involvement-level groups. Students at colleges that do not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters were more likely to report using skills labs. As the involvement level of the chapter increased, students were less likely to report using skills labs.

The results of an analysis of variance test on survey items related to academic challenge are shown in Table 7. There are statistically significant differences between the chapter-involvement-level groups' responses to two survey items within this benchmark: (a) the amount of coursework that emphasizes using information learned in class to perform a new skill, and (b) the amount of coursework reading assigned. Students at colleges that do not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters were more likely to report that their coursework emphasized using class information to perform a new skill. More coursework reading is assigned at colleges that do not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters.

Table 8 shows statistically significant differences across the Phi Theta Kappa chapter-involvement-level groups on four items within the student-faculty benchmark: (a) how often students work with instructors on activities other than coursework, (b) how often students speak with instructors or advisors about their career plans, (c) how often students discuss ideas from readings or classes with instructors outside of the classroom, (d) and how often students discuss grades or assignments with instructors.

Students at colleges that do not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters were more likely to report working with instructors on activities other than coursework, discussing career plans with instructors and advisors, discussing ideas from class readings with instructors outside of the classroom, and discussing their grades and assignments with instructors.

Two survey items related to the support for learners benchmark show statistically significant differences between the chapter-involvement-level groups: (a) how much the college emphasizes helping students cope with non-academic responsibilities, and (b) how much the college emphasizes providing support for students to thrive socially.

As indicated by the results displayed in Table 9, students at colleges with highly-involved chapters and moderately involved chapters are less likely to report college support for their non-academic responsibilities and for their social integration.

Results of Regression Analysis

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was performed to determine which student characteristics are most strongly related to engagement levels and students' perceptions of their relationships with others on campus and whether adding the

involvement level of the campus' Phi Theta Kappa chapter adds to the explanatory power of the model. It was determined that the student characteristics should be entered into the equation first because they are known to be associated with student engagement, while the exploratory value of chapter involvement level is unknown. Entering the variables in this order allows for an examination of how well the chapter involvement level measurement improves the explanatory power of the model.

As shown in Table 10, sixteen regression models were developed, two models for each of the five CCSSE benchmarks and the three relationship variables. Student enrollment status, age, gender, first-generation status, and race were entered in the first regression model. The level of involvement demonstrated by the Phi Theta Kappa chapter was then entered into the equation to develop the second regression model.

Chapter Involvement

All models are statistically significant as shown by significant R^2 values. The models using only student characteristics explain $15 - 30$ percent of the variability in engagement levels and $11 - 25$ percent of the variability in relationship measurements. Adding the chapter involvement level to the models explains an additional $1 - 3$ percent of variance in engagement levels and in students' perceptions of their relationships with others.

Active and collaborative learning benchmark scores can be explained by student variables ($R^2 = .20$, $p < .001$). The explanatory power of the model increases ($R^2 = .21$, $p < .001$) with the addition of the Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement variable with a change to R^2 of .01.

Results of the analysis indicate that student characteristics are most useful in explaining student effort levels (R^2 = .30, p < .001) and academic challenge (R^2 = .29, p < .001). Entering the Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level into these models did not increase the explanatory value of the models to a statistically significant degree. For student-effort levels, the change in R^2 is .002 and for the academic challenge benchmark the change in R^2 is .003.

Student-faculty interaction scores are associated with student variables (R^2 = .15, p < .001). Adding the chapter involvement level adds to the explanatory power of the model (R^2 = .17, p < .05) with a change in R^2 of .02, p < .05.

Student characteristics are statistically significant at explaining levels of support for learners (R^2 = .26, p < .001). Adding the level of involvement displayed by the Phi Theta Kappa chapter adds to the explanatory power of the model (R^2 = .28, p < .001) and yields a statistically significant change in R^2 of .015, p < .05.

Student characteristics explain 25 percent of the variance in students' perceptions of their relationship with other students in campus; 11 percent of the variance in their perceptions of their relationships with instructors; and 15 percent of the variance in their perceptions of their relationships with administrators. Adding chapter involvement levels increases the variance explained in students' relationships with other students, (R^2 = .28, p < .001), and increases the explanatory power of the model by 3 percent (ΔR^2 = .026, p < .01).

Table 10: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analyses for Variables Explaining Student Engagement and Relationships (N=361)

Measure	Active and Collaborative Learning		Student Effort		Academic Challenge		Student-Faculty Interaction	
	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added
	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
Chapter Involvement								
Moderate		-.092		-.044		-.002		-.100
High		-.101		-.026		-.056		-.157**
No chapter/No involvement (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Student Characteristics								
Enrolled								
Part-time	-.450***	-.444***	-.386***	-.383***	-.360***	-.361***	-.291***	-.285***
Full-time(ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Age								
Nontraditional	.272***	.275***	.256***	.258***	.275***	.272***	.062	.061
Traditional (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gender								
Female	.089	.086	.309***	.309***	.393***	.391***	.173**	.169**
Male (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
First-generation								
Yes	-.152**	-.164**	.054	.051	-.183**	-.188***	.037	.019
No (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Race								
Black	.069	.070	.182***	.181***	.141**	.144**	.102*	.105*
Hispanic	.258***	.262***	.205***	.206***	.220***	.225***	-.072	-.064
Other	.164**	.158**	.079	.077	.079	.078	.071	.064
White (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
R²	.197***	.207***	.298***	.299***	.288***	.291***	.147***	.167***
Δ R²		.010		.002		.003		.020*

Significance: * p < .05 **p <. 01 ***p < .001

Table 10: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analyses for Variables Explaining Student Engagement and Relationships (*continued*)

	Support for Learners		Relationship with students		Relationship with Instructors		Relationship with Administrators	
	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added
Measure	β	β	β	β	β	β	β	β
Chapter Involvement								
Moderate		-.088		-.145**		-.131*		-.140*
High		-.135*		-.167**		-.143*		-.193**
No chapter/No involvement (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Student Characteristics								
Enrolled								
Part-time	-.240***	-.235***	-.156**	-.147**	.072	.081	-.059	-.051
Full-time (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Age								
Nontraditional	-.012	-.012	.251***	.254***	.152*	.155*	-.034	-.033
Traditional(ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Gender								
Female	.204***	.200***	.157**	.154**	.092	.089	.161**	.156**
Male (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
First-generation								
Yes	.213***	.198***	.268***	.249***	.153*	.136*	.145*	.123*
No (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Race								
Black	.279***	.281***	-.122*	-.121*	-.081	-.080	-.291***	-.288***
Hispanic	.284***	.291***	-.035	-.028	.052	.059	-.149*	-.139*
Other	.134**	.128**	.007	-.003	.040	.031	-.038	-.047
White (ref grp)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
R²	.263***	.278***	.253***	.279***	.110***	.130***	.146***	.177***
Δ R²		.015*		.026**		.020*		.031**

Significance: * p < .05 ** p <. 01 *** p < .001

93

The model using student characteristics and Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level to explain students' relationships with instructors is statistically significant (R^2 = .13, p < .001) and has more explanatory power than the model with only student characteristics. Adding the level of involvement displayed by the Phi Theta Kappa chapter yields a statistically significant change in R^2 of .02, p < .05.

Additional variability in measurements of students' relationships with administrators is explained by adding chapter involvement levels (R^2 = .18, p < .01), and results in a statistically significant change in R^2 of .031, $p < .01$.

Student Characteristics

Enrollment Status.

Almost 60 percent of community college students are enrolled part-time (AACC, 2012a). Part-time attendance creates a difficult challenge for students and college officials, as it is well documented that part-time students are less engaged than full-time students and face greater risks of leaving college without completing their academic goals (Horn, 1996; Adelman, 1999; Alfonso, Bailey & Scott, 2005; CCSSE, 2009).

The results of the current study were consistent with the literature. Students enrolled part-time recorded lower levels of engagement on all five benchmarks – active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners – than full-time students. Students enrolled part-time were also less likely to report positive relationships with other students and administrators.

Age.

Sixty percent of community college students are older than 21 (AACC, 2012a) and the average age is 28 (AACC, 2012a). These adult and nontraditional aged students are attracted to the open admissions policies, proximity to major population areas, weekend and evening class schedules, and substantial vocational training tracks offered by community colleges. Non-traditional-aged students often work full-time while attending classes part-time, they do not participate in most collegiate activities, and they rarely spend time out of class with faculty or other students (Kasworm, 2003a). Students in this age group connect their college experience most strongly with their classroom experience, with activities that are related to their continued academic success, and their relationship with faculty (Kasworm 1990, 1995, 2003).

In this study, adult students over 24 years of age were more likely to report activities in three of the five benchmarks – active and collaborative learning, student effort, and academic challenge. These benchmarks, which focus on classroom learning and success, include measurements of students' classroom participation, efforts preparing for class, using skills labs, independent reading, and synthesizing and using classroom learning outside the classroom. Adult students in this study were also more likely to report positive relationships with other students and their instructors.

Gender.

Studies indicate that, compared to men, women tend to view their campuses as less supportive of their academic and social needs, which in turn adversely affects their learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986; Sandler, Silverberg, & Hall,

1996). In this study the engagement levels of females were higher than the engagement levels of men in four of the five benchmarks. Being female was also positively associated with stronger relationships with other students and administrators but was not related to the strength of relationships with instructors.

These findings may indicate that women continue to feel undervalued in the classroom, lending support for work being done to encourage classroom participation by women and continued refinement of teaching practices to accept and value the knowledge and voices of women.

First-Generation Status.

Little research exists regarding the college experiences of first-generation community college students and how those experiences differ from the experiences of students who have college-educated parents. In this study, being a first-generation student had a statistically significant and negative association with active and collaborative learning and academic challenge benchmarks. Items in the academic challenge benchmark include: how much has your coursework emphasized analyzing ideas, experiences, or theory; how much has your coursework emphasized making judgments about the soundness of information, arguments, or methods; how much has your coursework emphasized applying theories or concepts to practical problems or new situations; and items related to the number of textbooks and papers required.

Regarding the tendency of first-generation students to have lower scores on the active and collaborative learning benchmark, it is possible that, because their parents did not have the economic benefits of a college degree, these students' financial situations

tend to require that they work, attend school part-time, and may indicate that they have more off-campus responsibilities. All of these situational attributes reduce the amount of time a student can spend on active and collaborative learning.

A positive association was found between being a first-generation student and the support for learners benchmark. There was also a positive association between being a first generation student and reporting positive relationships with others on campus.

Race.

Researchers have identified a number of academic and social challenges experienced by minority students at community colleges. Within community colleges low-income and minority students are much less likely than White and middle-income students to earn credentials or transfer to baccalaureate-granting institutions (Alfonso, Bailey & Scott, 2005). Hispanic community college students have the lowest retention rates and are least likely to transfer to a four-year institution (Harvey, 2002; Rendón & Garza, 1996).

Hispanic students in this study report significantly higher levels of engagement in four of the five benchmarks – active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge and support for learners. Similarly, Black students recorded higher engagement scores on the student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction and support for learners benchmarks. Black and Hispanic students were more likely to report less positive relationships with administrators. Black students also recorded less positive relationships with other students.

These findings are consistent with research indicating that Hispanic and Black students report being more engaged than White students, despite a negative relationship between minority status and academic performance (CCSSE, 2005; Hu & Kuh, 2002). Researchers indicate that the higher engagement levels reported by minority students may be tied to the extensive barriers to educational success many of these students must overcome, such as first-generation status, part-time enrollment, and financial instability. It may be that the adversity and risks faced by these students require that they put forth greater effort and engagement into achieve their educational goals than is required of their White counterparts (Greene, Marti, & McClenney, 2008).

College Size

As research indicates that college size can influence students' levels of engagement, with smaller liberal arts colleges demonstrating higher levels of student engagement (Hu & Kuh, 2002; Pascarella, Wolniak, Cruce, & Blaich, 2004), the positive influence of a small campus on student engagement levels might be confounding the results presented here.

As shown in Table 11, a chi-squared analysis indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the level of Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement and the size of the college. Of the 172 small colleges, having an enrollment of less than 4,500 students, 87, or 51 percent do not host Phi Theta Kappa chapters or host uninvolved chapters. Only six extra-large colleges, having an enrollment of 15,000 students or more, 21 percent, do not host a chapter or have an uninvolved chapter. Thus, the majority of

small colleges host uninvolved chapters and the majority of large and extra-large colleges

host highly-involved chapters.

Table 11: Phi Theta Kappa Chapter Involvement Level by College Size (N=361)

College Size	All	Small (size < 4,499)	Medium (4,500 < size < 8,000)	Large (8,000<=size<=14,999)	Extra Large (size >=15,000)	χ^2
Chapter Level of Involvement						37.901***
No Chapter/Not involved	132	51%	26%	23%	21%	
Moderately Involved	126	33	37	33	38	
Highly-Involved	103	16	37	44	41	

Regression Analysis by Size

      To determine if the level of Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement can be used to explain student engagement levels and students' perceptions of their relationships with others on campus, while controlling for college size, a series of 16 stepwise multiple regression analyses were performed for small, medium, large, and extra-large colleges. Student characteristics were again entered into the regression first, followed by chapter involvement level. As seen in Table 12, in this series of regressions, adding the Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level to the analysis did not result in a statistically significant change in R^2 in any of the models explaining CCSSE benchmark scores or in the models explaining students' relationships to administrators or faculty. Adding the chapter involvement level did result in a statistically significant change in R^2 in the model explaining students' relationships to other students at extra-large colleges. The model using only student characteristics explains 45 percent of the variability in students' perceptions of their relationships with other students on extra-large colleges. Adding the chapter involvement level to the model explains an additional 22 percent of variance in students' perceptions of their relationships with others.

Table 12: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analyses Explaining Student Engagement and Relationships, by College Size (N=361)

Size	Active and Collaborative Learning		Student Effort		Academic Challenge		Student-Faculty Interaction	
	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristic	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristic	Chapter Involvement Level Added
Small Colleges								
R^2	.203***	.225***	.348***	.356***	.338***	.343***	.122**	.146**
Δ in R^2		.022		.008		.005		.023
Medium Colleges								
R^2	.250***	.277**	.285***	.304***	.325***	.347***	.145*	.171*
Δ in R^2		.027		.020		.022		.026
Large Colleges								
R^2	.251*	.252	.321**	.343**	.467***	.468***	.382***	.389**
Δ in R^2		.001		.022		.001		.008
Extra-Large Colleges								
R^2	.437	.475	.333	.383	.337	.361	.424	.469
Δ in R^2		.038		.050		.024		.045

Significance: * p < .05 ** p <. 01 *** p < .001

Table 12: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis Explaining Student Engagement and Relationships, by College Size *(con't)*

Size	Support for Learners		Relationship with Students		Relationship with Instructors		Relationship with Administrators	
	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristic	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristic	Chapter Involvement Level Added	Characteristics	Chapter Involvement Level Added
Small Colleges								
R^2	.276***	.295***	.167***	.177***	.092*	.100*	.104*	.118*
Δ in R^2		.019		.010		.009		.015
Medium Colleges								
R^2	.378***	.380***	.358***	.367***	.287***	.312***	.196**	.208*
Δ in R^2		.002		.009		.025		.012
Large Colleges								
R^2	.327**	.335**	.324**	.329**	.450***	.456***	.281**	.292*
Δ in R^2		.007		.005		.007		.010
Extra-Large Colleges								
R^2	.584**	.594*	.447	.665**	.552**	.591*	.311	.319
Δ in R^2		.010		.218**		.039		.007

Significance: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$

Summary

The analysis indicates that the presence and involvement level of a Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus did not explain scores on the five CCSSE engagement benchmarks or students' perceptions of their relationships with administrators and faculty, once the size of the campus is controlled. The presence and involvement level of the Phi Theta Kappa chapter did add explanatory power to students' perceptions of their relationships with other students on extra-large college campuses.

CHAPTER FIVE

Discussion

Community college students are more likely to be older, of minority descent, work full-time while enrolled part-time, and be the first in their families to attend college (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005), attributes known to create barriers to persistence, graduation, and credentialing (Astin, 1993; Harper & Quaye, 2009; Tinto, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). To assist these students, community college educators and administrators are investigating engagement theory. Engagement theory suggests that student success is directly related to two elements, among others: (a) the time and effort students spend on educationally purposeful activities and (b) a college culture that elicits greater effort from students, provides an affirming and inclusive environment, and communicates high expectations of student performance (Kun, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt & Associates, 2005).

One financially efficient method of building engagement on community colleges may be administrative and financial support of student organizations. Many student organizations, such as honor societies, are financially supported by international non-profits devoted to enhancing student learning opportunities. These groups validate students as learners and may offer programs to further develop leadership, service, and scholarship skills. While members of these organizations may benefit from the positive peer groups, opportunities for collaborative learning, and more frequent student-faculty

interactions that are offered through group affiliation, it is possible that when these student groups lead strong, campus-wide initiatives that the engagement level of the entire student body is influenced.

This study investigates this connection with one such student organization. Phi Theta Kappa, as the honor society for two-year colleges, has programming designed to provide resources and support that enable chapters to create campus-wide initiatives that involve all students in educationally purposeful activities. Specifically, this study asks: (a) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus, and (b) Does having a highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students' views of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel?

To answer these questions, this study used the 2011 Community College of Student Engagement [CCSSE] survey data of 175,627 students from 361 colleges to examine the associations among student characteristics, Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level, and college size on student engagement levels and perceptions of campus relationships. Student scores on the five CCSSE engagement benchmarks – active and collaborative learning, student effort, academic challenge, student-faculty interaction, and support for learners – were examined, as well as student responses to questions about their relationships with others on campus.

Three comparison groups were identified based on Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level: (a) those campuses not having a Phi Theta Kappa chapter or having an chapter not involved in programming; (b) campuses that participate in the Five Star Chapter Development Plan, which indicates a moderate level of involvement in Phi Theta Kappa programming; (c) and campuses hosting chapters that either won Hallmark Awards, achieved Five Star level in the Five Star Chapter Development Plan, or were recognized as a Top 100 Chapter for work completed in 2011, indicating a high level of involvement in Phi Theta Kappa programming.

Summary of Findings

The results support the literature on the influence of personal characteristics on student engagement levels. Significant associations were found between students' enrollment type (part-time or full-time), age, gender, first-generation status, race and their levels of engagement and relationships with others on campus. Phi Theta Kappa chapter involvement level was not found to significantly explain student engagement levels and was not found to influence students' perceptions of their relationships with others on campus.

Student Engagement at Community Colleges

Student responses to the survey items related to the CCSSE benchmarks indicate institutional practices and student behaviors that produce an appropriate level of academic challenge and elicit student effort. Responses also indicate that more work may

be needed to provide additional support for learners, create more opportunities for student-faculty interaction, and increase the number of active and collaborative learning experiences.

Indicating an appropriate level of academic challenge, the majority of students report that critical thinking skills, such as analyzing, synthesizing, and making judgments about information, theories, and ideas, are "quite a bit" emphasized in their coursework. Additionally, 90 percent of students indicate that they have worked harder than they thought they could to meet an instructor's expectations.

Responses to survey items related to the student effort benchmark indicate that 98 percent of students spend time preparing for class, with nearly 40 percent spending between one and five hours, 30 percent spending between six and ten hours, and 30 percent sending more than eleven hours preparing for class. Thirty-five percent of students have never come to class without completing their readings or assignments and only three percent report coming to class unprepared "very often". Of concern are results that indicate that nearly 20 percent of students have "never" prepared at least two drafts of a paper before turning it in.

It is interesting to note that only 32 percent of students indicate that their college puts "very much" emphasis on providing the support they need to succeed. Other survey items included in the support for learners benchmark echo this finding. Forty percent of students report that their college does "very little" to help them cope with non-academic

responsibilities; only 10 percent indicate their college provides "very much " support for their social needs; and only slightly more than half, 53 percent, report that their college provides more than "some" support for their financial issues.

As indicated by their responses to survey items included in the student-faculty interaction benchmark, meaningful contact between students and faculty is limited, with 46 percent of students reporting that they have never discussed ideas from readings or classes with instructors outside of class; 30 percent indicating that they have never talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor; and 70 percent reporting that they have never worked with professors on activities other than coursework.

On items related to the active and collaborative learning benchmark, 66 percent of students report that they ask questions or contribute to class discussions "often" or "very often". Less encouraging are results indicating that nearly 40 percent of students have never worked with classmates outside of class to prepare for class assignments, 72 percent have never tutored or taught other students, and 30 percent have never made a presentation in class.

Phi Theta Kappa Chapter Involvement Level

When the level of involvement displayed by the local Phi Theta Kappa chapter was added to the model explaining student engagement, the change in R^2 was modest, (2 percent or less), but statistically significant for the student-faculty interaction and the support for learners benchmarks. Adding the chapter-involvement-level when explaining

students' relationships with others on campus explained 3 percent or less of additional variability.

Chapter Involvement Level and College Size

In this study, 51 percent of small colleges did not have involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters. Based on the literature and evidenced by this study, the engagement levels of students at these community colleges are higher than the engagement levels reported by students at medium, large, and extra-large colleges. Further, 40 percent of the colleges with highly-involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters in this study are located at large and extra-large schools, where research shows, and this study echoes, students report lower levels on the CCSSE benchmarks and in their perceptions of relationships with others on campus.

To determine if the size of the college was influencing the results of this study, a series of regression models were run. The results of that series suggest that the presence and involvement level of Phi Theta Kappa chapters did not explain students' engagement levels or perceptions of their relationships with administrators or faculty once college size was controlled. The presence and involvement level of Phi Theta Kappa chapters did add explanatory power to the model explaining students' perceptions of their relationships with other students at extra-large colleges.

While this study did not show a significant association between the involvement level of Phi Theta Kappa chapters, and student engagement levels and perceptions of

their relationships with faculty and administrators on campus, anecdotal evidence does suggest that student groups can enhance the engagement of students on campus. One need only look at the influence of college sports on college social activities and school spirit to understand how the values and interests emphasized on campus influence student behavior. As Boyer (1990) discovered, academically focused student groups and campus activities can contribute to the academic culture of a college and provide opportunities for students to feel welcomed and part of the academic community. For this reason the impact of Phi Theta Kappa chapters on campus, as well as the influence of other student groups on campus, should be the focus of further research.

Implications and Recommendations

This study has implications for the policies and practices of community colleges and Phi Theta Kappa. The mission of community colleges and the characteristics of their students require that extraordinary measures be taken to ensure student success. The characteristics that make community colleges an attractive option for underserved students, such as low tuition, part-time enrollment, remedial education, and non-standard class hours, are the same characteristics that adversely affect student engagement and graduation rates, and yet, community colleges are facing an increasingly urgent appeal from the public to increase graduation and credentialing rates. This emphasis on accountability has raised new questions regarding best practices and policies in student engagement.

Phi Theta Kappa, as a non-profit organization dedicated to the recognition of academic achievement, offers programs aimed at improving the scholastic and leadership skills of their members. In addition, Phi Theta Kappa has a corporate interest in ensuring the success of all community college students. To that end, the organization may be interested in developing programming that provides developmental opportunities for its members while furthering the mission of community colleges.

Implications for Policy

For Phi Theta Kappa, the results of this study could prove useful in program evaluation and as a guideline for new programming. Examples of such programs and possible avenues for policymaking are:

- Five Star Chapter Development Plan: Are there aspects of this blueprint for chapter development that should be redesigned to further encourage engagement and inclusion of other students individually and in cooperation with other groups on campus?

- College Project vs. Hallmark Awards: The College Project is a cooperative venture dictated by the community college administration and fulfilled by the chapter, to benefit the college. Hallmark Awards provide recognition for chapter projects that integrate scholarship, leadership and service efforts into a community service project. Does one of the aforementioned directions for recognition yield more positive results to the student and the college? Should Phi

Theta Kappa's international programs focus on promoting involvement in the local college community (College Project), rather than emphasizing projects off campus (Honors in Action)?

Phi Theta Kappa could further use this study to communicate the value and necessity of stressing inclusivity rather than elitism. Communications could emphasis to Phi Theta Kappa members the value of contributing to positive relationships among members of the college community, based on shared values of scholarship, and reinforcing the premise that the scholar has the responsibility to share knowledge.

Implications for community colleges could include an evaluation of student groups to determine how closely the groups' missions match and enhance the college's mission and goals. When student group budgets are allocated, a review of the degree to which different student groups and their programs align with the college mission, emphasize inclusiveness, and encourage participation in academically engaging activities should be conducted.

Implications for Practice

Phi Theta Kappa's leadership could consider evaluating their programs, faculty advisor and chapter officer development plans to emphasize joint ventures with community colleges as key strategies for chapter success. Such goals may enhance student engagement levels and enhance relationships among students, faculty, and administrators on campus, leading to successful student outcomes and further the mission

of Phi Theta Kappa by raising the level of awareness of the organization on campus,

enhancing the brand, and providing more opportunities to encourage students to work to

meet the requirements for membership.

National organizations desirous of forging a link with community colleges could

develop programs that encourage engagement and align with the mission of the colleges

and communities they serve. The shared projects and goals of college administrations and

student groups could develop partnerships to impact colleges in a positive manner.

Limitations

Limitations to this study include the use of self-reported data. The CCSSE survey

asks students to report and judge their engagement levels and community college

experiences and some studies have supported the theory that self-reported data should be

used with care. There is some evidence that students may use different baselines to

measure their college experiences (Pascarella, 2001). Maxwell and Lupus (1994) found

that some students tend to overestimate their academic accomplishments while low-

achieving students tend not to report at all. This difference may make comparisons of

students' self-reported engagement levels especially difficult given the diverse student

bodies found at community colleges. Research also exists that supports self-reported data

as a valid method of measuring student behavior, perceptions and outcomes (McClenney,

Marti, & Adkins, n.d.; Gonyea, 2005).

Only three questions on the CCSSE are used to judge students' perceptions of others on campus. The questions are very broad and may support conflicting interpretations. For example, students are asked to rate fellow students on their degree of friendliness and supportiveness. Because a person can be friendly and non-supportive the students' answers may contain a degree of ambiguity.

The colleges participating in the CCSSE survey have self-selected to participate in the study. The effect of this self-selection is unknown.

As full-time students are enrolled in more classes than part-time students, they may be overrepresented in the 2011 CCSSE cohort ("CCSSE: Part-time students underrepresented", n.d.).   To adjust for this the Center for Community College Engagement applies a weighting procedure, based on the most recent IPEDS enrollment figures and uniquely calculated for each institution ("CCSSE: Cohort Data Overview", n.d.).

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the findings regarding the academic challenge benchmark, it would be interesting to study the differences between the academic paths taken by first-generation students and the paths taken by community colleges students whose parents attended college. Are first-generation students more likely to enroll in classes requiring less academic depth and challenge?

A qualitative study that included the voices of Phi Theta Kappa advisors, student officers, and college administration might be effective in pinpointing associations between student engagement on campus and the activity level of a Phi Theta Kappa chapter. Such narratives could eliminate many of the various aspects of campus life associated with student engagement levels and bring forth data to provide insight into specific Phi Theta Kappa events, experiences and programs that encourage student engagement.

An area of future resource that could further Phi Theta Kappa's understanding of the nuances of chapter activities would be an examination of campus engagement by activity type. Such research would inform decisions about developing programs and activities aimed at partnering with community colleges to enhance engagement or developing programs aimed at providing members-only programs that assist Phi Theta Kappa members. Such research should be supplemented with the voices of the community college population. In particular it would be interesting to conduct a qualitative study of campuses with highly active Phi Theta Kappa chapters involved in projects suggested and championed by college administrators. Such a study could highlight contributions to the college environment by such chapters and offer data for future Phi Theta Kappa program development.

More research is needed to determine the effects of local student groups affiliated with the college on student engagement levels and on perceptions of others. That is,

research is needed on student organizations with unrestricted membership, such as book clubs, art clubs, and debate clubs that are local to the college. Studies examining possible associations between participation in community college sports, student body support of sports teams, and the academic focus of campuses might also yield information on student engagement.

Conclusion

According to the National Employment Law Project, 21 percent of job losses during the recession of 2009 came from lower-wage occupations; 60 percent came from the middle-skills, middle-wage area; and 19 percent came from high-wage occupations (National Employment Law Project, 2012). Further, during the recovery, 58 percent of new jobs were in the lower-wage occupations; 20 percent in higher-wage occupations; and a dismal 22 percent in the middle-skills sector (National Employment Law Project, 2012). The resulting squeeze of the middle-class and downward shift in employment opportunities have placed even greater pressure on community colleges to fulfill their mission of providing advancement through education to their constituents. As a variety of environmental variables continue to make this an increasingly difficult proposition, more research and innovation on how to provide opportunity effectively is needed, and is needed quickly. One area that warrants study and effort is partnerships between student groups and college administrators to ensure that all parties on campus are working toward common goals that aid students in their pursuit of their educational goals.

REFERENCES

Adelman, C. (1999). *Answers in the tool box: Academic intensity, attendance patterns, and Bachelor's degree attainment*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Adelman, C. (2005). *Moving into town—and moving on: The community college in the lives of traditional-age students*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.

Alfonso, M., Bailey, T.R., & Scott, M. (2005). The educational outcomes of occupational sub-baccalaureate students: evidence from the 1990s. *Economics of Education Review, 24*(2), 197-212.

Altavena, L. (2011, July 14). 4 Out of 5 in Community College Want to Transfer, Report Says [Blog posting]. Retrieved from http://thechoice.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/14/community-college-transfer/

Altbach, P.G., Berdahl, R.O., & Gumport, P.J. (Eds.). (1999). *American higher education in the twenty-first century: Social, political, and economic challenges.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press.

American Association of Community Colleges. (2000). AACC Position Statement on Remedial Education. Retrieved from http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/history/Pages/significantevents.aspx

American Association of Community Colleges. (2010). *About community colleges*. Retrieved from http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/history/Pages/mission.aspx

American Association of Community Colleges. (2010a). *Fast facts*. Retrieved from

     http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Pages/fastfacts.aspx

American Association of Community Colleges. (2010b). *Significant events*. Retrieved

     from http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/history/Pages/significantevents.aspx

American Association of Community Colleges. (2012). *Reclaiming the American Dream:*

     Community colleges and the nation's future. A report from the 21st-Century

     Commission on the Future of Community Colleges. Washington, DC: American

     Association of Community Colleges.

American Association of Community Colleges. (2012a). *Fast facts*. Retrieved from

     http:www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Documents/FactSheet2012.pdf

American Association of Community Colleges. (2012b). Preparing America for middle-

     skill work. *Community College Times*. Retrieved at:

     http://www.communitycollegetimes.com/Pages/Workforce-

     Development/Preparing-America-for-middle-skill-work.aspx

American College Testing. (2010). *College retention and graduation rates from 2000*

     through 2010. Retrieved from:

     http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/10retain_trends.pdf

American College Testing. (2010a). *What works in student retention? 4th national survey:*

     Community colleges report. Retrieved from

     http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/droptables/CommunityColleges.pdf

Astin, A.W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel, 25*, 297-308.

Astin, A.W. (1985). *Achieving educational excellence: A critical assessment of priorities and practices in higher education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Astin, A.W. (1993). *What matters in college? Four critical years revisited*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Bailey, T. & Morest, V.S. (2006). *Defending the community college equity agenda*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press.

Bean, J.P., & Metzner, B.S. (1985). A conceptual model of nontraditional undergraduate student attrition. *Review of Educational Research, 55*(4), 485-540.

Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N., & Tarule, J. (1986). *Women's ways of knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. New York: Basic Books Inc.

Bellow, M., & Overberg, P. (2001, Oct 26). Middle class' share of the nation's income is shrinking. *USA TODAY*. Retrieved at: http://www.usatoday.com/money/economy/story/2011-10-25/middle-class-disappearing/50914822/1

Berger, J., & Milem, J. (2000). Organizational behavior in higher education and student outcomes. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research* (Vol. XV, pp. 268-338). New York: Agathon.

Berkner, L., & Choy, S. (2008). *Descriptive summary of 2003-04 beginning postsecondary students: Three years later* (NCES 2008-174). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008174

Boggs, G. R. (2010). *Democracy's College: The Evolution of the community college in America.* Retrieved from: http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/whsummit/Documents/boggs_whsummitbrief.pdf

Boyer, E. L. (1990). *Campus Life: In search of community*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Boyer, E. L. (1997). *College: The undergraduate experience in America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: Classification description, Basic. (n.d.). Retrieved from Http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/basic.php

Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching: Classification description, Undergraduate Profile. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/undergraduate_profile.php

Casner-Lotto, J., Barrington, L., & Wright, M. (2006). *Are they really ready to work?* Report Number: BED-06-Workforce. New York: The Conference Board. Retrieved from: http://www.conference-board.org/publications/publicationdetail.cfm?publicationid=1218

CCSSE: About the CCSSE Survey. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/aboutsurvey/aboutsurvey.cfm

CCSSE: Academic Challenge. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/bench_academic.cfm

CCSSE: Active and collaborative learning. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/bench_active.cfm

CCSSE: Cohort data overview. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/reports/2011/overview.cfm#overview

CCSSE: Part-time students underrepresented. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/underrepresented.html)

CCSSE: Student Effort. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/bench_student.cfm

CCSSE: Student-faculty interaction. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/bench_sfi.cfm

CCSSE: Support for learners. (n.d.). Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/survey/bench_support.cfm

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2005). *Engaging students,*

  challenging the odds: 2005 findings. Retrieved from

  http://www.ccsse.org/center/resources/docs/publications/CCSSE_highlights2005.

  pdf

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2009). *Making connections: Dimensions of student engagement*. Retrieved from http: www.ccsse.org/center/resources/docs/publications/CCSSE09_execsum.pdf

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2010a). *The relationship of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the National Survey of Student Engagement(NSSE).*Retrieved from http://www.ccsse.org/aboutccsse/relate.cfm

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2010b). *Why focus on student engagement?* Retrieved from http://www.ccsse.org/aboutccsse/engage.cfm

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (2012). *Understanding Survey Results.* Retrieved from http://www.csse.org/survey/reports/2012/understanding.cfm#weights

Center for Community College Student Engagement. (n.d.). *Institutional Location and Size Matter Less Than Expected.* Retrieved from http://www.ccsse.org/survey/nr_institutional.html

Chapman, D. W., & Pascarella, E. T. (1983). Predictors of academic and social integration of college students. *Research in Higher Education*, *19*(3), 295-322.

Chickering, A. W. (1974). *Commuting versus resident students: Overcoming the educational inequities of living off campus.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Chickering, A. W., & Gamson, Z. F. (1987). Seven principles for good practice in

undergraduate education. *American Association for Higher Education &*

Accreditation [AAHE] Bulletin, 39(7), 3-7.

Choy, S. (2002). *Access and persistence: Findings from 10 years of longitudinal research*

on students. Retrieved from:

http://www.acenet.edu/bookstore/pdf/2002_access&persistence.pdf

Clark, B. (1960). The 'cooling out' function in higher education. *American Journal of*

Sociology, 65(6), 569-576.

Clark, B. (1970). The organizational saga in higher education. *Administrative Science*

Quarterly, 17(2), 178-184.

Clark, B. (1980). The 'cooling out' function revisited. *New Directions for Community*

Colleges, 32, 15-31.

Cohen, A. M., & Brawer, F. B. (2008). *The American community college* (5rd ed.) San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power and analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.).

Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Community College Completion Corps. (2010). Retrieved from

http://www.cccompletioncorps.org/

Community College Completion Corps-PTK. (2010). Retrieved from

http://www.cccompletioncorps.org/ptk

Community College Student Report. (n.d.). Retrieved from

    http://www.ccsse.org/aboutsurvey/docs/CCSR_2005.pdf

Community College Survey of Student Engagement. (2008). *Essential elements of*

    engagement: High expectations, high support. Austin, TX: The University

    of Texas at Austin, Community College Leadership Program.

Cross, P. K. (1981). *Adults as learners*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B.D., & Smith, J.C. (2011). *Income, poverty, & health*

    *insurance coverage in the United States: 2010.*Washington, DC: U. S. Census

    Bureau.

Dougherty, K.J., & Hong, E. (2005). *State systems of performance accountability for*

    community colleges: Impacts and lessons for policy makers, An Achieving the

    Dream Policy Brief. Boston: Jobs for the Future.

Fleming, B. (2004, Sept 10). Public Colleges raise tuition sharply, but not as much as in

    recent years. *The Chronicle of Higher Education, 51*(3), A22.

Floyd, D.L., Skolnik, M.L., & Walker, K.P. (2005). *The Community College*

    Baccalaureate: Emerging trends and policy issues. Sterling, VA: Stylus

    Publishing.

Greene, T. G., Marti, C. N., & McClenney, K. (2008). The Effort–Outcome Gap: Differences for African American and Hispanic Community College Students in Student Engagement and Academic Achievement. *The Journal of Higher Education 79*(5), 513-539.

Gonyea, R. (2005). Self-reported data in institutional research: Review and recommendations. *New Directions for Institutional Research 2005*(127), 73-89.

Gordon, E.E. (2009). *Winning the global talent showdown: How businesses and communities can partner to rebuild the jobs pipeline.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Harper, S. R., & Quaye, S. J. (2009). *Student engagement in higher education: Theoretical perspectives and practical approaches for diverse populations.* New York: Rutledge.

Harvey, W. (2002). *Minorities in higher education 2000-2001: Nineteenth annual status report.* Washington, DC: American Council on Education.

Hebel, S (2003, May 3). Unequal impact: Community colleges face disproportionate cuts in state budgets. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *49*(38), A21.

Hoachlander, G., Sikora, A.C., & Horn, L. (2003). *Community college students: Goals, academic preparation, and outcomes* (NCES 2003-164). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003164

Horn, L. (1996). *Nontraditional undergraduates: Trends in enrollment from 1986 to 1992 and persistence and attainment among 1989–90 Beginning Postsecondary Students* (NCES 97–578). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from

http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=97578

Horn, L., Peter, K., & Rooney, K. (2002). *Profile of undergraduates in U.S. postsecondary institutions: 1999–2000* (NCES 2002-168). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from

http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2002168

Hu, S., & Kuh, G. D. (2002). Being (dis)engaged in educationally purposeful activities: The influence of student and institutional characteristics. *Research in Higher Education, 43* (5), 555-576.

Institute for Higher Education Policy. (1998). *Reaping the benefits: Defining the public and private value of going to college.* Retrieved from:

http://www.ihep.org/assets/files/publications/m-r/ReapingTheBenefits.pdf

Kasworm, C. (1990). Adult undergraduates in higher education: A review of past research perspectives. *Review of Educational Research, 60*(3), 345-372.

Kasworm, C. (1995). *Involvement from an adult undergraduate perspective. Presented at the American Educational Research Association*. San Francisco, CA.

Kasworm, C. (2003). Adult meaning making in the undergraduate classroom. *Adult Education Quarterly, 53*(2), 81-98.

Kasworm, C. (2003a). *What is collegiate involvement for adult undergraduates? Presented at the American Educational Research Association*. Chicago, IL.

Kuh, G. D. (1993). Ethos. *Liberal Education,79*(4), 22-32.

Kuh, G. D. (1994). Creating campus climates that foster learning. In C.C. Schroeder & P. Mable (Eds.), *Realizing the educational potential of residence halls* (pp. 109-132). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G.D. (2001). Assessing what really matters to student learning: Inside the National Survey of Student Engagement. *Change, 33*(3)*,*10-17.

Kuh, G. D. (2009). What student affairs professionals need to know about student engagement. *Journal of College Student Development, 50*(6), 683-703.

Kuh, G. D., Douglas, K.B., Lund, J. P., Ramin-Gyurnek, J. (1994). *Student learning outside the classroom: Transcending artificial boundaries.* ASHE-ERIC Higher Education Report No. 8. Washington, DC: The George Washington University, Graduate School of Education and Human Development.

Kuh, G. D., Kinzie, J., Schuh, J. H., Whitt, E. J., & Associates (2005). *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kuh, G. D., Schuh, J. H., Whitt, E. J., & Associates (1991). *Involving colleges: Successful approaches to fostering student learning and development outside the classroom.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Levin, J.S. & Montero-Hernandez, V. (2009). *Community colleges and their students: Co-construction and organizational identity*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

Love, B. J. (1993). Issues and problems in the retention of Black students in predominantly White institutions of higher education. *Equity and Excellence in Education*, *26*,27-33.

Maxwell, N.L., & Lupus, J. S. (1994). The Lake Wobegon effect in student self-reported data. *The American Economic Review 84*(2), 201-209.

McClenney, K. (2009, April 24). Helping community-college students succeed: A moral imperative. *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *55*(33), A60.

McClenney, K., Marti, C.N., & Adkins, C. (n.d.). *Student engagement and student outcomes: Key Findings from CCSSE validation Research*. Retrieved from: http://www.ccsse.org/aboutsurvey/docs/CCSSE%20Validation%20Summary.pdf

McCormick, A.C., & McClenney, K. (2012). Will these trees ever bear fruit: A response to the special issue on student engagement. *The Review of Higher Education (35)2*, 307-333.

Metzner, B. S., & Bean, J. P. (1987). The estimation of a conceptual model of nontraditional undergraduate student attrition. *Research in Higher Education*, *27*(1), 15-38.

Moltz, D. (2009, Apr 30). Adopting Performance-Based Funding. *Inside Higher Ed.*

Retrieved at

http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/04/30/ohio#ixzz1pIPK9Iok

Mullins, C. M., & Phillippe, K. (2009). *Community college enrollment surge: An analysis*

of estimated fall 2009 headcount enrollments at community colleges (AACC

Policy Brief 2009-01PBL). Retrieved from

http://www.aacc.nche.edu/Publications/Briefs/Documents/enrollmentsurge_12172

009.pdf

National Center for Education Statistics. (2009). *Projections of education statistics to*

2018.   Available at

http://nces.ed.gov/programs/projections/projections2018/sec2c.asp

National Employment Law Project. (2012). *The low-wage recovery and growing*

Inequality. Retrieved from:

http://www.nelp.org/index.php/content/content_about_us/tracking_the_recovery_

after_the_great_recession

Nettles, M. (1988). *Toward Black Undergraduate student equality in American Higher*

Education. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Pace, C. R. (1984). *Measuring the quality of college student experiences: An account of the development and use of the College Student Experiences Questionnaire.* Los Angeles: University of California. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 255099)

Parsad, B., & Lewis, L. (2003). *Remedial education at degree-granting postsecondary institutions in Fall 2000* (NCES 2004-010).Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2004010

Pascarella, E.T. (1997). It's time we started paying attention to community college students. *About Campus 1*(6)*,* 14-17.

Pascarella, E. T. (2001). Using student self-reported gains to estimate college impact: A cautionary tale. *Journal of College Student Development*, *42*(5), 488‑492.

Pascarella, E. T., & Petersen, M.L. (1999). *Community college effects on students: A review of recent evidence.* Retrieved from the Iowa Academy of Education Web site: http://www.education.uiowa.edu/html/iae/iae-z-op-pascarella-1-1.pdf.

Pascarella, E. T., Smart, J. C., & Ethington, C.A. (1986). Long-term persistence of two-year college students. *Research in Higher Education 24*(1), 47-71.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P.T. (1998). Studying college students in the 21st century: Meeting new challenges. *The Review of Higher Education (21)*2, 151-165.

Pascarella, E. T., & Terenzini, P. T. (2005). *How college affects students: A third decade of research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Pascarella, E.T., Wolniak, G.C., Cruce, T.M., & Blaich, C.F. (2004). Do liberal arts colleges really foster good practices in undergraduate education? *Journal of College student Development, 45*, 57-74.

Phi Theta Kappa (2010). Alabama Couple Give Time, Talents and Resources to Phi Theta Kappa and the Foundation. *Visionary*, 9.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2010a). *The Democratization of Information, Honors Program Guide*. Jackson, MS.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2012). *Awards Program*. Jackson, MS.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2012a). *The Culture of Completion, Honors Program Guide*. Jackson, MS.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2012b). [Phi Theta Kappa awards database]. Unpublished raw data.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2012c). [Phi Theta Kappa chapter annual report database]. Unpublished raw data.

Phi Theta Kappa. (2012d). [Phi Theta Kappa chapter database]. Unpublished raw data.

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society College Project Ideas. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.ptk.org/fivestar/college-project-ideas

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Constitution. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://ptk.org/about/constitution

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Entry Excerpts: Honors in Action projects. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.ptk.org/benefits/awards/hallmark/hia-excerpts

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Entry Excerpts: College Projects. (n.d.). Retrieved

from http://www.ptk.org/benefits/awards/hallmark/college-project-excerpts

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Five Star Chapter Development. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://www.ptk.org/?q=fivestar

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Five Star Chapter Development Requirements. (n.d.).

Retrieved from http://www.ptk.org/?q=fivestar/requirements

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Hallmark Awards. (n.d.). Retrieved

from http://www.ptk.org/benefits/awards/hallmark

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Hallmark Award Categories. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://www.ptk.org/?q=benefits/awards/hallmark/categories

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society History. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://ptk.org/about/history

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Programs. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://ptk.org/about/programs

Phi Theta Kappa Society 2011 Top 100 Chapters. (n.d.). Retrieved from

http://www2.ptk.org/hallmarks/awards/top100.htm

Phillippe, K. A., & Sullivan, L. G. (2005). *National profile of community colleges:*

Trends & statistics. Washington, DC: Community College Press.

Porter, S.R. (2011). Do college student surveys have any validity? *The Review of Higher*

Education (35)1, 45-76.

Provasnik, S., & Planty, M. (2008). *Community Colleges: Special supplement to the condition of education 2008* (NCES 2008-033). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2008033

Quality Education for Minorities Network. (1977). *Weaving the web of MSE success for minorities: Top ten colleges and universities report* . Washington, DC: The Quality Education for Minorities Network. (ERIC Document Service Reproduction No. ED 432209.)

Radford, A.W., Berkner, L., Wheeless, S.C., & Shepherd, B. (2010). *Persistence and attainment of 2003-04 beginning postsecondary students: After 6 years* (NCES 2011-151. Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2011/2011151.pdf

Rendón, L. I. (1994). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model of learning and student development. *Innovative Higher Education, 19* (Fall 1994), 33-51.

Rendón, L. I. (2002). Community college Puente: A validating model of education. *Educational Policy, 16*(4), 642-667.

Rendón, L. I., & Garza, H. (1996). Closing the gap between two- and four-year institutions. In L. I. Rendón & R. O. Hope (Eds.), Educating a new majority: Transforming America's educational system for diversity (pp. 289-308). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Rendón, L. I., Jalomo, R.E., & Nora, A. (2000). Theoretical considerations in the study of minority student retention. In J. Braxton (Ed.), *Rethinking the departure puzzle: New theory and research on college student retention* (pp. 127-157). Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Sandler, B. R., Silverberg, L. A., & Hall, R. M. (1996).*The chilly classroom climate: A guide to improve the education of women*. Washington, DC: National Association for Women in Education.

Stewart, S., & Rue, P. (1983). Commuter students: Definition and distribution. *New Directions for Student Services, 1983* (24), 3-8.

Terenzini, P.T., & Reason, R.D. (2005, November). *Parsing the first year of college: Rethinking the effects of college on students.* Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Philadelphia, PA.

Tierney, W.G. (1988). *The impact of culture on organizational decision making: Theory and practice in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

The College Board. (2010). *Education pays 2010*. Retrieved from

http://trends.collegeboard.org/downloads/Education_Pays_2010_In_Brief.pdf

The White House, Office of the President. (2009). Excerpts of the President's remarks in

Warren, Michigan today and a fact sheet on the American Graduation Initiative

[Press release]. Retrieved from

http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Excerpts-of-the-Presidents-remarks-

in-Warren-Michigan-and-fact-sheet-on-the-American-Graduation-Initiative/

The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. (2012). Fact Sheet: A Blueprint to train

two million workers for high-demand industries through a community college to

career fund. Retrieved from http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-

office/2012/02/13/fact-sheet-blueprint-train-two-million-workers-high-demand-

industries-th

The White House. (2013). Education: Knowledge and skills for the jobs of the future.

Retrieved from http: http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/education/higher-

education

Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college: rethinking the causes and cures of student attrition*.

(2nd ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Townsend, L. (1994). How universities successfully retain and graduate Black students.

Journal Of Negro Education, 27, 85-89.

United States., & Zook, G. F. (1947). *Higher education for American democracy: A report*. Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off.

United States Census Bureau. (2011). Education and Synthetic Work-Life Earnings Estimates Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2011pubs/acs-14.pdf

United States Department of Labor. (2012). Education Pays. Available at http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_chart_001.htm

Vaughan, G. B. (2006). *The community college story*. (3rd ed.). Washington, DC: Community College Press.

Wassmer, R., Moore, C., & Schulock, N. (2004). Effect of racial/ethnic composition on transfer rates in community colleges: Implications for policy and practice, *Research in Higher education, 45,* 651-672

Wirt, J., Choy, S., Provasnik, S., Rooney, P., Sen, A., & Tobin, R. (2003). *The condition of education 2003* (NCES 2003-067). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2003067

APPENDIX A: CCSSE Instrument

The Community College Student Report

Instructions: It is essential that you use a No. 2 pencil to complete this survey. Mark your answers as shown in the following example: ● Correct Mark ⊘ ⊗ ⊜ ⊙ Incorrect Marks

1. Did you begin college at this college or elsewhere? ○ Started here ○ Started elsewhere

2. Thinking about this current academic term, how would you characterize your enrollment at this college? ○ Full-time ○ Less than full-time

3. Have you taken this survey in another class this term? ○ Yes ○ No

4. In your experiences at this college during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?

	Very often	Often	Some-times	Never
a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions	○	○	○	○
b. Made a class presentation	○	○	○	○
c. Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in	○	○	○	○
d. Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	○	○	○	○
e. Come to class without completing readings or assignments	○	○	○	○
f. Worked with other students on projects during class	○	○	○	○
g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments	○	○	○	○
h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary)	○	○	○	○
i. Participated in a community-based project as a part of a regular course	○	○	○	○
j. Used the Internet or instant messaging to work on an assignment	○	○	○	○
k. Used e-mail to communicate with an instructor	○	○	○	○
l. Discussed grades or assignments with an instructor	○	○	○	○
m. Talked about career plans with an instructor or advisor	○	○	○	○
n. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class	○	○	○	○
o. Received prompt feedback (written or oral) from instructors on your performance	○	○	○	○
p. Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations	○	○	○	○
q. Worked with instructors on activities other than coursework	○	○	○	○
r. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	○	○	○	○
s. Had serious conversations with students of a different race or ethnicity other than your own	○	○	○	○
t. Had serious conversations with students who differ from you in terms of their religious beliefs, political opinions, or personal values	○	○	○	○
u. Skipped class	○	○	○	○

5. During the current school year, how much has your coursework at this college emphasized the following mental activities?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Memorizing facts, ideas, or methods from your courses and readings so you can repeat them in pretty much the same form	○	○	○	○
b. Analyzing the basic elements of an idea, experience, or theory	○	○	○	○
c. Synthesizing and organizing ideas, information, or experiences in new ways	○	○	○	○
d. Making judgments about the value or soundness of information, arguments, or methods	○	○	○	○
e. Applying theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	○	○	○	○
f. Using information you have read or heard to perform a new skill	○	○	○	○

PLEASE DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

▢○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○

SERIAL #

1
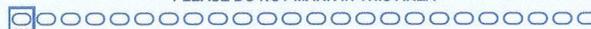
6. During the current school year, about how much reading and writing have you done <u>at this college</u>?

	None	1 to 4	5 to 10	11 to 20	More than 20
a. Number of assigned textbooks, manuals, books, or book-length packs of course readings	○	○	○	○	○
b. Number of books read on your own (not assigned) for personal enjoyment or academic enrichment	○	○	○	○	○
c. Number of written papers or reports of any length	○	○	○	○	○

7. Mark the response that best represents the extent to which your examinations during the current school year have challenged you to do your best work <u>at this college</u>.

Extremely challenging ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Extremely easy

8. Which of the following have you done, are you doing, or do you plan to do while attending <u>this college</u>?

	I have done	I plan to do	I have not done nor plan to do
a. Internship, field experience, co-op experience, or clinical assignment	○	○	○
b. English as a second language course	○	○	○
c. Developmental/remedial reading course	○	○	○
d. Developmental/remedial writing course	○	○	○
e. Developmental/remedial math course	○	○	○
f. Study skills course	○	○	○
g. Honors course	○	○	○
h. College orientation program or course	○	○	○
i. Organized learning communities (linked courses/study groups led by faculty or counselors)	○	○	○

9. How much does <u>this college</u> emphasize each of the following?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Encouraging you to spend significant amounts of time studying	○	○	○	○
b. Providing the support you need to help you succeed at this college	○	○	○	○
c. Encouraging contact among students from different economic, social, and racial or ethnic backgrounds	○	○	○	○
d. Helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)	○	○	○	○
e. Providing the support you need to thrive socially	○	○	○	○
f. Providing the financial support you need to afford your education	○	○	○	○
g. Using computers in academic work	○	○	○	○

10. About how many hours do you spend in a typical 7-day week doing each of the following?

	None	1 – 5	6 - 10	11 - 20	21 - 30	More than 30
a. Preparing for class (studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, doing homework, or other activities related to your program)	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Working for pay	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Participating in college-sponsored activities (organizations, campus publications, student government, intercollegiate or intramural sports, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Providing care for dependents living with you (parents, children, spouse, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Commuting to and from classes	○	○	○	○	○	○

11. Mark the number that best represents the quality of your relationships with people <u>at this college</u>.

Your relationship with:

<u>a. Other Students</u>

Friendly, supportive, sense of belonging ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unfriendly, unsupportive, sense of alienation

<u>b. Instructors</u>

Available, helpful, sympathetic ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unavailable, unhelpful, unsympathetic

<u>c. Administrative Personnel & Offices</u>

Helpful, considerate, flexible ⑦ ⑥ ⑤ ④ ③ ② ① Unhelpful, inconsiderate, rigid

12. How much has YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THIS COLLEGE contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas?

	Very much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
a. Acquiring a broad general education	○	○	○	○
b. Acquiring job or work-related knowledge and skills	○	○	○	○
c. Writing clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
d. Speaking clearly and effectively	○	○	○	○
e. Thinking critically and analytically	○	○	○	○
f. Solving numerical problems	○	○	○	○
g. Using computing and information technology	○	○	○	○
h. Working effectively with others	○	○	○	○
i. Learning effectively on your own	○	○	○	○
j. Understanding yourself	○	○	○	○
k. Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	○	○	○	○
l. Developing a personal code of values and ethics	○	○	○	○
m. Contributing to the welfare of your community	○	○	○	○
n. Developing clearer career goals	○	○	○	○
o. Gaining information about career opportunities	○	○	○	○

3/8" PERF

SERIAL #

PLEASE DO NOT MARK IN THIS AREA

○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○ ▢

13. This section has three parts. Please answer all three sections, indicating (1) HOW OFTEN you use the following services, (2) HOW SATISFIED you are with the services, and (3) HOW IMPORTANT the services are to you AT THIS COLLEGE.

	(1) Frequency of Use				(2) Satisfaction				(3) Importance		
	Often	Some-times	Rarely/Never	Don't know/N.A.	Very	Some-what	Not at all	N.A.	Very	Some-what	Not at all
a. Academic advising/planning	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
b. Career counseling	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
c. Job placement assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
d. Peer or other tutoring	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
e. Skill labs (writing, math, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
f. Child care	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
g. Financial aid advising	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
h. Computer lab	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
i. Student organizations	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
j. Transfer credit assistance	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
k. Services to students with disabilities	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

14. How likely is it that the following issues would cause you to withdraw from class or from this college? *(Please respond to each item)*

	Very likely	Likely	Some-what likely	Not likely
a. Working full-time	○	○	○	○
b. Caring for dependents	○	○	○	○
c. Academically unprepared	○	○	○	○
d. Lack of finances	○	○	○	○
e. Transfer to a 4-year college or university	○	○	○	○

15. How supportive are your friends of your attending this college?

○ Extremely   ○ Somewhat
○ Quite a bit   ○ Not very

16. How supportive is your immediate family of your attending this college?

○ Extremely   ○ Somewhat
○ Quite a bit   ○ Not very

17. Indicate which of the following are your reasons/goals for attending this college. *(Please respond to each item)*

	Primary goal	Secondary goal	Not a goal
a. Complete a certificate program	○	○	○
b. Obtain an associate degree	○	○	○
c. Transfer to a 4-year college or university	○	○	○
d. Obtain or update job-related skills	○	○	○
e. Self-improvement/personal enjoyment	○	○	○
f. Change careers	○	○	○

SAMPLE

3/8" PERF

SERIAL # ○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○○□

18. Indicate which of the following are <u>sources</u> you use to pay your tuition at this college? *(Please respond to each item)*	Major source	Minor source	Not a source
a. My own income/savings	○	○	○
b. Parent or spouse/significant other's income/savings	○	○	○
c. Employer contributions	○	○	○
d. Grants and scholarships	○	○	○
e. Student loans (bank, etc.)	○	○	○
f. Public assistance	○	○	○

19. Since high school, which of the following types of schools have you attended other **than the one you are now** attending? *(Please mark all that apply)*

○ Proprietary (private) school or training program
○ Public vocational-technical school
○ Another community or technical college
○ 4-year college or university
○ None

20. When do you plan to take classes at this college again?

○ I will accomplish my goal(s) during this term and will not be returning
○ I have no current plan to return
○ Within the next 12 months
○ Uncertain

21. <u>At this college</u>, in what range is your overall college grade average?

○ A
○ A- to B+
○ B
○ B- to C+
○ C
○ C- or lower
○ Do not have a GPA at this school
○ Pass/fail classes only

22. When do you most frequently take classes <u>at this college</u>? *(Mark one only)*

○ Day classes (morning or afternoon)
○ Evening classes
○ Weekend classes

23. How many TOTAL credit hours have you earned <u>at this college</u>, not counting the courses you are currently taking this term?

○ None
○ 1-14 credits
○ 15-29 credits
○ 30-44 credits
○ 45-60 credits
○ Over 60 credits

24. At what other types of institutions are you taking classes this term? *(Please mark all that apply)*

- ○ None
- ○ High school
- ○ Vocational/technical school
- ○ Another community or technical college
- ○ 4-year college/university
- ○ Other

25. How many classes are you *presently* taking at OTHER institutions?

- ○ None
- ○ 1 class
- ○ 2 classes
- ○ 3 classes
- ○ 4 classes or more

26. Would you recommend this college to a friend or family member?

○ Yes   ○ No

27. How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this college?

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Good
- ○ Fair
- ○ Poor

28. Do you have children who live with you?

○ Yes   ○ No

29. Mark your age group.

- ○ Under 18
- ○ 18 to 19
- ○ 20 to 21
- ○ 22 to 24
- ○ 25 to 29
- ○ 30 to 39
- ○ 40 to 49
- ○ 50 to 64
- ○ 65+

30. Your sex:

○ Male   ○ Female

31. Are you married?

○ Yes   ○ No

32. Is English your native (first) language?

○ Yes   ○ No

33. Are you an international student or foreign national?

○ Yes   ○ No

34. What is your racial identification? *(Mark **only one**)*

○ American Indian or other Native American
○ Asian, Asian American or Pacific Islander
○ Native Hawaiian
○ Black or African American, Non-Hispanic
○ White, Non-Hispanic
○ Hispanic, Latino, Spanish
○ Other

35. What is the highest academic credential you have earned?

○ None
○ High school diploma or GED
○ Vocational/technical certificate
○ Associate degree
○ Bachelor's degree
○ Master's/doctoral/professional degree

36. What is the highest level of education obtained by your:

	Father	Mother
a. **Not a high school graduate**	○	○
b. **High school diploma or GED**	○	○
c. **Some college, did not complete degree**	○	○
d. **Associate degree**	○	○
e. **Bachelor's degree**	○	○
f. **Master's degree/1st professional**	○	○
g. **Doctorate degree**	○	○
h. **Unknown**	○	○

37. Using the list provided, please fill in the bubbles that correspond to the code indicating your **program** or major. Using the first column, indicate the first number in the program code, using the second column, indicate the second number in the program code.

⓪ ⓪
① ①
② ②
③ ③
④
⑤
⑥
⑦
⑧
⑨

APPENDIX B: CCSSE Permission

Data Use Agreement
Community College Survey of Student Engagement

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*) instrument is copyrighted. Data collected through CCSSE administration and maintained as part of the Center for Community College Student Engagement's (CCCSE) national database is the property of *CCSSE*. These data will be made available only for use in research projects approved by *CCCSE* in advance and only upon favorable review of the requestor's submission of the following information:

1. List of the specific *CCSSE* item(s) and/or the specific group of colleges or college types for which data are requested, along with an indication of the survey year(s) for which the data are requested (this description of data requested must be very specific for *CCCSE* staff to be able to respond to your request);

    Specific group of colleges: I am requesting **all** responses from **2011** from **students at the 392 colleges** listed on the "Colleges to Include" tab of the attached Excel spreadsheet ("request to ccsse.xlsx"). You will notice that next to each college I have included a column entitled "CCSSE Code". This code indicates the level of involvement displayed by the PTK chapter at the named college. For example, the PTK chapter at Arkansas State University Mountain Home is one of 30 chapters having the highest level of PTK involvement (code = 100).

    Please include the "CCSSE code" on each student response so that I may compare responses from students based on the level of involvement displayed by the college's PTK chapter.

     Survey year: 2011

    CCSSE items:
        The items I am requesting are detailed on "CCSSE Data request details of fields needed.docx" (attached). As a general description:
    1) All items related to the five CCSSE benchmarks
    2) Items related to students' views of their relations with others on campus; question 11
    3) Carnegie basic classification code per college
    4) Carnegie Undergraduate Profile Classification code per college
    5) Tuition source (question 18), age (question 29), race (question 34), parental education level (question 36) for each respondent
    6) CCSSE code, described above
    7) An identifier tying all responses from a specific school together, without identifying which school it is.

2. Written permission from college president(s)/CEO(s), if data for a specific college or colleges are requested (as contrasted with aggregate data);
N/A
3. Statement of the objective of the applicant's survey or study, along with clearly stated research questions;

I will use the Community College Student Survey of Engagement (CCSSE) survey to compare students' perceptions of engagement, affirmation and inclusivity at community colleges based on the level of involvement of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society chapter. The overarching query to be answered is: To what extent are engagement levels and climate, as measured by the CCSSE, influenced by the presence or absence of a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter? The specific research questions are:

I.   Does having a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus?

2. Does having a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students' view of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel?

4. Expected completion date of the research;

May 2013

5. Name, title, organization and complete contact information for the principal investigator; if the requested use is for a dissertation study, please provide also the same information for the dissertation committee chairperson.

I am a fulltime employee of Phi Theta Kappa and an Ed D. candidate at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Ellen Carmody Roster
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Dissertation Committee Chairperson:

Melissa S. Anderson
Department of Organizational Leadership Policy and Development
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮
▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Agreement:

Applicant must agree to the following conditions:

1. Applicant will provide to *CCCSE* both electronic and hard copies of the proposal for subject research (e.g., the dissertation proposal for doctoral studies), including the overview of proposed research, research questions, literature review, and description of methodology. These materials shall be provided in a timeframe that allows *CCCSE* staff at least 3 weeks for review and comment prior to finalization of the research proposal.
2. Applicant will provide to *CCCSE* an electronic copy of the results of data analysis; electronic and hard copies of the subject report or study; and the appropriate citation for the work. The signature below also indicates permission to cite the report or study, with appropriate credit, on the *CCCSE* Web site.
3. When data on *CCCSE's* items are reported, applicant will include the following citation: "Data used with permission from the *Center for Community College Student Engagement, The Community College Survey of Student Engagement [date of survey version -- e.g., 2007],* The University of Texas at Austin."
4. Permission is valid for one-time use only but may be renewed with written permission from *CCCSE*.

5. Applicant agrees to comply with provisions set forth in *CCCSE's* policy statement on Responsible Uses of Survey Data (see link at bottom of page at www.cccse.org).

CCCSE
The Center for Community College Student Engagement

CCSSE
Community College Survey
of Student Engagement
a CCCSE Initiative

Ellen Carmody Roster
_____
Please Print Principal Investigator's Name

Ellen Carmody Roster
_____
Principal Investigator's Signature

July 27, 2013
Date

Please return this information to the address listed below or email to data@cccse.org.

The University of Texas at Austin
Center for Community College Student Engagement
3316 Grandview Street, Austin, TX 78705

APPENDIX C: Phi Theta Kappa Approval

PHI THETA KAPPA
HONOR SOCIETY

May 18, 2012

Dr. Rod Risley
Executive Director
Phi Theta Kappa
1625 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

Dear Dr. Risley:

I am doing a quantitative study of student engagement levels at community college campuses to fulfill the requirements of my doctorial degree. In this analysis, I will use the CCSSE survey to compare students' perceptions of engagement, affirmation and inclusivity at community colleges that host highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters with students' perceptions of these cultural attributes at community colleges that have less involved Phi Theta Kappa chapters. The overarching query to be answered is: To what extent are engagement levels and climate, as measured by the CCSSE, influenced by the presence or absence of a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter? Specifically this study will address the following questions:

1. Does having a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus affect the level of engagement of all students on campus?

2. Does having a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on campus influence students'   view of their relationships with fellow students, faculty and administrative personnel?

Dr. Risley, I am requesting permission to use Phi Theta Kappa data related to the Hallmark Awards in 2009, 2010, and 2011. I am also requesting permission to use data from chapters that have not entered Hallmark Awards during those years, have not reported Five Star Chapter Development Plan activity, and otherwise not demonstrated involved in the organization's international programming. In total approximately 400–600 chapters will be used.

Please signal your permission for me to use Phi Theta Kappa data in this manner by signing below.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Ellen Carmody Roster
Chief Information Officer

Rod Risley, Executive Director of Phi Theta Kappa

5-18-12
Date

APPENDIX D: IRB Approval

Ellen Roster

From:	irb@umn.edu
Sent:	Monday, June 25, 2012 2:33 PM
To:	carmo027@umn.edu
Cc:	dobrovca@umn.edu
Subject:	IRB Review Not Required

TO : mand@umn.edu, carmo027@umn.edu,

PI: Ellen Carmody Roster

IRB HSC: 1206E16187

Title:
The influence of a highly involved Phi Theta Kappa chapter on engagement levels of students on community college campuses

From: Institutional Review Board (IRB)

The IRB determined your planned activities described in this application do not meet the regulatory definition of research with human subjects and do not fall under the IRB's purview for one or both of the following reasons:

1) The proposed activities are a) not a systematic investigation and/or b) not designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge [45CFR46.102(d)].

Quality assurance activities and evaluation projects designed for self-improvement or program evaluation, not meant to contribute to "generalizable" knowledge, do not meet the threshold of research with human subjects.

Although IRB review may not be required for case studies, you still may have HIPAA obligations. Please contact the Privacy Office at 612-624-7447 for their requirements.

and/or

2) You will not obtain private identifiable information from living individuals [45 CFR 46.102(f)].

Interviews of individuals where questions focus on things not people (eg. questions about policies) do not require IRB review.

You will be analyzing aggregate data that cannot be linked to a living individual.

The above referenced IRB Human Subjects Code (HSC) will be inactivated in the database and you will have no further obligations for this project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRB office at 612-626-5654 if you have any questions. Thank you for allowing the IRB to make the determination about whether or not review is required.

HRPP Staff