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# A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate: What Happened in Ten Years?

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A CASE STUDY OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BACCALAUREATE:

WHAT HAPPENED IN TEN YEARS?

by

Bonnie S. Hofland

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

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Under the Supervision of Professor Barbara LaCost

Lincoln, Nebraska

August, 2011

A CASE STUDY OF THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE BACCALAUREATE:  
WHAT HAPPENED IN TEN YEARS?

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University of Nebraska, 2011

Adviser: Barbara Y. LaCost

A growing number of community colleges are offering bachelor degrees in addition to maintaining their traditional functions. This case study examined one community college that began offering bachelor degrees in 1999. The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical "portrait" of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs. Specifically, I explored, through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty, how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college.

Several conclusions were drawn from the data. The interviewees were adamant Great Basin College is continuing to live up to its community college mission by offering the baccalaureate degrees. They did not perceive the mission had changed; it had been extended. Offering baccalaureate degrees have impacted Great Basin College in several ways. The chief impacts included the recruiting and hiring of faculty with doctorate degrees resulting in a change of culture and an increase in expenses, transforming of the general education, increasing the library holdings, developing of procedures and policies resulting in more standardization of processes and curriculum, creating a workload policy, increasing student services and transforming the perception of the college by the

community by creating legitimacy and a sense of place. The interviewees perceived these changes as strengthening all degrees and programs.

Two major themes emerged: inevitability of change and connected with community. The respondents viewed change as inherent in their past, their present and their future- change is inevitable. They emphasized the link between change and leadership and technology. The interviewees stressed their commitment to the community and their responsiveness to its needs developing a cohesive relationship between the college and the community. The study concluded that although adding baccalaureate degrees was an important event, the continual change in the community's needs, the ever changing developments in technology, and the change of leadership had a greater impact on the evolution of this community college.

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## **Chapter I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Problem Statement**

Community colleges originally were created to offer individuals higher education opportunities that were not provided in university settings. Through time, the offerings of the community colleges have diversified. Recently some community colleges began offering baccalaureate degrees; this phenomenon has resulted in controversy over the mission and function of the community college. Vaughn (2000) outlined the mission of most community colleges as shaped by the following commitments:

- Serving all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students
- Providing a comprehensive educational program
- Serving the community as a community-based institution of higher education
- Teaching and learning
- Fostering lifelong learning

Many believe that a community college cannot be all things to all people and offering four year degrees may decrease the focus from the open access mission (Dougherty, 2001; Eaton, 2005; Townsend, 2005; Wattenbarger, 2000). Furthermore, the graduates' preparedness to compete in the market or be successful in graduate school has been questioned. Others believe that the community college should respond to the needs of its community and the changing student population (Floyd, 2006; Floyd & Walker, 2003; Walker, 2001).

There are three reasons why community colleges began offering the baccalaureate degree as a response to a variety of social and economic concerns. First, offering a baccalaureate provided an opportunity to further satisfy the community services responsibility of community colleges through access to the baccalaureate degree in regions of the state where it was not previously available (Garmon, 2004). The rising demand of employers and students created motivation for the community college baccalaureate. Second, some state systems viewed the community college baccalaureate as a cost effective means for individuals to earn a baccalaureate degree as opposed to the university (Walker, 2001). Third, the community college baccalaureate was an opportunity to provide specific programs that produced graduates in areas of shortage such as nursing and elementary education (Floyd & Walker, 2003).

Some published papers offered individual stories about the community college baccalaureate; others provided commentaries. *The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues* (Floyd et al., 2005) explored and examined the multifaceted realms related to the community college baccalaureate. Recently researchers have addressed specific issues that arise when community colleges offer a baccalaureate degree. Most of the research is reported in dissertations, and organizational transformation has been a primary concern. Plecha (2008) provided evidence that over time, community colleges conferring baccalaureate degrees had tendencies to morph into four-year institutions, abandoning the community college mission. Petry (2003) revealed that students have more access to the degree and the workforce development of the

surrounding communities. Included in this research was an outline of what community colleges should consider before providing a baccalaureate degree.

As baccalaureate programs only recently have been offered, research in addressing how offering baccalaureate degrees has changed community colleges is limited. Overall, the literature has examined (a) what community colleges did in the preparation of becoming a four year institution, (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Dougherty, 2001), (b) how policies changed in order to allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees (Burrows, 2002; Manias, 2007; Pershin; 2006), (c) what community colleges should consider before offering a baccalaureate degree (Petry, 2003), d) the cost effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate (Bemmel, 2008) and (e) what four year degrees mean to faculty development and support (Ross, 2006).

Research addressing what actually happens to community colleges after offering the four-year degrees is limited. Over time, further research may determine whether or not the community colleges adhere to the traditional community college mission.

In 1999, Nevada approved its first community college to confer a baccalaureate degree. The Board of Regents granted Great Basin College the privilege to offer a Bachelors Degree in Elementary Education. In lieu of this decision, the Nevada System of Higher Education added a section to its procedures and guidelines manual. It states,

The NSHE *Master Plan for Higher Education in Nevada* provides for “selected niche baccalaureate degrees” at community colleges. For purposes of this policy, such degrees can be defined as baccalaureate degrees that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- promote the goals of the *Master Plan for Higher Education in Nevada*;
- address a unique educational need of an identifiable population; and
- enhance access to populations which otherwise would not be

served due to geographic isolation or other barriers. (Nevada System of Higher Education Procedures and Guidelines Manual, 2010, chap. 6)

The manual further states, “Since, it is not the intention of the NSHE community colleges to abandon their community college mission, each proposal must address this issue in both a cultural and organizational context.” Thirty-two items, which the institution must address when seeking a baccalaureate degree, are outlined in the manual (see Appendix I). Some criteria include: determining if there is a need and demand for the degree through a feasibility study; qualification of faculty; workload issues; needed facilities and equipment; fostering the cultural and organizational environment that ensures adherence to the community college mission; required additional student services; addressing general education; additional costs; consideration of a cooperative program between nearby four-year institutions; needed library acquisitions; impact on faculty, facilities, or other students; anticipated accreditation issues; and relationship to the associate degrees.

Although the NSHE Board of Regents requires the requesting institution to address each of these issues, questions arise whether the offering of the baccalaureate degree has transformed the community college into something different than originally intended.

I gathered data about how the college evolved and how the baccalaureate degree impacted, if at all, the other functions of the college. Twenty respondents were interviewed to determine in part whether the college has moved away from the traditional community college mission or adhered to its original intent. After the interviews were completed, more data were collected to see if their perceptions matched the data.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical "portrait" of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. Specifically, I explored, through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty, how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college.

### **Research Questions**

#### **Central Research Question**

How has a community college transformed to a community college with five baccalaureate degrees? What impact has offering four-year degrees made on the community college mission?

#### **Topical Questions**

1. What do the respondents perceive as significant events in the history of Great Basin College and the evolution of Great Basin College?
2. How has offering four year programs impacted the traditional community college mission? As Great Basin College added four-year programs, was it



able to retain its institutional identity mission as a traditional community college as perceived by the respondents?

3. What do the respondents believe about the college's investment in maintaining the community college mission?
4. What are the respondents' perceptions of how the four-year programs impacted other functions of the college?
5. How do the respondents perceive the impact of the four-year programs on the faculty, the curriculum, governance, the culture of the college, faculty workload, facilities and equipment, or students services?

### **Location and Scope of the Study**

Great Basin College has offered baccalaureate degrees since 1999. The Bachelors of Arts in Elementary Education was the first baccalaureate degree followed by the Bachelor of Arts in Applied Science, Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies, Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education, and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The college then added a 3+1 social work degree in partnership with a university in the state. Since the bachelors' degrees inception, Great Basin College has maintained the other community college functions. As well as offering the baccalaureate degree, Great Basin College offers transfer degrees like the associate of arts and associate of science, terminal degrees like the associate of applied science, developmental education, continuing education, workforce development, dual credit, certificates of achievement, and cultural enrichment programs and courses. The four-year degrees build upon the two year degrees. The bachelor of applied science builds upon the associate of applied science.

Great Basin College serves the six rural counties of Nevada. Its service area is 62,000 square miles or 54% of Nevada's land mass. The population of the service area is approximately 120,000 people or 5% of the population. The main campus is located in Elko. There are permanent Great Basin College centers in Battle Mountain, Ely, Pahrump and Winnemucca. There are 20 satellite centers. In providing higher education to its vast service area, distance education technology is used extensively. Over 55% of Great Basin College's enrollment is through interactive video connections or online (internet) courses.

Nevada has granted two other community colleges the opportunity to offer select baccalaureate degrees. The College of Southern Nevada offers a Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene while Western Nevada College offers an Applied Bachelors Degree in Technology of Construction Management.

### **Significance of the Study**

Most of the published articles about the community college baccalaureate are founded on either a college's story about how the offering of a baccalaureate degree came to be or about individual's opinions on whether community colleges should extend its mission to include offering a baccalaureate degree. The controversy has been established. Both sides have outlined their key points. Policies have been established and community colleges are offering baccalaureate degrees.

The next logical step is to examine how offering four year degrees has impacted the community colleges. Some of the community colleges have had ten years to gain permission, establish the programs, implement them, and live the new life. Enough time

has passed to see how these institutions have evolved and what changes, if any, have occurred.

The results of this study contribute to the limited research available on the impact adding four-year degrees made on community colleges. I examined the evolution of one community college and how adding four-year programs impacted the college. The study is unique because there are few community colleges that have been offering baccalaureate degrees for ten years or more. Adding baccalaureate degrees to the function of community colleges may have brought about consequences, intended or unintended, which can only be noted by the “wait and see” approach. Further, being able to find individuals who participated before the baccalaureate degrees, during the inception of the baccalaureate degree, and remain at the same institution after the transition period is uncommon. The 20 interviewees of the study have an average of 20.5 years at Great Basin College. They lived through the evolution and can talk about the before, during, and after of the transition. In some way or another, many of them participated in the development of the program. Therefore, results provide insight to the future of community colleges desiring to offer four-year programs. Results answer some of the questions raised during the debate on whether community colleges should offer baccalaureate degrees and if they lose their identities and purpose. Community colleges traditionally served a niche in the scheme of higher education. Although their function continues to evolve, will they be able to accomplish their given purpose? I took an in-depth look at one college that has offered the baccalaureate degree for ten years.

### **Definition of Terms and Acronyms**

*Community College* is defined by Cohen and Brawer (2008) as any institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree (p.5). Floyd and Skolnik (2005) consider institutions that retain the basic mission of a community college while conferring some baccalaureate degree as hybrid institutions.

*Community College Baccalaureate (CCB)* is defined as “one coming from public community colleges or two-year institutions that are approved to confer baccalaureate degrees in one or more areas” (Floyd, 2006, p. 64). It has been described as the degree granted by postsecondary institutions approved for associate degree awards with the addition of limited baccalaureate degree approval in specialized fields. In most, but not all cases, the CCB degree includes the same general education requirements of certain university-granted baccalaureates. In some cases, however, the general education requirements are not the same, and the degrees are more focused on workforce preparation without an expectation of serving as a prerequisite for any graduate-level program. The baccalaureate degree is awarded by the community college. In many states, such as Nevada, West Virginia, Texas, and Florida, the authorizing legislative language mandates that the college must continue the community college mission as baccalaureate degree offerings are added to the curriculum (Floyd & Walker, 2009, p. 101-102).

*Articulation Baccalaureate* is a formal articulation agreement with community college and university- University confers degree (2+2).

*Workforce Baccalaureate* is a traditional four-year baccalaureate degree (teacher education, nursing, law enforcement, public service).

*Applied Baccalaureate or Bachelor of Applied Science* is a degree program consisting of four years of required specialized study in the applied sciences (e.g., technology, business management).

*Interactive Video (IAV)* is a distance education technology that originates in one location and is broadcast to other locations. Students interact with an instructor through live compressed video on television screens.

*Livenet Course* is asynchronous online classroom in which the instructor and students meet through the internet at a specific time for discussions using a microphone headset. Students may participate in course discussions on their computer.

*Service Area* is used to define the community college's geographic service area as defined by the Nevada System of Higher Education. Geographic service areas are appropriate for interactive video when designating the institution with responsibility for a.) establishing and maintaining interactive video sites in an area and b.) coordinating the receipt of programs using interactive video with offering institutions. Geographic service areas do not apply to web-based instruction.

### **Assumptions**

All studies are built upon assumptions that may shape them. Three assumptions were apparent from the beginning of the research project. This section delineates the set of assumptions that underlie the present study's inquiry into the evolution of a community college's experience while adding four-year programs to its functions.

1. Participants are truthful about their experiences with the evolution of Great Basin College.
2. Participants want to make experiences and perspectives known to others and to the researcher.
3. Great Basin College is willing to share pertinent documents, data, and information with the researcher.

### **Delimitations and Limitations of the Study**

The delimitations of the study included a description of the population to be studied and notations about potential for the findings to be generalized. Great Basin College is unique in its geographical region and its large service area. The closest university is 200 miles away. Because of its rural location, generalization to urban community colleges may not be relevant. Because of students' limited access to higher education in this rural area, options to earn a four-year degree are restricted to either relocating or completing an online four-year program. This study focused on a single, rural community college as opposed to other institutions.

Although the interviewees were carefully chosen to represent all areas and departments on campus, other individuals at Great Basin College may perceive its evolution differently. The interviewees were delimited by two criteria: (a) years of experience at Great Basin College and (b) willingness to complete interviews. Other employees may have different opinions or beliefs.

### **Overview of the Remaining Chapters**

In Chapter II, I present a selected literature review addressing the background of community colleges, the history of community colleges, their purpose and the rationale behind their creation. The traditional community college mission is explained. I then provide an explanation of the community college baccalaureate and the debate that surrounds its existence. I conclude with the current research that addresses community college baccalaureates.

In Chapter III, I describe the methodology. Rationale for using the case study tradition and justification of the selected case study begins the chapter. I then explain the selection of interviewees, the interview process, the interview protocol, data collection procedures and data analysis. I conclude the chapter with the validity of the study, the role of the researcher and ethical considerations.

In Chapter IV an in-depth summary of the context of the study of Great Basin College, is provided through details of the location, the mission, the history and the characteristics. The particulars are necessary to understanding the respondents' stories.

In Chapter V I recapitulated the study's research questions. I answered each of the questions based upon the data collected, documents examined and responses of the interviewees.

The themes that emerged from the interviews are presented in Chapter VI. Much of the information gathered is based upon the interviews of 20 respondents. Themes were developed based upon what the individuals had to say.

In Chapter VII, I provided a summary of the findings. I concluded with the relevance of these conclusions for future community college baccalaureate programs and

others interested in knowing how a community college may evolve when adding four-year programs to its functions. In this chapter, I also presented recommendations for practice and future research based on the findings.



## **Chapter II**

### **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

#### **History of Community Colleges and Their Evolving Missions**

Some define the role of the community college narrowly. Cohen and Brawer (2008) stated the community college is “any institution regionally accredited to award the associate in arts or the associate in science as its highest degree” (p. 5). They professed that community colleges began with the same core mission and have maintained it through time, although it has become more comprehensive in nature. Cohen and Brawer (2008) outlined the curricular functions of the community college as (a) the academic function- transferring an associate degree to a four year institution, (b) vocational programs-providing vocational skill to help individuals enter the workforce, (c) continuing education-offering skills and training to assist individuals to better their talents, (d) community education- providing cultural enrichments for the community, and (e) developmental/remedial education- allowing all individuals to have access to higher education.

Others define the community college more broadly. Vaughan (2000) explained the maintenance of a core mission throughout time. He posited that the community college was created to “provide access to postsecondary educational programs and services that lead to stronger, more vital communities. The way individual community colleges achieve this mission may differ considerably” (p. 8). He stated that all community colleges provide (a) a comprehensive educational program, (b) serving the community as a community-based institution, (c) services to all segments of society,

promoting open-access to all individuals that offers equal and fair treatment to all students, (d) a place for fostering life-long learning and (e) an atmosphere for teaching and learning, not research. Although he sees the curriculum changing throughout time, he does not see these core missions compromised. He did not specify the highest degree awarded but defined community colleges by core mission commitments. His definition provided a framework free of specifics and encourages community colleges to take individual identities and roles.

Although community colleges can be defined by the degrees offered, curricular functions, or core values, the researchers agreed that community college roles have changed since inception. Townsend and Dougherty (2006) supposed that external and internal factors have played roles in shaping the community college missions. External societal changes, such as the economy and rising demands for new skills from business and students, have emphasized the need for workforce and economic development. Serving the communities and facilitating educational opportunity have supported growth in the development of adult education and community services. Lastly, governmental officials and community college leaders have used the community colleges to increase their own popularity or use the mission to grow the financial support of the community college itself. In a literature review by Foote (1999), organizational change in the community college is noted as inevitable and the “colleges are predisposed to transformation” (p. 133). She notes that although community colleges are constantly making and remaking themselves in response to social, economic, and governmental transformation, change can be controlled and managed through planning and vision.

The importance of how community colleges began and what transpired in our country's history to instigate changes is critical to understanding the roles of the community colleges. In higher education, community colleges are a relatively new idea and have been in existence in the United States since the early 1900s.

Tillery and Deegan (as cited in Levinson, 2005) describe five generations of the U.S. community college: (a) from 1900 to 1930, the extension of the secondary school; (b) from 1930 to 1950, the junior college generation; (c) from 1950 to 1970 the community college generation; (d) from 1970 to 1985, the comprehensive community college generation; and (e) from 1985 to the present, an era that is not yet assigned a name. These generations provide a framework of the role of the community college based upon our country's history.

From 1900 to 1930 the main role of the community college was that of an extension of the secondary school. The first junior college began in 1901 in Joliet, Illinois. It was founded by William Rainey Harper, the president of the University of Chicago, with the premise that junior colleges would serve primarily as a transfer institution to universities. Harper, considered by some to be the father of junior colleges, perceived that the associate degree focused mainly on a liberal arts education. The junior college would teach students the lower-division preparatory materials. Students who completed the associate degree could transfer to four-year institutions to pursue baccalaureate degrees or seek employment that demanded the two-year degree.

Community colleges developed in other states. Wisconsin supported the idea of community colleges and emphasized the university as a way to assist through extension

services and assistance to the state government. California passed legislation that encouraged postsecondary classes in high schools and provided state and county financial support for junior college students. In California, the largest community college system, almost half of postsecondary students attend community colleges.

In the junior college students focus on a liberal arts education with general education offerings as the majority of courses. The curricular offerings included science, humanities, English, math, music and social sciences. Some of the early junior colleges also offered community service classes. Junior colleges grew in popularity. In 1909, 20 junior colleges existed, and by 1940, this had grown to over 600 community colleges. In the beginning decades, the average number of students attending junior colleges was approximately 150 students per college.

Many of the first junior colleges were created by community leaders. They encouraged having a college in their town and believed it brought community prestige. It also brought a sense of refinement to their area. Many community leaders and business owners collaborated and utilized local individuals to teach and manage the colleges. Community leaders saw the junior college as a way to meet the needs of the community, the individuals, and a way to provide education to anyone who wanted to pursue it.

From 1930 to 1950, the vocational role grew. In the 1930s when the depression was occurring, junior colleges began to offer more vocational training. The goal was to help individuals to further their skills to gain employment. Vocational offerings increased while maintaining transfer programs to the universities.

In the 1940s, the Truman Commission Report was published. It utilized the word “community college” and advocated that junior colleges become an avenue to access to higher education and be more comprehensive in nature. The report emphasized the importance of providing to all Americans a “general education” that underscores civic responsibility. The commission suggested that such an education could be provided by a network of low-cost community colleges throughout the nation (Levinson, 2005).

Dougherty (2001) viewed the comprehensive community college role as contradictory. One of the community college’s roles is to provide workforce preparation. He viewed this role as costly and possibly difficult while keeping up with the changing needs of employers. He was concerned that business may have too much influence over the college curriculum. Another role is college access to the baccalaureate for students. He cited sources that students that enter a community college rather than a four-year college significantly have a lower probability of attaining a baccalaureate degree. Because the community college offers occupational education, many of the undecided students that might have gotten a four-year degree settle for occupational education. He argued that the vocational training detracts from the transfer role. The intended role of the junior college was to provide the first two years of a college degree followed by the student transfer to a university. By adding the vocational role, community colleges hindered students from earning the four-year degree. Dougherty (2001) predicted that community colleges will not remain static but continue to react to the economic, social and political environments. With globalization and the changing needs of trained or

educated workers in the United States, the community colleges would have to continue to be there for individuals who wanted an education or to be trained for the workforce.

Brint and Karabel (1989) outlined two theories behind the shift from college-preparatory transfer programs to one that emphasizes terminal vocational training. The first was a consumer-choice model. They theorized that students are consumers that demand a change in curriculum that is more focused on employment. The students preferred to enroll in programs that would quickly prepare them to gain employment. The students are trying to obtain the highest possible rates of return for the lowest cost in time, effort, and expense. The second model, a business-domination model, which theorizes that change in curricular offering of the community college is due to powerful business interests that prefer programs that provide technically trained workers. Vocational education is driven by the business world's need to acquire trained labor.

Brint and Karbel (1989) argued that the shift from transfer programs to vocational programs limited the social mobility of students. Instead of encouraging individuals to pursue the four-year degree, community colleges allowed individuals to "settle" for a lesser degree that maintained the students' status quo of lower-socioeconomic status. Brint and Karabel (1989) thought this undermined the core values of the community college which was social advancement. In 2006, Alfonso conducted a longitudinal study which concluded that "community college students, including those who have baccalaureate expectations, are significantly less likely than their 4-year counterparts to attain a bachelor's degree...even when lower socioeconomic status, academic preparation, and education expectations is accounted for" (p. 894).

From 1950s to 1970, the comprehensive college developed. Not only was the transfer mission and liberal arts encouraged, as well as the vocational role, but continuing education was added. In 1960s and 1970s, the number of junior colleges grew. The notion of more comprehensive community colleges expanded into other areas. Remedial and developmental education were added to the list of roles. With the changing times, junior colleges became community colleges, each reflective of the community in which it resided. Students who attended community colleges worked full-time and took classes part-time. Each student had personal goals that may or may not be obtaining a transfer degree. Students wanted more training, increased access to vocational programs and certificates, and community colleges were quick to adapt to the communities they served. They had less red tape to cut through to make changes. They were responsive to students' wants and needs and the business and industries in their geographical location.

Kane and Rouse (1999) outlined the debate over the community college's role in providing access to higher education and the role in economic development. They acknowledged the contradictions facing the college and the concern that the workforce development role played in possibly deterring students from completing a four-year degree, but they argued that community colleges have provided the gateway for those on the verge of enrolling in college: older students, those who couldn't afford to attend full-time, and those who needed to develop their basic skills. Community college increased aggregate educational attainment and were associated with higher wages, even for those not completing degrees.

The controversy that surrounded the comprehensive community college mission grew. Some argued that community colleges could not be all things to all people and that the comprehensive community college could not maintain quality in all of its programs, and some programs may suffer as a result of the expansion of the mission. Townsend (2001) and Townsend and Wilson (2006) brought attention to their concern of the transfer function of the community college mission. With the transfer rates fluctuating, energy should be directed at ensuring students transfer successfully to four-year institutions. Others argued that the mission of the community college was to meet the needs of the community in which it existed and served. The mission should continue to grow and expand with the times and demands (Downey, Pusser, & Turner, 2006).

Baily and Morset (2004) examined several community colleges and found vertical and horizontal expansion of the community college mission. They provided the example of community colleges offering an associate of science degree in technology, as well as an applied science degree in technology, a certificate in technology and individual courses in technology so that students could improve his/her skills. He emphasized that the evolution of the community college would not change its core mission as outlined by Vaughan (2000).

From 1985 to present, researchers have addressed defining the community college role. The core values in which community colleges it were founded are questioned. At the same time, the word community has been driven to the forefront in which community colleges stand. In 1988 The Commission on the Future of Community Colleges was created. The report, *Building Communities: a Vision for a New Century*, defined



community not only as a region to be served but as a climate to be created. The report stated that community colleges should play an important role in creating the climate and serving the region. Community not only refers to meeting the needs of the service area or geographical region, but also the environment being a community of learners. While creating a community, the college must understand the diverse backgrounds of the students and bring them together for a common purpose. Cohen and Brawer (2008) stated:

Perhaps community colleges should merely be characterized as untraditional...Community colleges do not even follow their own traditions. They change frequently, seeking new programs and new clients. Community colleges are indeed untraditional, but they are truly American because at their best, they represent the United States at its best. Never satisfied with resting on what has been done before, they try new approaches to old problems. They maintain open channels for individuals, enhancing the social mobility that has characterized America, and they accept the idea that society can be better, just as individuals can better their lot within it. (p. 40-41)

More recently, Alfred and Carter (2011) argued that community colleges must be equipped to accept and deal with change. They discussed four transformational forces which community colleges must respond: students with changing needs and expectations, new competitors, technology, and the drive for performance and accountability. Alfred and Carter made the argument that community colleges must maintain their core values

to succeed. They defined the four core values as: (a) responding to multiple learners' needs with flexible learning opportunities, (b) increasing access through affordability, diversity, adaptability, and flexibility, (c) committing to help individuals achieve a standard of living and quality of life to which they aspire, and (d) creating community connections and partnerships.

In the twenty-first century, community colleges are more comprehensive in nature. They include not only the basic curricular function of the transfer degree, vocational programs, developmental education, continuing education, and community service, but also English as a second language instruction, industry specific certification, workforce development, dual credits with secondary schools, small business developments, contract education, tech prep courses (which encourage high school students to begin taking technical courses at the community college), and even baccalaureate degrees (Walker, 2001). Some argue that these changes need to occur to meet the needs of a changing, technological society/ community, meet workforce shortages, generate revenues from differing sources, and meet the changing needs of our students.

Community college missions focus on the individual. First, they provide access to an education for all students. Students who were not prepared to attend universities can build their skills through developmental/ remedial education classes. Community colleges maintain an open-door policy with no admission requirements. Second, they provide individual mobility to students. By providing an education, individuals can move from the lower-class of society. Many people nicknamed the community college the "people's

college,” and “democratic colleges.” Community colleges have encouraged individuals from low-socioeconomic status to obtain an education and work towards the American dream. Third, the community colleges are more affordable than universities which allow more individuals to attend. Fourth, community colleges encourage students from all backgrounds to attend and are inclusive in nature, creating a community. Finally, individuals do not have to move to receive an education. Geographical locations of the community colleges provide access to more students (Rhoads & Valadez, 1996; Giller, 2001; Baily, 2002; McClenney, 2004; Cohen & Brawer, 2008)

McPhail and McPhail (2006) acknowledged the multiple missions of community colleges. They developed a framework for mission prioritization. By community college leaders revisiting their core institutional values and societal demands, each community college could reinvent itself based upon a strategic, informed process.

“As society evolves, our institutions must accommodate change or risk becoming obsolete. Community colleges, as providers of higher education in a particular geographic area, must be responsible not only to local community needs but also to national developments and demographic changes” (Chen, 2008, p. 1). Based upon current data, Chen outlined seven trends in community colleges: (1) increased distance learning, (2) great number of baccalaureate degrees awarded, (3) increased partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions, (4) greater recruiting of baby boomers, (5) increased enrollment across different student groups, (6) increased partnerships with business, and (7) increased response to globalization. Chen posited that by providing more classes online, students have a greater access to education. Because of the

workforce demand, Chen argued that creating partnerships with four-year institutions to ensure transferability or conferring the baccalaureate degree, community colleges are providing access to the baccalaureate degree. Chen concluded that in order to survive, community colleges must be in tune with the changing society and keep up with the trends.

There is agreement that community college missions are evolving and forever changing, that more students are attending higher education that more people have some sort of post high school education, and that more nontraditional students are pursuing a higher education. The controversy arises when the role of the community college is questioned (Kasper, 2002-2003; Martin & Samels, 2001). Should the community college be all things to all people? Can the quality of the educational programs be maintained when more is added to its role? Last, does providing access to “some” education detour from the four-year degree?

### **Community Colleges and Baccalaureate Programming**

Providing access to higher education is the primary function of the community college. Community colleges include access to the baccalaureate as part of this mission. The thought that the community college could expand its programming to meet the needs of its community while providing access to baccalaureate degrees became more common. Politicians, business leaders, students, policy makers and institution leaders support that community colleges should explore new ways of fulfilling workforce needs of local communities while still addressing the issues of access, costs, and relevant curriculum needs. Universities and community colleges began to collaborate in new ways to make

transferring easier for the students. More formal agreements were signed, and partnerships were formed. In many cases, this improved access to the baccalaureate (Gerderman, 2001; Durdella, 2003). These campuses may or may not use their sister institutions as collaborators. Community colleges became an integral part of the baccalaureate in a variety of ways.

Floyd and Skolnik (2005) explained that the community college baccalaureate is in response to a variety of social and economic concerns. Three factors affect the motivation for community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. The first is the rising demand from employers and students. Many of the local workforce demands require a baccalaureate degree. The second is the rising costs of universities. With the rising costs, individuals can not afford to earn four-year degrees. The third is the limited programs and access to meet these demands. Typically students must move to earn a four-year degree, and many universities don't allow all students to attend. Community colleges usually develop programs that meet the geographical needs of the communities they serve while continuing to have an open-door policy. This allows for all individuals access to four-year degrees in areas in which they can be employed after completing their degrees.

Floyd (2005) wrote about the history of the community college baccalaureate. In 1970 New York created the Fashion Institute of Technology with a bachelor degree in fashion. However, the movement did not catch on until the 1990s. Utah, Vermont, Nevada, and Florida were the next to allow community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees. These degrees included teacher education programs and other applied science degrees to meet the local workforce needs. In these states the community college

baccalaureate allowed the institutions to continue being a community college while expanding their offerings to four-year degrees. This poses the question whether these community colleges will be able to behave like a community college and maintain its community college mission. Several years later, the additional states: Texas, Indiana, Hawaii, and Washington allowed community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees (Floyd, 2005).

Several other states have allowed community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees but have required them to switch their institutional mission from a community college to a four-year college. They include Georgia, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. Because of the inconsistency among states to classify colleges, the community college baccalaureate identification lines have been blurred. Because these community college baccalaureates are required to change to a four-year institution, the question remains whether they will transform and behave like a four-year institution or try to maintain their community college culture and traditional functions (Floyd, 2005).

Skolnik (2005) told of the story of the development of the community college baccalaureate in Canada. Canada has a community college system, created in the 1960s. Although community colleges are even younger in Canada, the concept of community college and its role is still being debated. Community colleges in Canada began offering baccalaureate degrees in 1980. In 2003, governments in three of Canada's four largest provinces authorized community colleges to offer the baccalaureate degree. More than a quarter of Canada's community colleges now offer at least one baccalaureate program with estimates of this rising significantly in the near future. Although the primary

motivation for offering the community college baccalaureate was to increase access to the baccalaureate, several other community colleges began offering the baccalaureate degree to respond to the labor market with applied degrees. The trend concentrated on community colleges offering a new, more applied type of degree to meet workforce needs in fields in areas not commonly offered by universities. Many of the community colleges in British Columbia that offer baccalaureates took on a new identity and are considered university-colleges- “to create a new type of institution that offered the best of both university and college programs and services to the region” (Skolnik, 2005, p. 61). In Alberta the government maintains that the “community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees will not become university, nor will they confer degrees in traditional university programs...The intention of the applied degree demonstration project is to allow public colleges and technical institutes greater flexibility to fulfill their traditional mandate which is providing career and technical education and training to Albertans at the certificate and diploma level” (Skolnik, 2005, p. 61). Because of the differences in policies between provinces, there is question to how the community college baccalaureates will continue to evolve and change in Canada. Skolnik (2005) noted there were issues with graduates from community colleges being admitted into graduate school, difficulties with transferability of credits, and the question of the commitment to the traditional community college mission.

The community college baccalaureate usually addresses three different functions. The first is the workforce baccalaureate. This is a traditional four-year baccalaureate degree in areas such as teacher education, allied health, law enforcement, and public

service (Floyd & Walker, 2009). The second is the applied baccalaureate, in which the “baccalaureate is articulated with an associate of applied science degree and is offered in specialized fields of study such as technology management, business management, certain health fields, and information technology” (Floyd & Walker, 2009). The third is the inverted baccalaureate (3+1). This is usually in a technical field where the first three years are used to complete technical courses, and the last year is used to complete general education requirements (Floyd & Walker, 2009).

Floyd (2005) defined a four-part typology of community colleges and baccalaureate programs. First is the articulation baccalaureate. This is “when there is procedural governing student transfer spelled out in an intrastate applicable to both institutions” (p. 32). The university confers the degree. The second model is the university center baccalaureate and concurrent-use baccalaureate. This is when a consortium of colleges and universities jointly use facilities for the delivery of the upper-division courses and programs. The university confers the degree in partnership with others. The third model is the university extension baccalaureate. This is similar to the university center model except where the university offers the courses is formally part of the university. Again, the university confers the degree. The fourth model is the community college baccalaureate. This is when the community college offers all of the courses required for the four-year degree and confers the degree. The community college baccalaureate is a hybrid institution that may confer only one bachelor’s degree or several. This creates classification issues. Are they considered a four-year college, even if they maintain their community college status?



Most legislative bodies still consider community college baccalaureates as community colleges with extended programming. Some higher education affiliates recognize the change and responded through the addition of differing classification. The Southern Regional Education Board identifies those conferring the baccalaureate degree as associate/baccalaureate institutions. In 2006 the Carnegie Foundation (Carnegie Foundation Website) created a new classification for community colleges that confer baccalaureate degrees; baccalaureate/associate colleges are for associate degree-granting colleges that award as many as 10% of their degrees at the bachelor's level. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (National Center for Education Statistics Website) reclassified institutions that were awarding bachelor's degrees to its "Four-year Public" category.

Some community colleges have the baccalaureate as a stepping stone to becoming a state college. They no longer consider themselves a community college. Dixie State College in Utah and Bismarck State College in North Dakota are examples. After they began offering the baccalaureate degree, they changed their mission and institutional identity to a four-year college (Dixie State College Website & Bismarck State College Website).

### **Support for Community College Baccalaureate**

Community colleges have been considered "people's colleges" or "democracy's college," primarily because of their open-access admissions policies, their affordable costs, and their geographic locations that are within easy, driving distance for most people (Floyd & Skolnik, 2005). Some leaders see allowing baccalaureate degrees to be

an extension of the evolution of the community college access (Walker, 1999 and 2001; Garmon, 2000; McKinney, 2003). Walker (2005) advocated for the creation of Community College Baccalaureate Association (CCBA) to advocate for access to the baccalaureate. It was created to “promote access to the baccalaureate degree on community college campuses, and to serve as a resource for information on various models for accomplishing this purpose” (Community College Baccalaureate Association Website). The CCBA website stated that the purpose of community college baccalaureate is:

An educated populace is the foundation of a free and prosperous society.

The baccalaureate degree is an important entry requirement for the better jobs and a better lifestyle. Therefore, every person should have an opportunity to pursue the baccalaureate degree at a place that is convenient, accessible and affordable.

First, the support for the community college baccalaureate is centered on the historical foundation of the community college movement. The strongest support comes from the extension of educational access to people unable or unwilling to attend four-year institutions. This may include the geographical relocation or the preparedness of the student (Burke & Garmon, 1995). Making the baccalaureate available to groups that would not otherwise attain it is a way of democratizing the degree and making higher education available to many students (Baily & Morest, 2006).

Second, some two-year institutions saw this as an opportunity to fulfill their community service and meet the local workforce needs, as well as the demands of the

students wanting employment in the geographical region they reside (McKee, 2006).

Many of the demands of the workforce include a four-year degree. The four-year degree is becoming more common as the entry floor education that employers expect (Walker, 2001; Wallace, 1999).

Third, some state governments viewed the community college baccalaureate as a cost-effective way to increase access to baccalaureate education. Because the lower rate of tuition, higher education could be affordable to students who may not be able to fund a four-year degree at a university (Brophy, 2000; Jacobs & Dougherty, 2006; Meyer, 2006; Walker, 2001).

Last, state officials see this as a potential solution to a major work-force shortage in areas such as nursing and teaching. Projection of the shortages in these areas may leave states in a catastrophic situation. Searching for individuals to be employed in these areas may lessen the quality of the profession by trying to meet the required quota. These officials wanted to be proactive by developing these programs based upon projected numbers so that the quality of people did not hinder public service as in nursing and teaching (Floyd & Walker, 2003; Furlong, 2003; Garmon, 1998; Walker, 2001). Garmon (2000) pointed out that nurses trained at community colleges make up two-thirds of the current U.S. population of nurses who take the national nursing exam, and they have the same or better results as their bachelor-degree counterparts. One explanation for this is that community colleges may provide smaller classes and more individualized attention from teaching-oriented faculty than that at a university where faculty must produce research (Grubb & Worthen, 1999). Garmon (2006) stated that the “community colleges

needed to keep their identity and mission as two-year institutions while fulfilling a rather limited demand for specialized baccalaureate degrees” (p. 6).

The community college baccalaureate support was also based in part on practicality. The literature suggested that community colleges could provide baccalaureate education in ways universities could not. Examples were more flexible scheduling for part-time students, better services for at-risk students, while being more affordable (Walker, 1999; Troumpoucis, 2004; Skolnik & Floyd, 2005).

### **Concerns about the Community College Baccalaureate**

Although some states chose to pursue this route, others decided that the mission of the community college was not to confer baccalaureate degrees. They viewed the awarding of the community college baccalaureate degree as inappropriate and as threat to the basic core values of the community college (Mills, 2003; Lane, 2003; Wattenbarger, 2000). Maintaining the traditional role of the community college is an integral part of the future of the community college (Cohen & Brawer, 2008).

The most supported argument against the community college baccalaureate is that the institution may develop an incoherent identity. Dougherty (2001) referred to the community college as the “Contradictory College,” hybrid institutions that have many different purposes which are somewhat contradictory. Townsend (2003) viewed the movement of the community college baccalaureate as mission creep that “may well transform the institution to one that moves beyond its traditional roles of a junior partner to that of a serious competitor with senior institutions” (p. 3). Because community colleges are neither a true community colleges nor four-year institutions, they may

behave in a manner that is not cohesive and scattered into many pieces. Pederson (2001) suggested that colleges would initially commit to maintaining community college traditions but would eventually forget the “poor and academically under-prepared.” He also posited that there would be increases in the cost structure of the institution that would force them to become more like four-year colleges. Much of this pressure would come from regional and professional accrediting bodies. The focus and resources would take away from vocational and certificate programs, as well as developmental education (Manzo, 2001; Eaton, 2005). Other programs would suffer at the expense of the four-year programs. The transformation of the community college from one that adheres to the community college mission to one that behaves like a four-year institution is a stressed concern (Levin, 2001). Plecha (2008) concluded that over time, community colleges conferring baccalaureate degrees have a tendency to morph into behaving like four-year institutions, abandoning the community college mission.

Those who believe in neo-institutionalism argue that institutional motives are based upon justifiable explanations of organizational action (Brint & Karabel, 1989). They posited that the main source of power for institutional action and change is institutional agents such as state officials and professions and that state officials, through policy and funding, require conformity and standardization. The institutional motives are driven by legitimacy and prestige, as well as organizational behaviors that are modeled from successful organizations or from conforming to standards. Thus, institutions can become more similar over time and creates stability of organizations over time.

Levin (2004) modified the neo-institutional position in regards to the community college baccalaureate. He extended this theory to include that the state's primary motive for policy and funding is driven by its interpretation of global forces. Levin (2004) concluded in his literature review that "markets, not citizens are the focus of higher education institutions...Change in the purposes of colleges and universities in the past two decades are arguably a result of global competition and a marketplace orientation of higher education institutions" (p. 3). Because of globalization, community colleges reflect global identities and local identities, "while the global can penetrate the local, the local can also retain its historical character" (p. 2). Levin (2000) believed community college missions would expand even further because of globalization and technology. With the expansion of technology to blur the lines of geographic locations, the community college mission would have to be responsive to a greater community in which they serve. The community college responsiveness to globalization and technology, while retaining its commitment to the community in which it exists shapes its development (Levin, 2004).

Levin's modified theory raised two questions. The first being whether community colleges can fulfill economic development goals and human development goals simultaneously. The second being whether the community college baccalaureate would create a distinct institution that is not like a community college or a four-year state college. Levin argued that adding the baccalaureate degree not only changes the mission of the community college, it created challenges with the institutional identity.

The purpose of Levin's study was to examine the institutional identities of community college baccalaureates. He analyzed state legislation and official policy documents to determine the rationale and intent of the community college baccalaureate: if and to what extent economic competition contributes to programming, and if and to what extent the community mission of access is a compelling factor. He also interviewed 180 individuals on community college baccalaureate campuses. He concluded that both institutional and global forces were reflected in the development of the community college baccalaureate. Global forces influenced the community college programming to develop a workforce to compete in the global economy. Institutional forces influenced the community colleges to have a dual identity with two values systems and two subcultures. He concluded that when community colleges add baccalaureate programming, they have the potential to alter organizational culture and institutional identity. They continue to maintain true to the community college values of access and responsiveness. Yet standardization and policy requires them to behave as a four-year institution. Community colleges both adapt existing programs and establish new programs to prepare a workforce, serving state policy initiatives and employers' needs to compete and survive (Levin, 2001).

A second concern is the quality of the degree. Because many of the faculty are not properly prepared, it is suggested the community college baccalaureate would be an inferior degree. Faculty who are not required to have a doctorate might result in a lack of rigor. The graduates would not be prepared to enter the workforce or be successful in graduate school (Townsend, 2005; Drumm, 2000; Wattenbarger, 2000). To date, the

effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate graduates have not been documented.

The third concern is the overlap in missions with universities. Overall, state systems of higher education would spend money to support programs that could be supported by current institutions already providing these programs. There are other viable sources so opponents argue why put the system into a costly structural change. In Canada, the provinces set up community colleges, instead of local officials. The government examined the social, economic, cultural and political conditions across the country before deciding to make changes in the higher education system. In doing so, community colleges cannot offer baccalaureate degrees that are in direct competition with other institutions that offer similar degrees (Skolnik, 2005). In the United States we do not have this system of checks and balances, so the community college may be a repeat of a service that is already met by a sister institution.

The fourth concern is the community college as an affordable choice for higher education. With added support services, increased costly accreditation expenses, and the need to recruit properly prepared faculty members resulting in higher salaries, tuition may be increased to meet the increased costs to support the infrastructure of the four-year degrees (Eaton 2005; Wattenbargar, 2000).

The fifth concern is the maintaining of the open-door policy for admission. Adding a baccalaureate degree may result in a selective admission process. Although community colleges were developed to allow any individual the possibility of a higher education degree, individuals may not be able to pursue their dreams if the admission



process changes (Shannon & Smith, 2006). The admission process needs to be closely monitored to ensure the open-door policy remains.

The final concern is based upon perceptions. Many of the opponents to the community college baccalaureate believe that this is a way for community colleges to gain prestige.

### **Current Research about Community College Baccalaureate**

Because these programs have only been recently created, research in regard to the effectiveness of these programs is limited. The literature has examined how the missions of community colleges have evolved (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Dougherty, 2001), how policies have changed in order to allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees (Manias, 2007), what community colleges should consider before offering a baccalaureate degree (Petry, 2003), what faculty development and support needs should be considered (Ross, 2006), the cost effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate (Bemmel, 2008), and the competencies of teacher education graduates from a community college baccalaureate in comparison to a nearby state university (Floyd & St. Arnauld, 2007; Shah, 2010).

Many of the early published papers offered individual stories about the community college baccalaureate; while others provided commentaries. *The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues* (Floyd et al., 2005) explored and examined the multifaceted realms related to the community college baccalaureate. In a dissertation, Burrows (2002) told the story of the history, motives, and political strategies involved in the creation, enactment, and implementation of the baccalaureate

legislation in the state of Florida. Her research focused on St. Petersburg College, the first institution in Florida to offer the community college baccalaureate. After Burrows study, the Florida Senate approved additional community colleges to offer select baccalaureate degree programs. Building on Burrow's research, Pershin's (2006) dissertation examined and described in detail how policy was framed and constructed in Florida in order to permit community colleges in Florida to offer baccalaureate degrees.

Petry (2003) added to the existing dissertation studies about Florida's initiation of the community college baccalaureate. She examined five Florida community colleges to determine the factors that led to the introduction and initiation of these programs, as well as how they have transformed. She revealed that the programs were created so that students have better access to the baccalaureate degree and the workforce demands of the surrounding communities were better met. An outline of what colleges should consider before providing a baccalaureate degree was included.

Manias' (2007) dissertation was completed focused on the impact and outcomes of the legislation that enabled community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees. He examined whether three community college baccalaureate degree programs in Florida actually increased access to the baccalaureate degree as the legislation intended. He concluded that the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at community colleges in Florida are increasing access to the baccalaureate education.

In 2005, Gonzales, in his dissertation, examined the community college baccalaureate movement. He encouraged community college baccalaureates to utilize national databases, like IPEDS, to compare select institutional characteristics such as

completions by award level and information regarding instructional programs and degrees conferred to enhance accountability, inform policy decision-making, and facilitate monitoring the national trend of community college baccalaureates.

Rice (2007) examined how the community college mission may be impacted by offering the baccalaureate degree. From surveys of 14 institutions, Rice concluded that enrollments in the traditional community college missions (transfer courses, developmental instruction, and applied vocational courses) were not negatively affected when compared to the national trends.

Recently research has addressed the specific issues that arise when community colleges offer a baccalaureate degree. Most of the research stems from dissertations. Plecha (2008) explored the issue of community college identification. She wanted to know if community college that offer four-year degrees retain their institutional identity, or over time, morph completely into four year institutions, abandoning their community college values? Through interviewing three different community college baccalaureates, she provided evidence, that over time, community colleges conferring baccalaureate degrees had tendencies to morph into four-year institutions, abandoning the community college mission.

Ross (2006) used both a survey and interviews to identify what faculty support and development was required for traditional two-year college instructors to transition to a faculty that could deliver upper-division baccalaureate programming. He concluded that professional activities that were ongoing were important to the faculties feeling of success while teaching upper-division courses. Also, he reported that faculty required

more time to prepare and deliver upper-division courses versus lower-division programming. He concluded that community colleges that offer four-year programs need to consider added resources such as workload adjustments, library resources, technology support, faculty and student research and increased access to professional activity such as conferences and workshops when adding a four-year degree.

Bemmel, (2008) studied the cost-effectiveness of the baccalaureate at community college compared to that of a university. The researcher concluded that increased growth in the enrollment of the programs combined with the implementation of effectiveness measures comparable to those of the university would render baccalaureate programs at the community colleges more cost effective. Like most of the early dissertations, Bemmel research was limited to institutions in the state of Florida.

Two exploratory studies turned to the graduates to reveal more about the community college baccalaureate. The first exploratory study of the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs reported high licensure test passage rates for the graduates of these programs (Floyd & St. Arnauld, 2007). The investigators interviewed ten community colleges that offer a baccalaureate in teacher education. The primary motivator to create the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education was the community colleges' desire to meet the teacher shortage in their service area. Because the rural nature of some of the colleges, access to the baccalaureate was also indicated as a motivator. State policies changed to allow the community college to offer the baccalaureate. Increased resources were crucial to implementing the new programs. In addition, the expenses of accreditation, time to develop the program, and the

requiring of advanced education for faculty in education had to be addressed. All ten community colleges reported that all of their faculty are placed on the same salary scale. The study didn't have data about employment of the graduates, but anecdotal records that the graduates were employed in local school districts.

Shah (2010) conducted the second exploratory study of the competencies of teacher education graduates. A comparison of the results of the surveys indicated no significant differences between two groups with regard to their competencies as teachers. The results suggested that if the cost of baccalaureate degree delivery is less expensive via the community college baccalaureate, the community college baccalaureate is a viable option to reducing local teacher shortages.

Although community colleges were created to serve the geographical community in which they are located, studies have not been completed to determine what impact has been made on the communities in which they serve.

### **Summary**

This literature review presented background on main constructs framing this study, included the history of community colleges, their evolving mission, globalization, the history of community college baccalaureates, and the debate of the community college baccalaureate. The review also examined the current research on community college baccalaureates which was predominantly founded in dissertations.

## **Chapter III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In this chapter, I describe the detailed plan for the methodology for this case study. I begin this chapter with a rationale for using the case study tradition, and a justification of the selected case study. Then I provide an explanation of (a) the selection of interviewees, (b) the interview process, (c) a description of the interview protocol (d) data collection procedures and (e) the data analysis methods. Finally, I present the validity, limitations, and the role of the researcher.

The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical “portrait” of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs. Specifically, I explored how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty

#### **Rationale for Case Study Tradition**

Because I wanted to understand the impact of adding four-year programs to a community college, I designed an instrumental case study that elaborated the complexity of the issues (Stake, 1995). Researchers define case studies several ways. Stake (1995) defined case study as the “study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances where the researcher emphasizes episodes of nuance, the sequentiality of happenings in context, and the wholeness of the individual” (p. xi-xii). Yin (2009) defined case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context,

especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (p. 13). Because it is not always possible to distinguish between phenomenon and context in real-life situations, he pointed out that case studies explore many variables of interest, rely on multiple sources of evidence and prior development of theoretical propositions to guide the collection of data. Yin presents case study as a comprehensive research strategy, incorporating specific data collection and analysis approaches to investigate phenomena in real-life contexts. Simons (2009) defined case study as

an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a real life context. It is research-based, inclusive of different methods and is evidence-led. The primary purpose is to generate in-depth understanding of a specific topic, programme, policy, institution or system to generate knowledge and /or inform policy development, professional practice and civil or community action. (p.20-21)

The commonality of the definitions is a commitment to studying a situation or phenomenon in real-life context, to understanding complexity, and to defining case study. I chose the tradition of case study to understand the community college baccalaureate because of the complexity of the issue and the need to understand the concept within the real-life context. When looking at the college as a system in which everything is related, isolating a single variable is not prudent. A complex issue can only be understood by using at multiple sources of evidence and examining the wholeness of the college.

Stake (1995) distinguished between intrinsic, instrumental, and collective case studies. I chose the instrumental case study because it provides for a general understanding or insight into an issue. In this case, I am gaining an understanding of the how adding baccalaureate degrees impacted a community college. The importance of discriminating among the three allowed me to select methods that suited this type of case study.

### **Justification of the Selected Case Study**

Great Basin College is a rural, community college that began conferring baccalaureate degrees in 1999. Elementary education was the first baccalaureate degree offered with the first graduates in 2001. Since then, the college has added a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Science, Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies, Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education, and Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The college then added a 3+1 social work degree in partnership with a university in the state. Great Basin College has been offering the degree for ten years, making it one of the longest community colleges offering a baccalaureate degree; therefore, providing a longer history. A case study is “bounded system” by time and place (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 1998); therefore, the evolution period for the study was from 1997-98 through 2009-2010. Great Basin College is representative of a traditional community college while offering baccalaureate degrees.

### **Selection of Interviewees**

Because the interview is the main road to multiple realities (Stake, 1995), individuals were purposefully selected to represent the college by an administrator with a



long history with Great Basin College. The administrator recommended 20 individuals with extensive involvement with the college during 1997-2010. Twenty of the selected interviewees agreed to participate (See Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

*Average Years of College Involvement of Interviewees*

Position	Number of interviewees	Average years
Administrator	7	23.3
Faculty	11	15.2
Community Member	2	35
Total	20	20.5

### **Interview Protocol**

A fixed-format guide with open-ended questions was used during the interview (as shown in Appendix B). The questions were designed to guide the interviewees to answer the specific research questions while allowing them to expand upon their personal experiences, capturing the culture of the institution. Probing questions were intended to gather more information surrounding the interviewees' perceptions of why the college evolved and determine whether it was related to the baccalaureate degrees or another reason. After developing the interview protocol, I tested the questions with a person unrelated to the college to see how respondents may respond to the questions. When answers were brief, the questions were rewritten to encourage more dialogue. After the protocol was revised, I completed a sample interview with a person employed by the

college. I asked for feedback from the test subject and revised the protocol a third time. The protocol evoked the telling of personal stories while specific responses to the research questions were addressed.

### **Interview Process**

Interviewees were initially contacted through email to request participation in an interview. After the interviewee agreed to participate in an interview through email, a time was scheduled by phone. The interviewees were provided an informed consent, and after all questions were answered, they were asked to sign the consent statement (Appendix C). Twenty of the contacted initial 20 respondents agreed to participate in the interview. The interviews lasted 35-135 minutes, depending upon the stories the individuals wanted to share. Interviews were completed one-on-one and recorded. The interviews were transcribed; each transcription was then emailed to the corresponding interviewee with instructions to check the transcriptions for accuracy. Over half of the transcriptions were returned to the researcher with clarification and addition of further details.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

When designing a single case study, the utilization of different sources to develop a comprehensive picture and the intricacies to be analyzed are critical. Multiple sources of information were utilized to provide a detailed, in-depth, holistic analysis (Yin, 2009). Data were collected through documents, personal communications, archival records, interviews, IPEDS and physical artifacts.

In order to understand the evolution of the college, historical background information was collected to create a chronology of major events. Several sources were used to build a timeline of the college and hear the voices of the individuals that experienced the evolution. Great Basin College's website provided information about the creation of the college. It also provided documentation of minutes of meetings, facts, accreditation, and access to all of the college's catalogs. Personal communications were beneficial when corresponding events with personal perceptions taken from a specific moment in time. Individuals who participated in the interviews offered their personal communications. Using all of the information, a historical evolution of the college was mapped.

After the historical data were collected, the interviews were conducted. After the interviews were analyzed additional data were sought to substantiate perceptions of the interviewees. This process, progressive focusing, allowed for additional data to be collected based upon what was said by the interviewees. Important issues that appeared during the interviews were followed up. This "teasing out" process helped to clarify issues that were unclear or underdeveloped. Further data were collected from IPEDS, the Institutional Researcher, reports submitted to Faculty Senate and to accrediting body, catalogs, procedures and policy manuals, and the internet.

In all, I gathered data about the faculty workload-teaching load, faculty qualifications, accreditation demands, change of mission, offerings of student services, facilities and equipment, library services, governance structure, general education requirements, and programs offered.

## **Data Analysis**

The search for meaning in a case study comes from a search for a pattern or “correspondence,” consistent within certain conditions (Stake, 1995). Two methods of data analysis were used: categorical aggregation and direct interpretation (Stake, 1995).

Direct interpretation was primarily used when documenting historical data based upon historical records and archival documents. Through direct interpretation, I pulled data apart and put them back together in meaningful ways. After documenting specific events and times, utilizing the personal communications and interview minutes added value and allowed for correspondence between the interviewees responses and the documents. I collected data from multiple sources, created tables and then determined which data had relevance to the case study. Some of the data confirmed/ disconfirmed the interviewees’ perceptions, and other data provided information and detail about why the data presented itself like it did and what may be significant to the overall evolution and perceptions of the interviewees.

Categorical aggregation was used to determine if an issue-relevant meaning was threaded throughout the data. Data were analyzed through open coding (Creswell, 1998).Based upon coding, categories were created. Patterns and relationships were discovered to develop themes. I read the transcribed interviews multiple times to get an overall sense of the responses. First, I coded the transcriptions specifically for the research questions. The responses were straight forward and provided an understanding of majority and minority responses. After impacts were determined then the transcriptions were analyzed for understanding and nuances of the evolution of the

college. It had to be determined whether or not the changes in the college were based upon the changing times, the economic times, the political climate, or result of the addition of the baccalaureate degrees.

After questions were answered and determination of the impacts was made, other collected data were compared to either confirm or disconfirm the interviewees' perceptions. Then I had to create a link to the understanding of the specific context to the results of the questions. Detailed examples of the themes were then illustrated with quotes from the transcriptions. Only through understanding of the context can other researchers make conclusions to other institutions or designing further research.

Finally naturalistic generalizations from the analyzed data were developed. These generalizations can inform other community college baccalaureates of issues that may occur as intended or unintended consequence of adding four-year programs.

### **Validity**

Validity refers to the “trustworthiness,” “authenticity,” “verification,” “validation,” “legitimacy,” and “credibility” of a study (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Creswell (1998) suggested that researchers engage in at least two different verification strategies to ensure the credibility of the study. It is critical that the insights and conclusions presented “ring true to readers, educators, and other researchers,” so that the study can be generalized. “No data obtained through the study should be included if it cannot be verified” through participants (Creswell & Miller, 1995).

Member checking was used for credibility. All interviews were audio recorded with the consent of the participants. The recordings were transcribed. The transcribed

interviews were emailed to each participant for a validity check. Each participant verified for accuracy. The researcher compared the transcribed interviews with those that were returned with comments. It was noted that no content was changed in any of the transcribed interviews, but details were added. Thoroughness in the responses to the questions resulted.

To ensure further validity, methodological triangulation was used. I interviewed enough people, 20, to ensure themes were general perceptions of the college employees and not a small pool of individuals. When patterns developed while coding and analyzing the transcribed interviews, further data were collected to confirm or disconfirm some the interviewees' perceptions. By using multiple sources, themes and generalizations were corroborated which heightened the validity of the study.

An auditor reviewed data and the research process. The auditor provided support; played devil's advocate; asked hard questions about the methods, meanings, interpretations; and challenged the researcher's assumptions. By completing the three verification strategies, the researcher is confident that the results of the study are valid.

Reliability means that scores received from participants are consistent and stable over time. In qualitative research, reliability plays a minor role (Creswell & Clark, 2007). With the ever-evolving community college mission, expecting stability and consistency over time is probably not likely. If the study was duplicated in another ten years, the results may be different.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Limitations of the study included the obvious limitations that case studies pose. Stake (1995) recognized the following faults: qualitative inquiry is subjective, new puzzles are produced more frequently than solutions to old ones, the work is slow and there is a tendency for bias. Simons (2009) added the case study is locked in time while the people in it have moved on.

1. The study is limited to one case study. Findings may not be generalized to different institutions.
2. A case study, by nature, is “bounded” therefore, if the study were duplicated, at a different time, the results may differ. This study considered the years of 1997-98 through 2009-2010.
3. In regards to higher education trends, ten years is not very long.
4. A case study is bounded by place and time. During this place and time, greater issues may have influences on the study. The economy of the nation and the state of Nevada is poor. Unemployment is at a high and revenues are short. The state of Nevada cut budgets, including 15% of the Nevada System of Higher Education. All state employees are mandated to take a 4.6% cut in salary. Some of these impacts may interfere with data.

### **Role of the Researcher**

The researcher’s background includes being employed part-time for two years at Great Basin College and then in 2002 gaining full-time employment. Although the researcher has been employed at the case study site, employment began after the baccalaureate degree was initiated. The researcher was not involved in the process of

attaining permission to offer baccalaureate degrees and had no prior knowledge of Great Basin College until 1999. The researcher had no understanding of the college culture before the baccalaureate degree was added.

### **Ethical Considerations**

As required by the university and as the primary researcher, I completed the Human Research Curriculum module of the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) class. This training expired September 2012. I sought and received permission to do the study from the University of Nebraska Lincoln Institutional Review Board. The participants of the study were provided the purpose and procedures of the study. They understood that they could withdraw at any time. Anonymity and confidentiality were adhered to all times. At the time of the interviews, each interviewee reviewed the Informed Consent Form, asked questions as needed and made an informed decision of whether or not to participate in the study.



## **Chapter IV**

### **CONTEXT OF THE STUDY**

In this chapter, I provide an overview of Great Basin College. It explains the geographical location, the curriculum, the programs, the mission, the history, and its students.

#### **Overview**

Great Basin College considers itself a comprehensive community college. It was designed to meet the diverse goals of individuals in rural Nevada. It welcomes traditional students, as well as non-traditional adults. Great Basin College “opens its doors to any adult who can profit from instruction” (Great Basin College Catalog 2010-2011, p.18). It has an open access policy, yet its baccalaureate degrees require entrance into their programs. It is classified by the Carnegie Classification system as an Associate’s Dominant College with a basic classification as Baccalaureate/ Associate’s College along with 120 other colleges in the United States. The Associate’s Dominant Colleges are institutions that award both associates and bachelor’s degrees, but the majority of degrees awarded are at the associate’s level.

Great Basin College is part of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE). NSHE is comprised of two universities, one state college, one research institute and four community colleges. Great Basin College is governed by the Nevada Board of Regents (BOR). NSHE is led by a Chancellor. The College has a president and two vice presidents. An advisory board comprised of community members is utilized to provide advice and counsel to the college.

Great Basin College is accredited by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The elementary and secondary education programs are approved by the Nevada State Board of Education. The College is licensed to provide Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) certification classes. The Associate of Science degree in Nursing and the Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing are accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc (NLNAC). The radiology program is recognized by the American Registry of Radiology Technology (ARRT).

### **Location**

Great Basin College, named after its geographical location, is the major provider of higher education in rural Nevada. Great Basin College serves six rural counties in Nevada: Elko County, White Pine County, Lander County, Humboldt County, Eureka County, and Nye County. Its service area is 62,000 square miles or 56% of Nevada's land mass. The population of the service area is approximately 120,000 people or 5% of the total population. The main campus is located in Elko. There are permanent Great Basin College centers in Battle Mountain, Ely, Pahrump, and Winnemucca. There are 20 other satellite centers. In providing higher education to its vast service area, distance education technology is used extensively. Over 55% of Great Basin College's enrollment is through interactive video connections or online (internet) courses. There are a total of 41 buildings on 177 acres throughout its centers. The closest university is 200 miles away.

One of the major industries in rural Nevada is mining. Because of its presence, Great Basin College has a strong partnership with the major mining companies and several technical programs provide mining workforce needs.

### **Curriculum**

Great Basin College offers a variety of classes, services and degrees that support diverse learning goals of individuals. As well as offering transfer degrees, associate of applied science, bachelor's degrees, and certificates, it offers developmental education, community education, and continuing education. Great Basin College offers high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to earn academic credit in college courses through its dual credit program or tech prep credit program. In both programs, high school students earn college credits that can be used towards a degree.

Although Great Basin College has an open-door policy, it has placement exams in English and mathematics. These placement exams determine the sequence of classes the students complete to earn a degree. Some of the English and mathematics courses are developmental and do not count towards degrees.

Great Basin College has an Adult Learning Center to help people improve basic skills. Free tutoring is offered to adults who are 17 years of age or older and who have an interest in improving their reading, writing, mathematics, and English skills. English as a second language is also addressed in the learning center. Great Basin College implements workplace literacy programs in cooperation with businesses in rural Nevada. Employers provide the facility and may allow release time for employees to study. Great

Basin College determines skill deficiencies, establishes a competency-based curriculum, and then trains students to meet workforce demands.

Great Basin College has a small business development center program in conjunction with University of Nevada Reno (UNR) and the U.S. Small Business Administration. It provides free one-on-one individual advising to any small business located in northeastern Nevada.

Great Basin College requires general education coursework for all degrees. Each associate degree requires varying credits of English/communications, mathematics, science, social science, humanities, fine arts, and technology. Great Basin College's five general education objectives include communication skills, critical thinking, personal/cultural awareness, personal wellness, and technological understanding. The communication skills objective is to communicate clearly and effectively in written and oral form, embracing discussion, reading, listening, and accessing information. The critical thinking objective is to integrate creativity, logic quantitative reasoning, and the hierarchy of inquiry and knowing in social scientific understanding. It includes three elements: quantitative ability, reasoning and independent thought, and scientific understanding. The personal/cultural awareness objective is to understand the roles of individuals in society, the development of human societies, and the significance of creativity in the human experience. The objective includes sense of the individual in society, sense of the past, sense of accountability, and appreciation of fine arts. The objective of personal wellness is to develop knowledge, skills, and behavior that promote personal well-being. The objective of technological understanding is to function

effectively in modern society through the use of technology (Great Basin College Catalog 2010-2011, p. 55).

### **Degrees and Certificate Programs**

Great Basin Colleges offers a variety of associate of arts, associate of science, associate of applied science, associate of general studies, certificate programs, licensure programs, and baccalaureate degrees. The associate of arts and science degrees require 60 credits. The areas of emphasis are agriculture, early childhood education, engineering science, and teaching. These degrees are intended for students to transfer into a bachelor's degree. The associate of applied science degrees are business administration, early childhood education, computer office technology, criminal justice, diesel technology, electrical systems technology, human services, industrial millwright technology, nursing, radiology technology, and welding technology. These degrees are typically terminal degrees and consist of 60 credits. They are required for entrance into the Bachelor of Applied Science degree. The associate of general studies degree consists of 60 credits. This is designed for non-traditional students whose academic interests or career objectives require an individualized program. It is not generally intended for transfer.

Certificate programs are in the areas of accounting technician, business administration, early childhood education, entrepreneurship, retail management, diesel technology, electrical systems technology, human services, industrial millwright technology, instrumentation technology, medical transcriptionist, medical coding and billing, office technology, Spanish interpreter/translator, substance abuse counselor

training, post baccalaureate in elementary education licensure, post baccalaureate in secondary education licensure, and welding technology. Special programs for licensure are real estate licensure, commercial driving license, entrepreneurship, emergency medical training and employment skills preparation.

Five baccalaureate degrees are offered. The Bachelors of Arts in Elementary Education requires an emphasis or endorsement area. Each student must emphasize in English, mathematics, science, social science, early childhood, special education or teaching English language learners. The Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education is offered in agricultural education, biological science, business education, English, mathematics, or social science. The Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies has a natural resources emphasis or a social science emphasis. The Bachelor of Applied Science has emphasis areas in instrumentation, management in technology and land surveying/ geomatics. The fifth degree is a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Great Basin College also has a Bachelor of Social Work. This is a collaborative program with the University of Nevada Reno (UNR). The students complete the first three years of the degree at Great Basin College then their last year at UNR.

### **Characteristics of Great Basin College**

In 2009 the college had a student count of 3,778 and FTE of 2,029 (see Table 4.1). This is a growth of 161%. Although the number of students increased, the number of students enrolled in upper division courses maintained 10%-15% of the total enrollment for the past ten years (Great Basin College Fact Book 2009-2010).

Table 4.1

*Enrollment*

	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Headcount	2657	2564	2974	3410	3778
FTE	1197	1368	1353	1657	2029

The students at Great Basin College are similar to many community college students. The majority of the students are female, Caucasian, attends part-time and may be any age (see Table 4.2). In 2009-2010, the persistence rate was 37% and the graduation rate was 26% (Great Basin College Fact Book 2009-2010).

Table 4.2

*Enrollment of Students*

	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Male	33%	32%	39%	39%	37%
Female	67%	61%	61%	61%	63%
Part-time	77%	67%	71%	80%	77%
Full-time	23%	33%	29%	20%	23%
Degree seeking	56%	62%	58%	65%	64%
Nondegree seeking	44%	38%	42%	35%	36%
Under 18	6%	9%	13%	14%	20%
18 to 24	27%	30%	27%	32%	30%
25 to 34	22%	20%	18%	17%	18%
35 to 49	30%	26%	27%	22%	19%
50 & over	15%	14%	14%	14%	12%
Minority	14%	15%	15%	16%	20%

The number of degrees awarded has increased from 191 in 2001-2002 to 325 in 2009-2010 (See Table 4.3). The degrees are divided into certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor degrees. The average percentage of each has remained constant over the past ten years with certificates approximately 10%, associate degrees approximately 72%, and bachelor degrees approximately 18% (Great Basin College Fact Book 2009-2010).

Table 4.3

*Number of Degrees Awarded*

	2001-2002	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Certificates	17	31	13	53	46
Associate	147	185	167	193	233
Baccalaureate	27	34	64	47	46
Total	191	250	244	293	325

Great Basin College receives the majority of its revenue through state appropriations, 90%. The other 10% come from registration fees, non-resident tuition, and operating capital investments (IPEDS Report, 2009). Because of its reliance on state money, the state's economy impacts Great Basin College. In 2011, all public institutions in higher education in Nevada were struggling for funding as the result of a deteriorated state economy. The 2011 biennial legislative session debated further cuts for higher education. Great Basin College has a strong foundation that was created in 1968. The foundation has secured several buildings on campus and many scholarships.

The cost of attending Great Basin College is based upon semester tuition. In-state fees include \$63 per credit for lower-division credits and \$103.25 per credits for upper-



division courses. In response to the cuts in state funding, student fees increased over 30% since 2008. Great Basin College began offering residential housing to students in 2005. It has apartments and dorm rooms (Great Basin College Catalog 2010-2011).

Because of the vast service area, distance education is frequently utilized. Interactive video (IAV) classes comprise 20% of all classes (See Table 4.4). These classes originate in one facility and are broadcast to one or more other locations simultaneously. The instructor uses television monitors to see what is being broadcasted as well as the students in varying locations. The system is integrated with other technologies. SMART Boards and Elmos allow students to see what the students in the originating site see. Great Basin College manages over 100 IAV site locations. 57% of the courses offered at Great Basin College are distance education. This has increased by 91% over the past nine years. 30-35% of total enrollment is through distance education.

Table 4.4

*Distance Education Course Sections*

	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Internet	57	47	75	136	194
Telecourse	19	23	23	44	0
Interactive video	174	219	292	412	399
Total Distance Courses	250	289	390	592	593
% of Total Courses	35%	39%	44%	54%	57%

The faculty includes 68 full-time and 187 adjuncts (Great Basin College Fact Book 2009-2010). In 2000 the number of full-time faculty was 44. Until 2008 the number of faculty increased every year. Because the down turn in the economy and cuts

in the budget, the number of full time faculty decreased in the past three years. According to IPEDS reports, the average salary of full-time instructional faculty equated to nine month contracts for all ranks was \$62,978 in 2008-2009 which is up from \$54,719 in 2004-2005.

In 2001 the full-time faculty taught 55% of the courses offered. In 2009 the full-time faculty taught 65% of the courses offered. The workload of faculty has always been 15 credits per semester. Data about workload was limited because the workload policy was not adopted until 2005. Since then the amount of overload has remained consistent at approximately 3-4 credits per semester. The number of full-time faculty with doctorates has increased from 6% to 24%.

### **Mission of Great Basin College**

The mission of Great Basin College is

Treating everyone we encounter with dignity and respect, Great Basin College provides superior, student-centered, post-secondary education in rural Nevada. Commitment Statement: As an institution of the Nevada System of Higher Education, Great Basin College is committed to responding to the programmatic needs of our service area by providing opportunities in university transfer, applied science and technology, business and industry partnerships, developmental education, community service and student support service in associate and baccalaureate programs” (Great Basin College Catalog 2010-2011 p. 15).

The mission goes on further to explain specifically how the institution meets these commitments. For the full mission statement see Appendix E.

During the interviews, many participants noted open access and responsiveness to the community as the most important part of the college's mission. One interviewee said:

I think the most important traditional value is an open door policy where anybody has the ability to come in and start where ever their level of achievement has been at this far in, and then to go forward. So access is really the primary one, but, also, it is to interact and serve the educational needs of the local area, not necessarily on a national scale, but, you know, the businesses and the other needs of the community . ... I would say those are the two fundamental parts.

### **History of Great Basin College**

Founded in 1967 Great Basin College, then referred to as Elko Community College, is the first community college in the state of Nevada. The roots of Great Basin College belong in its community leaders. One interviewee said:

Although the population was small, approximately 7,000, it has a leadership of people who had already improved the quality of life for the citizens. The community college was just one of many projects initiated by a very active group of citizens in a very vibrant and receptive community. I doubt if there could have been a grass root origin for a community college anywhere else in Nevada. The timing was also right. I doubt if it could, if it could today, could start today. The ingredients for

the program were present: It was an isolated community that was accustomed to providing for itself. It had a wealth of young, highly educated professional people interested in improving the quality of life in the community. It had great community spirit and desire for involvement in activities that improved Elko without any desire for personal, financial reward. They were involved in many different projects so that they interacted frequently....They joined with many newcomers to provide the leadership potential and excitement that stimulated each other and improved Elko. They were all independent thinkers. They were all unselfish in that they could take any role or action necessary for success without expectation of praise or reward. It was all done for the fun exhilaration of the accomplished deed. At the same time they were leaders in local, state and national organizations of their respected professions. Several held a local or state political office. The Elko Toastmaster club was a local think tank and many of the above mentioned plus other participated. Education was a frequent table topic. They realized that any city like Elko that did not have a college declined. These cities lost a generation of young people from the community; they lost the cultural advantages and the contributions of professional educators. They also lost the economic values associated with its presence... A community college seemed to be the institution that we needed.

The community refers to the individuals that started Great Basin College as the Founding Fathers. Also as members of the local Toastmasters Club, the Founding Fathers frequently discussed education as its value to promote human understanding and contribute to the betterment of mankind. Embracing the Toastmaster's vision of empowering people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams through communication and leadership skills, the members were dedicated to establish a community college (Toastmaster International Website). The members' interest was piqued by the 1966 governor's race when candidate, Paul Laxalt, campaigned for community colleges. He knew that rural people had unpredictable higher education opportunities. He asked the members of the local Toastmasters Club to spread the word and promote a community college in Elko (Great Basin College Website).

The community leaders analyzed the prospect of a community college, had a guest speaker, and then traveled to Oregon to visit an existing community college. The decision was made to establish a community college in Elko, Nevada. They moved forward with statewide actions to make their goal come true. One of the original founders wrote:

What was more heartening than anything else was an exercise in self-help going on in Elko, a northeastern Nevada community with a population of less than 10,000, but with enough pride and energy in its people to serve a community several times that size.

The founders formed a committee called the Yo-Yo Club, which earned its name because of the ups and downs of the project (Great Basin College Web site). One of the founders told about its peaks and valleys in an interview:

If it were not for this solid citizen support, the college could never have endured the subsequent down years: the disappointment of keeping the first presidents until the arrival of Dr. Bill Berg, the difficulty of educating the members of the legislature about the nature of a community college, the difficult task to educate them about its unique role in higher education and to reassure them it was not competing with the state universities. It took years of struggle with professors of those institutions to convince them of the quality of our course offerings and to get them to accept credits from Elko community college. It was a struggle to obtain the first building on the campus. There was disappointment with the architect forced upon us by the state. There was the difficulty of building the curriculum without any students, and then attracting students when there was no curriculum. Just when there was statewide understanding and support for the community colleges, the Board of Regents and Legislature caused great harm by revamping of the system.

In 1967 ten local businessmen executed a fundraising program within the community of Elko called "One Day's Pay" and raised \$46,000 dollars in just thirty days. In the fall of 1967, Elko Community College opened for classes, mainly as an adult education center. More than 300 people enrolled in 25 courses. A founder's wife

enrolled in a class. She wrote, "Elko people were marching as one. If you weren't enrolled, then your friends weren't speaking to you" (Great Basin College Web site). One interviewee stated, "There was a climate of excitement about the future of Elko that made possible the rapid and remarkable. It was the same enthusiasm and determination to make it succeed that influenced the citizens to both teach and attend college classes."

Elko Community College was governed through the local school district.

Although many people in the state thought Elko was too small to have a local college, the founders continued to make presentations and call the governor. Members of the Senate Finance Committee indicated that if it had to exist at all, it could not have Nevada in its name, thus the name Elko Community College (Great Basin College Website).

Before the first year was over, the college was penniless and homeless. The college was floundering, had no legal status, and was unclaimed by the state's Board of Regents, who governed all public higher education in Nevada. When hope started to fade in 1968, Howard Hughes made a major contribution to keep the college afloat. Governor Paul Laxalt traveled to Elko to address the community about the fate of their community college; the community believed it to be a dismissal address. The Great Basin College Website quoted Governor Paul Laxalt:

When I stood up and told them of my earlier conversation with Hughes, you could have heard a pin drop. Then, when I told them of the unexpected \$125,000 gift, there was the strangest reaction. For seconds, there were looks of disbelief, as if they were thinking, "That damned Governor is putting us on!" Never in all my years of public life have I ever

seen such an outpouring of appreciation. For me, it will always be one of my most cherished memories.

Howard Hughes read about the grassroots initiative in Elko and decided to support the community (Great Basin College Website). He donated \$250,000: \$125,000 for Elko Community College and \$125,000 to develop other community colleges in the state. Elko Community College became the first community college in the state and triggered other communities to request a community college.

Governor Laxalt called the state Legislature to a special session, and the group approved a feasibility study for a statewide system of community colleges.

Soon, the State assumed control and moved governance to the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education. In 1969 an Advisory Board was created by the community leaders. By 1970 the Elko Community College had graduates, and by 1971 it expanded to serve five rural counties. In 1973, when Elko Community College had its first building, the name changed to Northern Nevada Community College. The Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges awarded the College its first accreditation in 1974. Although it began with provided continuing education, programs grew based upon community request and student interest. Transfer degrees were also a priority at the college. Throughout the 1970s the college stabilized, constructed a few buildings and was acknowledged by all as a “real” college (Great Basin College Website).



In the 1980's the college, again listening to its community, went through transformation again. During this time, the college added workforce training to its college functions. One of the interviewee told the story:

I helped convince him [the president] that we needed somebody and he organized the program to work with the mining industry for work force training. And that was a big change because a lot of our faculty before that, I think they really only saw themselves as transfer. That's all; they didn't want too much dirt on the floor. When that occurred we had a large enrollment and, so we had that stronger emphasis in the mid-80s, evolved into a dual purpose that work force development really is important for us. And that program, it brought us up a level, enrollment increased and everything else.

In 1989, Dr. Ron Remington became president of the community college. He wrote about his experience in *The Community College Baccalaureate: Emerging Trends and Policy Issues* (2005). The college had obstacles that presented challenges. The nursing program was in danger of losing its accreditation, the college's outlying centers needed attention, the college lacked a unique identify for itself within the state, the college had low enrollment, the college lacked well-qualified, full-time faculty members. Because of these difficulties, Dr. Remington "launched a campaign to stabilize the college for its future, paying particular attention to the needs of the community (p. 141)." In 1994 the college received outstanding commendation of the full-review accreditation process from the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The faculty

numbers doubled. In 1995, Dr. Remington organized a retreat with stakeholders. They determined to make the institution “a college of first choice rather than a college of last resort” (p. 142). He developed the college’s capacity to offer baccalaureate programs.

To better reflect the service area, Northern Nevada Community College became Great Basin College in 1995. All of the interviewees noted this as a significant event in the evolution of Great Basin College. “We changed the name because we kept getting mail for the Northern Nevada Correctional Center, NNCC” (Interviewee). The other big reason for changing was reconceiving Great Basin College with bachelor’s degrees. One of the interviewees explained this process:

...The next evolution was we were looking at the people who wanted bachelor’s degrees. That’s all we heard about, you know, not enough teachers. We could not get universities to bring programs here, and so we started looking for opportunities, and that’s when we had the name change. And, there are two reasons for the name change. That was an evolutionary change, I think. It was Northern Nevada Community College and in the state, you can ask the people, for the most part, ‘Where is northern Nevada?’ They’re talking about Reno [and] Sparks. In fact there was a newspaper article one time with the headline *Riot at NNCC Cafeteria* or something like that. It was Northern Nevada Correctional Center and not our NNCC. So, we did that for two reasons, first of all to give us a clearer perception and just give us a better identity. We considered either Great Basin Community College or Great Basin College.

Another interviewee explained the process:

The faculty actually came up with College of the Great Basin or Great Basin College, and faculty senate pursued that, and Ron Remington was on board with it, so it sort of coalesced at the same time we got bachelor's degrees, and about the same time we were making application to the Reynolds Foundation for the campus renewal project, so that all kind of came together. With the name change, thinking about ourselves more broadly in serving the community, thinking about that more broadly, not just serving community, that the college was not just as a community college; you have lots and you defended it by saying, you know a lot of people in Northeastern Nevada, . . . we didn't have as big a swath of Nevada as we do now, but we still had 47,000 square miles and five counties.

During this transformation Dr. Remington enhanced the facilities. The college received a \$4.54 million grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation for campus beautification. The foundation provided money for a clock tower, a solarium, an amphitheater, a creek, landscaping, and a center social area for the campus. One of the interviewees reflected on this event:

I think that the campus made attractive really boosted us up. I think the Reynolds Foundation Grant and the landscaping of this central area was really important because it, it showed, showed people that we weren't just in two buildings that, that I saw a real improvement in community pride

about the college. People were always happy with college, but I think they really began to be proud of the college and that the college was here when it began looking like a campus.

Another interviewee expressed the importance of the sense of place at Great Basin College:

And there was just this patch of dirt between, and we would get together and sometimes we would plant flowers to try to bring a sense of place to it. But they were homegrown efforts, you know, and then when we got that money to build this pond and this bridge, I thought that was remarkable. I'm always amazed that you come to this place, you walk over a bridge, over sparkling water; there's a carousel raining and fountains. I mean what a great place to come to work, and it's just a little Podunk place in the middle of the desert that has this, and this sense of place is very important to me.

The college invested in equipment and training for faculty to teach through interactive video and the internet. Each branch campus purchased equipment and designed dedicated space to the interactive mode of teaching. The college also invested in software to begin internet courses. Two of the outlying centers launched community fundraising and built facilities to house the college. One of the interviewees spoke about an addition of a building in an outlying center:

Ely built its own Center through unselfish donations of private individuals and businesses, along with a grant in 1995. The building was finished with

labor from the conservation camp six years later. That has been a very significant event for Ely. We saw an increase in more local high school graduates coming here now that we had our own building.

The library was moved into a newly remodeled space that allowed it to triple its holdings. Interactive video was a significant event in the history of the college. One interviewee explained that interactive video brought together all of the centers. “Advanced technology brought us together. We are all one college: Great Basin College. No more ‘stepchildren centers’ and no division among the centers and main campus; there was a time when that wasn’t true.” Another interviewee expressed pride in the growth of technology:

One of the commendations we got [from accreditation] was after they visited the video link centers. They said that we treat; we’re one of the few institutions they know of with a service area of our size, and we treat our students the same off campus as we do on, and that they have the same advantages.... Our challenge is in travel and getting there. Certainly the interactive video has made that easier. Now I have some units that can do some financial aid and counseling, and we do that a lot. We are actually talking to somebody and the technology is much better, much better.

Dr. Remington also laid the groundwork for offering baccalaureate degrees by engaging in many conversations around the state including the Board of Regents, the chancellor, the dean of education of the closest university, and a legislator. In 1997 Dr. Remington mounted a campaign to have the state regents support a feasibility study for

the baccalaureate programs (Remington & Remington, 2005). In 1997 the feasibility “study concluded that there was strong support for the college to offer baccalaureate program in elementary education to provide teachers for the rural region served by Great Basin College” (p. 143). The local school districts were in support of the elementary education program.

In 1998, a Teacher Preparation Education Partnership Team was developed. Consultants from universities, representatives from Great Basin College, members of the five rural county school districts, administrators and instructors, approximately fifty members, held a forum to create the program. The committee agreed upon the values, the standards, the curriculum, a mission statement, and course requirements for the degree.

Although the first proposal was denied by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, the college moved forward. They created eight smaller sub-committees and reworked the proposal. They received a two-year provisional approval from the Nevada Department of Education. The legislature earmarked \$1.5 million to fund the baccalaureate program in elementary education. The Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities also granted a provisional accreditation. In 1999 Great Basin College offered its first baccalaureate program. One of the interviewees told about a personal experience while at Great Basin College during this process:

The addition of the four-year degrees was very exciting. There was, of course, some resistance by some corners of the faculty, but many of the faculty were excited and rose to the challenge. I think we threw some good degrees together. And these degrees also met the needs of our

community, and so, for a while there, there was a lot of activity, a lot of excitement and a lot of changes, and that plateaued after a while for a variety of reasons. And the last few years, you can't work hard forever; you know people worked very hard to get those degrees. They are not simple things to do. And, some point you feel, like you've been pushing this boulder up the hill for a while, when can we get a break? When will this situation stabilize? And the degrees, we are still fiddling, finagling around the edges doing some interesting things, but we plateaued for a while.

In reflection Dr. Remington wrote, "It is beneficial for a college to reexamine its mission, reenvision its future, reassess its standards and outcomes, create new programs and curricula, develop a new culture, and become more learning-centered. Implementing baccalaureate programs forced us to do all of these things (p. 148)."

During this time the general education was designed with objectives and outcomes. The faculty and administration worked to create a general education at the lower and upper division coursework. One interviewee believed the development of general education to be one of the most significant events at the college:

The general education core, developing that, forced us to sort of think about education, or at least to bring to the forefront the idea that there's a greater purpose maybe behind education besides just getting a job, and I think that our focus had been. We were just busy putting up classes and you know, but suddenly general education; there was an admission at least

there are things that an educated adult should know that has nothing to do with your job or anything else. These are things that an educated person should know.

In 2000, the Bachelor of Applied Science was approved. This degree was unique to higher education. One interviewee who designed this degree said:

A bachelor's of applied science builds on the applied science degree, the associate degree in a content area. That's what known as the modern business training. It's applying what they know to a particular problem, particular industry or situation and so a bachelor of applied science degree is, to me, an ideal community college degree. Because it's only in the community college that we match the associate of applied science with a baccalaureate, which is the bachelor's of applied science . . . many people were managers of the mine department or a department manager of retail or running their own business with no management training. And so I'm convinced that the two areas of expertise that people need, and the earlier they get those the better it is. It is management and information systems.

Another interviewee explained the significance of the degree:

One of the first bachelor's of applied science . . . came about because we had such a strong, rich tradition providing a quality education for the career technical education, mining industry specifically. So, we had trained a number of students; they were out working in the mine; it was time for them to work up into their career so the mines came back and



said, “Ok, we want to have people that have management skills, marketing skills, and budgeting skills.” I mean, they had all the hands for electrical, welding, you know, diesel so forth, now they needed to have additional skills so we have an inverted degree and that is how that degree came about. And I would say you don’t see a bachelor’s of applied science at a university.

Another interviewee rated the degree as a pivotal event for the evolving college: I think the BAS was a pivotal degree for us too because it’s probably been our biggest degree throughout and brought in more faculty than we would have otherwise. It’s helped the students go ahead and get their bachelors degree mainly in management. . . So that kind of creates a bit of a bridge between the technical and the academic area.

In 2001, Great Basin College developed its second bachelor’s degree, the Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies. In 2002, student housing was added to the college. Many of the interviewees thought the addition of student housing changed the culture of the college with a sense of place.

...then the arrival of the services for students was a biggie. Once we got housing then people could come, stay on the campus. It was kind of a commuter college for a while there. That was a biggie, when café X opened, that brought a sense of dining; this all brought about a gathering place and sense of place.

Another interviewee spoke about the addition of housing:

I think housing, housing is a big thing, and it's all in concert with expansion of programs and . . . that has made the college definitely. . . because of the four year programs, students are around more, they're around more in Elko, everybody gets to know them better and that leads to, and along with housing, that leads to more of a campus feeling than we had before.

The college continued to grow. In 2004, the Bachelor Science in Nursing was developed, and in 2005, the Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education was approved. In 2006 Great Basin College's service area was enlarged with the addition of Nye County to reflect the mission of Great Basin College, which was to serve the rural counties of Nevada. One of the interviewees explained this expansion:

. . . when we acquired Nye County. I better not forget that one; that was a significant change for us. . . Well, it increased us from five counties to six counties and from 47,000 square miles to 62,000 square miles, a long distance. It's a rural population like we are used to dealing with; it's in Southern Nevada and for us, it's just part of rural Nevada, for the people outside of our college, they say, "What are you doing in Southern Nevada? Because we have a north-south battle going on here, and you're in the middle of it." So it did extend us geographically, but it also gave us a more diverse population and a broader population base, actually an economic base that's different. When we first picked up Nye County, we had an enrollment decline here because of the economic situation and so

when we acquired them that made up for that enrollment decline, so that boosted us up. But now the economy is doing very poorly down there, and things are doing better up here, so it's a counter balance for us. That was one of the ideas, I mean, first of all they fit our rural mission; we could clearly see that. It is just a large frontier setting, but then the counter of the two areas was the other reason.

Several interviewees had mixed feelings about this addition. One stated: I think it's been very demanding and that for whatever reason; you know, in our service area prior to Pahrump, we had a culture for better or worse. I think that those folks in Pahrump had a different culture. They were attached to a different unit, and I think we see sometimes that there are some, some points of tension with the two cultures trying to mesh, and it seems like we've spent a lot of time and a lot of money trying to work these things out. I feel like that was a big, big change.

After 2005, the college continued to add two-year degrees and certificates. Some of the later degrees included criminal justice, radiology and medical transcription. A Bachelor of Social Work was created in 2007 in conjunction with the University of Nevada Reno. The 3+1 partnership allowed students to complete the first three years of the degree in Elko and then move to Reno to finish the last year. In 2008 the state of Nevada's economy took a downturn. Because of the financial issues, the state has gradually been decreasing funding to higher education. As a result, the number of faculty

at Great Basin College has decreased, yet the enrollment has continued to grow (Great Basin College Website).

### **Summary**

In this chapter I provided an overview of Great Basin College, then provided detail about its location and the curriculum. I presented the current characteristics of the college in conjunction with past facts. The growth of the college is noted in the programs, students, and faculty. I concluded the chapter with the history of the college, bringing attention to the grassroots movement creation of the college and the interviewees' perspective of the evolution.

## Chapter V

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical “portrait” of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. Specifically, I explored, through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty, how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college. The interview protocol is included in Appendix B. After the interviews were transcribed and categorized, other data were gathered to confirm or disconfirm the interviewees’ perceptions.

In this chapter I provide an answer to each of five research, topical questions based upon the transcribed interviews and data. A holistic response to the central research question concludes the chapter.

#### Research Topical Questions

**1) What do the respondents perceive as significant events in the history of Great Basin College and the evolution of Great Basin College?**

Fifteen of the interviewees stated the addition of the baccalaureate degree was the most significant event in the history of the college. There were eight other events that eleven of the interviewees saw as significant events by the interviewees: the beginnings of the college; the name change to Great Basin College; the addition of the Manpower Training Consortium (MTC) program; the hiring of Ron Remington as president; the addition of Nye County resulting in 12,000 more square miles to their service area and

serving southern Nevada; the changes in facilities funded by the Reynold's Grant Foundation; the hiring of new faculty; and the development and use of technology, more specifically IAV.

Below are a few of the comments from the 15 interviewees documenting the significance of the baccalaureate degree: "The baccalaureate degrees, I think extending those degrees would be another thing." Another said, "The bachelor's program, getting that is pretty significant so students don't have to travel all over the state to get their degree, they can stay right here at Great Basin College." One other participant stated, "The education program, where we can train teachers right here in Northern Nevada, that's pretty awesome, that's pretty significant."

The beginnings of the college were considered a significant event of the college. One interviewee recalled the beginnings of the college:

The Elko College was not created in a vacuum. It was an idea of a few people that suddenly became reality. Elko, after World War II, was a community of excitement and civic activity. Although the population was small, approximately 7,000, it has a leadership of people who had already improved the quality of life for the citizens. The community college was just one of many projects initiated by a very active group of citizens in a very vibrant and receptive community. I doubt if there could have been a grass root origin for a community college anywhere else in Nevada. The timing was also right. I doubt if it could, if it could today, could start today. The ingredients for the program were present: It was an isolated

community that was accustomed to providing for itself. It had a wealth of young, highly educated professional people interested in improving the quality of life in the community. It had great community spirit and desire for involvement in activities that improved Elko without any desire for personal, financial reward.

One interviewee said, “That would be the most, one of the significant things is, it was started by locals.” Another interviewee shared his experience. “Our beginning was a grass root paid for, in other words they decided they wanted one so they go and get the legislature to pay for it and so on. It was a top down thing; ours was a bottom up. I think ours was the proper approach.” A third interviewee said, “We would certainly have a chapter in there admitting what a colorful history and what the people did to get this place started, just determination of that.” Another interviewee recalled the founding of Great Basin College:

First of all, just the fact that we had community college in Elko because this was the first one in the state, and it was started by the community itself without state support. I mean, just hatching was very significant because we set the trend for the whole state...Just getting started and having the community support, having the support from governor, the governor, Paul Laxalt, from Howard Hughes of all people made it possible for this college to continue the second year and for community colleges in Nevada to get started because of money from Howard Hughes.

A third event that was noted as significant was the name change to Great Basin College. One interviewee believed the name change was related to identification: “Probably along with that was his [President Remington] desire for the name change. You know, a name that is more consistent with our service area, which obviously, Great Basin College, cause we’re in the Great Basin and does depict our service area.” Another interviewee perceived the name change as a precursor to the addition of the baccalaureate degree. “Over that course of a couple of years caused us to change our name from Northern Nevada Community College cause at the time the Northwest Accrediting Association that we are under would not allow an institution that had the word community in its name, community college, to offer baccalaureate degrees. So, in the mid-90s we changed our name to Great Basin College that was the first step.”

A third perceived the name change to be a result of the confusion of the acronym brought about the name Northern Nevada Community College (NNCC) and the reconceiving of the college:

We changed the name because we kept getting NNCC inmates escape, after the Northern Nevada Correctional Center was built; I think that’s the one in Ely if I’m not mistaken. We’d get confused with NNCC, Northern Nevada Correctional Center, and so that was one big reason for changing. The other big reason for changing was reconceiving Great Basin College with bachelor’s degrees, and we threw around, the faculty actually came up with College of the Great Basin or Great Basin College, and faculty



senate pursued that, and Ron Remington was on board with it and all that; so it sort of coalesced at the same time we got bachelor's degrees.

Another interviewee saw the name change was for a combination of reasons:

...And, there are two reasons for the name change. That was an evolutionary change, I think. It was Northern Nevada Community College and in the state, you can ask the people, for the most part, "Where is northern Nevada?" They're talking about Reno, Sparks. In fact there was a newspaper article one time with the headline *Riot at NNCC Cafeteria* or something like that. It was Northern Nevada Correctional Center and not our Northern Nevada Community College. So, we did that for two reasons, first of all to give us a clearer perception and just give us a better identity. And then but, we considered either Great Basin Community College or Great Basin College. We decided to drop the community part like in California. Their colleges are not, they don't have community in them; they are just a college. So, that name was symbolic and then shortly after that then they had the bachelor's degrees.

Another event that was considered significant was the addition of the Manpower Training Consortium (MTC) program. One interviewee stated, "The second important part would have been the initiation of what we call the MTC program, the Manpower Training Consortium. They changed the name recently but it is still MTC." Another interviewee recalled the event, "I think the response to the mining program. My bias here, because I was involved in the very beginning of the new mining program, it's

continued, so I think that was significant in regard to the training function of the college.”

A third interviewee recollected the event, “The technical program expansions, you know we started out when I was here we had the welding program, the diesel program now we have millwright, industrial millwright technology, instrumentation, electrical, that’s pretty significant I think.” A fourth interviewee went further in depth:

I think probably an important occurrence was after I was hired. We increased in mining activity in the mid-to-late 80s. I was actually hired initially because I am a geologist to start making connections for mining and I had to convince them first of all that miners are not geologists. I had to show the college that mining was something else. And then after that, Stan Popeck was a very important figure there. I helped convince him that we needed somebody, and he organized the program to work with the mining industry for work force training. And that was a big change because a lot of our faculty before that; I think they really only saw themselves as transfer. When that occurred, we had a large enrollment and, so we had that stronger emphasis in the mid-80s, evolved into a dual purpose. Work force development really is important for us. And that program, it brought us up a level; enrollment increased and everything else.

Several interviewees thought the change in administration provided an impetus for significant events. The hiring of Ron Remington as president as seen as significant. One instructor discussed the growth of the college and gave credit to the new

administration, “. . . they’d increased FTE to 30% . . . when Remington came in, he said, ‘Let’s teach whatever we want to for classes,’ and we jumped in 5% and it has been growing significantly ever since. Another participant added, “. . . The second thing was probably when, I would say, probably the hiring of Remington that brings up the Be All That We Can Be. . . The change in leadership, like from Ron Remington.”

Many of the interviewees made general comments about the change in administration. One said, “So there have been a lot of changes in administration, a lot of changes style, both style and substance of the administration.” Another commented, “Well that’s probably some of that change in attitude, some of that has come from the new administration, looking at the college differently.” A third added, “We’ve just been very fortunate to have good administrators.” A fourth agreed, “So, you know, having the right people on the bus is an important concept.” A fifth interviewee offered praise: “I really credit President Remington for that because it didn’t happen overnight.” A sixth person agreed, “I do know, that Ron and Dorothy were keys and had a vision that this could be done in Elko and elsewhere...” Two interviewees provided more detail about the administration:

When I started he was the Dean of Instruction and what that meant was he was a vision person, he was one of those people who didn’t worry about the trees, the details somebody else had to pick up after him, but the vision he had. He had, he influenced a lot of us, it was his vision that, that Great Basin or that Northern Nevada Community College need to do whatever it could to serve these educationally underserved areas of Nevada.

A second added,

The most, one of the highest most significant events is Ron Remington taking the presidency... we had previously had a president who was a very good person and who was absolutely, you know, kept to budgets, the regents loved him because there were never any surprises. He did things, kept order, you know things went just the way they were supposed to go..., I think Ron Remington was exactly the right person at the right time and he never, he lead by, he lead cooperatively. He said to use early on, you know shared governance doesn't mean you get carp at those of us who are making the decisions, you help us make decision, give us your perspective and we share in making the decisions, that means you have go get to work; you don't just sit; you're not sitting there complaining and criticizing; you have to get involved and we did.

Various interviewees considered the expansion of the college's service area as a significant event. "Probably another significant thing was when we took over Nye County. This gave us the six counties, 62,000 square miles. Other than maybe Alaska that has a bigger service area but no people, we probably have the largest service area of any college in the country." One interview provided a detailed recollection of the increased service area.

. . . the fifth one might be when we acquired Nye County. I better not forget that one; that was a significant change for us. So I might say that was probably number five. Well, it increased us from five counties to six

counties and from 47,000 square miles to 62,000 square miles, a long distance. It's a rural population like we are used to dealing with. It's in southern Nevada and for us it's just part of rural Nevada, for the people outside of our college, they say, "What are you doing in southern Nevada because we have a north south battle going on here and you're in the middle of it." So it did extend us geographically, but it also gave us a more diverse population and a broader population base, actually an economic base that's different. When we first picked up Nye County, we had an enrollment decline here because of the economic situation and so when we picked acquired them that made up for that enrollment decline, so that boosted us up. But now the economy is doing very poorly down there and things are doing better up here so it's a counter balance for us. That was one of the ideas, I mean; first of all they fit our rural mission. We could clearly see that, it is just a large frontier setting, but then the counter of the two areas was the other reason.

Many of these interviewees remembered the improvement of the facilities, more specifically the Reynolds' Grant Foundation Beautification Project. "It would be the facility change." "The facilities, the Reynolds Grant, were one. I think that was pretty significant for our campus. You know, if you have a nice campus, students are going to come. Facilities for sure, the EIT Building, the GTA building all those are very significant." "I think the Reynolds Foundation Grant and the landscaping of this central area was really important because it, it showed people that we weren't just in two

buildings that, you know, that I saw a real improvement in community pride about the college. People were always happy with college but I think they really began to be proud of the college and that the college was here when it began looking like a campus, you know there wasn't a patch of dead grass out here or a big puddle of water you know at the beginning of Spring when it would rain a lot." "On top of that I think you need this theatre and gym too. Just gave it more of a college feel and the theatre has brought in all kinds of things, it was wonderful and we used to have homegrown plays there." "When we got that grant and all of sudden the place started to have real personality, real sense of place. That to me was a culminating thing."

Below are quotes from three interviewees as they reminisced about the facility changes:

(Interviewee 1) And so as enrollments increased slowly through time we got the funding to build more buildings and especially with technical programs, we have two buildings, our two of our biggest buildings are primarily there for technical programs, diesel, electrical, those kinds of things. But then, the faculty took an active role in the campus planning early on, and I take a little credit for that, I was with the facilities committee cause the faculty said,

Interviewee 2) "We don't want to just start building buildings willy nilly, let's have a plan." So the faculty put together the idea of kind of having a central open campus, things arranged around it. Then that idea was followed up when we started getting donations. There was a lot of community interest of the community buildings, the theater and the gym

and the community center. They were built with community dollars with that idea that yeah, let's keep the middle part open, then after that we had a large plan to actually do landscaping and really create that focus on the interior. Now we're still putting buildings around the outside up, and for a long time, even when we circular format it was just dirt and a dry bed in the middle and now we have just a really beautiful, everybody who comes here always mentions how beautiful the campus is. So it's gone from cow pasture to really an attractive campus that people are impressed with.

(Interviewee 3) Oh yeah, the Reynolds's foundation grant, over 5 million dollars to beautiful our campus, the clock tower, the running stream, you know, the GTA building. When I started here, I built my own office. Then when we moved into GTA I thought that was great, I had an office just like every other faculty member so that's grown. The EIT building, you know, I think the technical programs have really pushed this college, stretched the college to say that. And, it is because of our local industry, the mining industry most definitely.

You know the library was used for everything, it was a meeting place, it was a reception place; it was; it was everything. It evolved into, you know, it evolved into a campus. We used to be two buildings sort of sitting in the middle of a farm, that was what we were, you know. We had, you know, we physically we have really grown in terms of the works of the campus, the number of buildings.

A couple of the interviewees reminisced about the continued change of the college and the increase of the number of faculty. “You know, faculty for one thing, we have a lot more faculty here.” The second added, “I think there was something like 15 full-time faculty when I started. And, I’ve seen that grow to probably five times that many, I’m guessing that we have about 75, is that five times?”

One interviewee recollected about the faculty:

. . . I think as we’ve gone along we’ve had good presidents and we’ve had excellent faculty. I’ve always said that when I’m needing my battery recharged I come here and meet with the faculty senate because many faculty senates greet you with I don’t have this, I don’t have that, I don’t have something else, but the faculty up here has always come with the idea, this is what we’re doing. Now to honestly do more, we have to have more money. So, I’ve always appreciated that, but uh, when you look back and think from whence that college came, it’s amazing, absolutely amazing.

Several interviewees spoke about the changes in technology, more specifically IAV. “And so, in the early 90s we developed the first interactive video rooms. We tied in Winnemucca, Ely and Elko and actually we did teach some classes. The technology has advanced significantly because there was much more choppiness and sound delay back in the early days.” A second added, “Our challenge was to be able to treat those people as well, you know in our services, as well as we are treating here on campus.” A third stated, “Certainly the interactive video has made that easier. Now I have some units that



can do some financial aid and counseling and we do that a lot. We are actually talking to somebody and the technology is much better, much better.”

**2) How has offering four year programs impacted the traditional community college mission? As Great Basin College added four-year programs, was it able to retain its institutional identity mission as a traditional community college as perceived by the respondents?**

Eighteen of the interviewees believed that the addition of the baccalaureate degrees strengthened the traditional community college mission while providing students access to the baccalaureate. When the community college was created, the founders envisioned a community college that adhered to the traditional community college mission. One of the founders talked about this experience:

We wanted it to be the inspiration for the community, provide leadership in the arts, music, and really, things that you get in a liberal arts education, a college. At the same time we wanted to be practical, we wanted to be able to actually supply the needs of the people in Elko, what they wanted, what they needed. We wanted to flexible so that you could adapt to change. And, you know, many of the businessmen, what was once absolutely essential has now been discarded, not used at all and so on and so forth. The um, we wanted of course the principle of the community college. We wanted to have them be able to be guidance and counselors, and we wanted community service programs as well as the vocational

technical and college program. We didn't want to compete with the universities on board.

Most of the interviewees separated the traditional values of the community college from the mission. Several described the traditional community college values as open access, student-centered, community-centered and affordable. One participant mused, "There really are several things we wanted [the founders]. One was education and one was community. And, I think it makes a community college." A second said, "Community college means that its community based so it's a college that the community can participate in. There is also a responsibility we have for a service area out there." A third stated, "Student-centered is value that we work with, as we address the six-prong mission of the community college. Our values would be the students, so we are very student centered, the admissions and career center." A fourth added, "Traditional, you know, cheaper, open enrollment, technical classes, smaller, more contact with professors and so forth."

One interviewee said:

I think the most important traditional value is an open-door policy where anybody has the ability to come in and start where ever their level of achievement has been at this far in and then to go forward. So access is really the primary one but also it is to interact and serve the educational needs of the local area, not necessarily on a national scale, but, you know, the businesses and the other needs of the community does that of the community. I would say those are the two fundamental parts.

Another explained her perceptions of the community college values:

The traditional community college's values that I grew up with, they may have changed a little since then, are openness, open enrollment, the offering of wide-variety of educational opportunities to students whether they are second language students or they can't read very well, right on up to students taking transfer work, you know, or taking associate degrees in various different areas. I think we're open, always been really open, in fact, sometimes maybe we have bent over backwards to be open to students, offering classes sometimes, independent study when couldn't get a class to make or that sort of thing. Openness and access have been really important. Dealing as we do with kind of underserved, educationally underserved population, um Great Basin College and before it, Northern Nevada Community College were both been, I think very flexible, able to develop, to delivery content and variety different ways or willing to consider student needs as very high in the priorities. I should say, in the educational deliveries and ways of, ways of getting education across to people.

Three of the interviewees viewed the community college as a means for individuals to improve their skills and live up to their own potential or better themselves: One said,

It's almost like democratization of education in a way. You went this course at one point in your life; now you have an opportunity to do something else, and I don't know that this is always the case in other

countries. I think of it as kind of an experiment in democracy, so I think that underlying whatever it is that we do here is that idea of being able to come back, to move forward in a different direction.

A second said,

In terms of preparation for either specifically jobs or careers, life experience. I mean everything from giving the really specific skills be it welding or teaching or surveying that kind of thing to our general education core which um, gives the broader, more rounded education um, less dependent on content value and more on making, I guess, the person a better informed citizen of our country.

A third said,

One is to take the students within the community who have been educated by the community schools, the high schools, and, of Nevada, and help them find their way into the businesses in Nevada and only a community college is willing to do that I think because it takes a different kind of instructor... in a community college, we take the student from where they are and help them see that they can be and then what the potentials are and the realities.

One of the interviewees combined the two ideas of values and mission:

Well, I think the first one deals open access, open enrollment policy, I think that would be one of the values. I think another values is looking at being able to address the business needs of the community, for example, at

Great Basin College, we have both liberal arts offerings but we also focus on current technical education programs like, like mining. So really I think if you're looking at some of the values of community college is open access and then addressing the needs of a business and industry. Another value would be the transfer or addressing the needs of the students that want to transfer from a community college to a university to earn their bachelor's degree.

The interviewees considered the traditional mission of community colleges to have six functions: transfer degree, terminal degree (associate of applied science), developmental education, continuing education, work-force training, and cultural enrichment. Two interviewees discussed the mission of community colleges:

(Interviewee 1) The word community is the key to that and historically community colleges have, have broadened what junior colleges used to be so they have added to the junior college mission by including the needs of local people basically in technical training, in the development of their skills in computers, reading, math or whatever apart from any kind of degree expectations or even goals.

(Interviewee 2) To reach as many people as we can, offer as, as diverse programs as we need to meet the needs of the community that we serve and partly to enrich developmental education for those people who wish to continue on to four-year programs or other universities within our system.

Eighteen of the interviewees believed that the addition of the baccalaureate degrees strengthened the traditional community college mission while providing students access to the baccalaureate degree. Statements included:

“But I still think we’re committed to the community college mission because we still have the same students, we just move some of them further than we used to.”

“I still think our overall, the overwhelming majority of what we do is to prepare people for either the terminal degrees, the AAS degrees or to get them the AA and AS and help them move on because we don’t have programs that serve everybody.”

“We have met some pent up need for bachelor’s degrees here, place-bound individuals.”

Below are quotes from four interviewees that illustrate their understanding about the community college mission:

With the name change, thinking about ourselves more broadly in serving the community . . . we basically built a case that said, our students are place-bound and we don’t want to stop somebody at an associate degree level. And many of them have the capabilities of going further and we want to do that. So, I see the four-year college group, um, growing really out of the community college mission because it’s always been to serve the community.

First of all and foremost, four-year programs provided access to students who didn’t have the access. Many of our students are place bound and so they could not pick up and, you know, go to another location for a baccalaureate program. Also, keeping in mind that when we began

the baccalaureate programs there wasn't the availability of on-line programs that there are now. So, I would say the benefit for students was absolutely tremendous.

I think Elko County wants GBC to maintain the two-year mission. I'm a big believer in the community college, I just think it's, it's a great opportunity for those folks who might not have addressed school if they had to go through a process of a four-year school. Kind of gives a chance to spread their wings, grow up a little bit, so yeah, just another link in the chain.

So now we have to be more of a lot of things to a lot of people. So, our mission has increased to include certain, select four-year baccalaureate programs. At the same time, not neglecting the original community college emphasis on you know all of those things I said before the community college did, but now we're supposed to offer some select four-year programs.

One interviewee perceived that Great Basin College is still a community college as it maintains the community college value, but there is a perception that it may be changing with more educated instructors.

You know the open enrollment and the lower cost is still there, the smaller size and the smaller size classes are still there, little more emphasis on professors having degrees; I think, more people coming in thinking more like universities than community colleges. I mean, I came here as a

community college, and I think I'm still part of a community college but just barely.

One interviewee explained how the college developed baccalaureate degrees to meet the needs of the local community as part of the mission.

. . . The education program took care of a supply problem for the school districts because it is hard to find teachers for rural locations and if you train the ones that are already there, they're likely to stay there and they are dedicated to it. I think we've had good luck there. And then following that we have a social work program which is a three plus one with UNR but it's the same thing, we're filling vacancies in the various social agencies that they couldn't keep filled before even in Ely and Owyhee and places like where they have real needs and they are very difficult to fill. We are helping to fill that. And, the BSN program is doing the same thing and, you know, the BAS program, which is a very unique one, is helping people advance in their jobs in various industries and businesses. The integrated studies one is just a good option. In fact, we are just starting to develop the potential of the integrated studies. So they got a definite benefit even though it is not a huge part of the enrollment, it is benefiting the communities very much providing those people.

In conclusion, eighteen of the interviewees believe that Great Basin College is adhering to the community college values. They perceive the baccalaureate as an



extension of the values by providing access to the baccalaureate to those who students who are place-bound or traditionally wouldn't attend college.

Two of the interviewees perceived Great Basin College to be evolving to behave more like a university. They believed the students are becoming younger and the percentage of instructors who have a doctorate degree has increased. See Table 5.1 for the demographics of students. The students under the age of 18 increased by 14% in the past ten years as a result of the introduction of dual credit courses. The number of students between the ages of 18 and 24 has only increased by an average of a 3% in the past ten years. The typical students that attend Great Basin College are part-time and are not considered traditional college students between the ages of 18 and 23. The student at Great Basin College has not changed much in the past five years. The percentage of full-time instructors with doctorates increased from 6% in 2000 to 24% in 2009.

Table 5.1

*Demographics of Students*

	2001-02	2003-04	2005-06	2007-08	2009-10
Male	33%	32%	39%	39%	37%
Female	67%	61%	61%	61%	63%
Part-time	77%	67%	71%	80%	77%
Full-time	23%	33%	29%	20%	23%
Degree seeking	56%	62%	58%	65%	64%
Nondegree seeking	44%	38%	42%	35%	36%
Under 18	6%	9%	13%	14%	20%
18 to 24	27%	30%	27%	32%	30%

25 to 34	22%	20%	18%	17%	18%
35 to 49	30%	26%	27%	22%	19%
50 & over	15%	14%	14%	14%	12%

### **3) What do the respondents believe about the college's investment in maintaining the community college mission?**

All interviewees believed that Great Basin College lived up to the community college mission. "I believe so and we see that ingrained uh in our, in our mission."

Eighteen of the 20 interviewees believed that Great Basin College is invested in maintaining the community college mission. "I would say we are highly committed to continuing our community college mission." Another added, "I think generally most of the faculty here are very committed and believe in the community college mission, I can think of some exceptions but that's ok, you'll find those anywhere."

One interviewee expanded upon this view:

Well, in my view the community college does fill a tremendous void that we have in our educational system and the values they have, I can go into missions... I consider them so very important because they change so many lives. And they have a very different attitude than the universities have because they do take care of people who would be afraid to go to the university, four-year situation. They prepare people who do want to go on to do that. I may not be answering your question, exactly, but my big concern now with our community colleges; I don't want each one of them to wish they were a state college. I don't want to ever see us lose the

community college mission because their mission is to serve their community and they do it well. So, I don't want that lose. I was concerned about the change in some of the names because Great Basin is different, as far as I'm concerned, because of our area that we cover and many of our people are place-bound, they can't jump up and go someplace else to further their education. So, it's a tremendous help to many people, but when they wanted so desperately to change their names from the community colleges and the rest of the system.

Another interviewee explained the significance of the associate degrees on the financial stability of the college:

90% of our students are at the associate level or on their lower division. Only 10% of our credits are on the baccalaureate level, three and four hundred level. So, our bread and butter as you would call it, how we survive, is really through our associate degrees, and I don't see us changing that.

One interviewee logically explained the importance of the two year degrees. "We are not planning on losing our associate degrees. It is just not going to happen because of the ratios, and most of our instruction is still in the first two years."

While explaining the importance of the meeting the communities' needs, one interviewee discussed the needs of the community and the need for more associate degrees:

We did a tour of the service area and met with about, pretty close to 100 community members [who] actually asked how we were doing. Overall, they were all pleased with what we are doing and what we were accomplishing. It is a fairly interesting report. We have a report for each of the communities and what their needs are, and we looked at what the overall and if there similar needs, and we combined all of the ideas and stuff into one report and then we have full reports which are individual reports for the areas, which differ a little bit, but we put all the common stuff together in the big report. It is pretty interesting and they were very happy with us and very supportive of both of our missions, associate degree and baccalaureates. . . . actually most requests – things that they wanted us to do more of -- were in job training, associate, certificate areas. So they were very pleased with the technician program and the management type people we're putting out. But by far, the requests were, let's get some of these people trained for jobs, so that is for the community college missions. I'd say throughout the area that is what we are here to do.

One interviewee believed the baccalaureate degrees strengthened the mission of the community college mission:

I think it is 100% vested in maintaining the community college mission and with the addition of the bachelor's degrees, I believe it strengthens a number of different aspects of our community college mission. One

example, deals with offering upper division course work, and I know that faculty has had the opportunity to develop and offer upper division classes, and I know that when we're able to develop those upper division classes, a lot of the research goes into developing a new class, also strengthens our lower division offerings.

One interviewee expressed the concerted effort of maintaining the community college mission:

I think positively, but I think that it has had a positive effect, but think there again it has taken a real concerted effort by many people not to lose let's say a career technical education component or not to lose a continuing education community service component because there is a place for that as well. I don't think we can ever totally meet all needs of the community, I mean, there are all sorts of degrees that we should never offer.

Because of the concern of losing the community college mission, this interviewee spoke about the awareness of maintaining the community college mission:

So we were meeting not only the needs of the people who live here by giving them training and they were place bound, but we met the needs of beginning, I think, of the hospital and then through to the PC age of teaching people how to use computers.

I don't know where the community would be without doing that. The community gained from the training provided by the college... So we

train the people who live here and that's what the community college does. We maintain that, we still have very strong community college mission. And it was a concern, yeah; it was a concern of many faculty of losing the community college mission.

Another interviewee discussed the typical student that attends Great Basin College and the importance of continuing to serve this population:

I think it takes people a while to get invested in that mission when they first get here. You hear a lot of, "Well, at other colleges we didn't do that, we didn't do such and such." But, it's really if you're dedicated to the original community college mission, which is to give, to educate students in Northwestern Nevada or in rural Nevada to the best of their, to bring them as far as you can bring them. We've just been able to add another level to that; so that still is true that our students start at. Most of them are not traditional college students, lots of them are the first student to ever be in college from their families. We don't have a lot of students that you would call traditional college students who are expected to go to college by their families, and sent on to college.

One of the respondents expressed concerns over losing faculty who are committed to the community college mission:

I would say they [the employees] are very invested, and I hope that will always continue to be that way. And sometimes I am concerned that we have employed long-term employees that get to retirement age, so you

lose the institutional history for, not the good old days, I don't mean that, but for the community college and what we were as a community college and how that evolution took place. I would hate to see a time where, as an institution, we become strictly a baccalaureate granting institution and we've lost the associate degrees and the certificates.

The two interviewees that expressed concerns over losing the community college mission mentioned cultural enrichment and the fine arts as the areas of unease. Although they believed there were fewer opportunities in the fine arts, the number of students enrolled in fine arts classes increased at the same rate as the overall increase in full-time equivalency (FTE). One of the interviewees expressed concern for the cultural enrichment portion of the mission. The interviewee was torn whether the four-year degree changed this part of the mission or the increase use in distance education technology with the expansion of the service area:

I do think that the enrichment portion of the college has – since I'm in the fine arts – has gone by the wayside, and that is a concern to me because I think that the mission is a little more vague than it used to be here... when I came here there was only one fine arts position, and then she wanted to go half time,, so I was hired in a half time position, and so there was one until the two of us developed the programs enough. At the same time, we brought in the theatre position and that was about 60% contract and then over that maybe 5-6 year span, we all became 100%, and so then we were growing. We were really adding classes and doing a lot of things, and I'm

sure there were other things on the campus going on to the community. But in the process of going to four-year degree programs, we seemed to have lost that goal and then it wasn't just the four-year degree programs. I think it was also that distance ed. had to, had to interweave into that. Then so, we just became so strung out all over the state and so as a department chair, I spend all my time now working with the four campuses in trying to meet their schedule needs and mentoring their adjuncts and then someone says, "You're not offering something on this campus." You know an art, another art class, but I have been getting classes going at four campuses.

In conclusion, eighteen of the interviewees reported that Great Basin College is invested in the community college mission, and they did not perceive change in the future. Interviewees perceived that Great Basin College will remain a community college, and the interviewees were dedicated to the traditional mission. They perceived the baccalaureate degrees to be an extension of the mission through the meeting of its community's workforce needs. Several respondents expressed concerns over the senior faculty leaving and the need to educate new faculty about the community college mission and values.

**4) What are the respondents' perceptions of how the four-year programs impacted other functions of the college?**

The other functions of Great Basin College as described in their mission are developmental education, continuing education, dual credit, and transfer degrees,



associate of applied science degrees, certificate programs, and community education. Nineteen of the interviewees perceived that either there was no impact or there was a positive impact on the other functions of the college. “I haven’t seen a major change in my perception, somebody else maybe might see it differently, but I think it’s pretty consistent.” “I don’t think it’s changed it a great deal to tell you the truth. It’s just that we have additional courses and we have additional instructors teaching, and we offer a different degree.” “I think we can clearly say we’re maintaining the community college since that’s 90% of our enrollment.” Most of the respondents had little to say about the impact on the other functions of the college. One interviewee explained how adding the baccalaureate degrees had a positive impact on the other functions of the college:

I think that bachelor’s degrees have actually enhanced our other functions. Some people were afraid it would take away from them, but I think they’ve actually enhanced them because more people now have access to higher levels of education if they want to work hard and they want to go through the levels. So you could start out as an ESL student and end up with a bachelor’s degree.

Two of the interviewees believed that the community enrichment programs have changed. “There was more art community, art/craft community type things.” When adding the baccalaureate degrees, the college developed the general education curriculum. All students must take courses in the seven curricular areas including fine arts. This has changed the focus of community enrichment classes in fine arts to the general education fine arts. Although the enrollment in fine arts has increased, the

number in the community enrichment classes has stayed relatively the same. The number of sections in the general education fine arts courses has increased dramatically.

One interviewee believed the increase of mining technology courses and the growth of education and nursing created more focus in those areas. The mining technology courses are certificates, continuing education and associate of applied science degrees. The nursing and education programs have both associate degrees and bachelor degrees.

Our community-based programs have leaned more towards mining technology. We used to offer more community service type classes. We don't offer as many as we used to because of the growth in the four-year and in the mining technology programs and the nursing programs and education. That's where our focus is leading us.

In conclusion, the respondents reported that there was little impact on other functions of the college, or there was a positive impact on the other functions. Two of the interviewees had concerns about the cultural enrichment of the college.

**5) How do the respondents perceive the impact of the four-year programs on the faculty, faculty workload, governance, the culture of the college, the curriculum, facilities and equipment, or students services?**

**Faculty.**

The majority of the interviewees perceived the four year programs as impacting the faculty in several ways: (a) an increase in the number of faculty, (b) an increase in the

number of faculty with doctorates which demand higher salaries and brought greater diversity, and (c) developed a renewed sense of enthusiasm for one's content area.

With the increase in degrees and the growth of full-time equivalency students, the number of faculty increased. "We have a lot more faculty here." In the past ten years the number of faculty increased from 38 to 68. With the increase in number of faculty, the faculty have been perceived as more departmentalized:

Since we've gone from under 20 faculty to as much as 70, the departments are becoming a little departmentalized, I guess. It used to be everybody knew everybody very well, and that we're losing some of that now because they're in their own little departments, and they see their own people. In some ways that's unfortunate. I think people used to be able to understand each other's disciplines. So as we become more specified, we are not as well connected with each other. Although we're still a pretty good group, I mean the people still know each other pretty well compared to most places.

The interviewees reported the four-year programs encouraged existing faculty to pursue doctorates and required recruiting faculty with doctorates. Several of the existing faculty pursued a doctorate degree. "We provide a quality education, and, so that begins with having quality faculty, and I feel that our faculty really stepped up to the plate as well because many of them have had to, and continue to, go on for advanced degrees."

One of the respondents talked about his experience:

We had to work on how to get more PhDs. We did a lot of growing from within. . . I didn't have my PhD, and I, through sabbaticals and other support, a lot of the existing faculty did get their PhDs and we had to begin hiring consciously to require a PhD. And, so the upper division could move in. This was definitely a shift for us.

Great Basin College also had to recruit faculty with doctorate degrees. The interviewees believed this brought about diversity within the faculty and a sense of youth. “. . . And our faculty is, we're getting a little younger now and bringing in those different ideas in the way we do things.” “Four year programs brought more faculty to the campus with diversity. Many faculty with doctorates probably wouldn't have come to the campus. I think that the four-year programs have been a blessing.” The average age of the faculty could not be confirmed. “. . . four-year programs brought a lot more PhDs to the campus and lots of folks from around the country. A lot of folks from Montana, folks from Dakota, New York and now they're coming with the four-year programs, so that would be a good cultural change.” One interviewee provided more detail:

It did create a more diverse faculty because we still have people who maybe have an associate degree but they're very good at what they do and then we have people with PhDs. I think one that is unique about the climate here is that compared to other campuses I've seen there a lot more dialogue between diverse ends.

One of the interviewees explained that it is more expensive hiring faculty with doctorates. According to the IPEDS data, the average salary of an instructor in 2004-2005

was \$54,719 and in 2009-2010 the average salary was \$63,101. There were no data before 2004 in IPEDS.

It probably has added to the cost because as we are hiring more people with doctoral degrees and therefore, they come in at the higher salary schedule. And we also are developing the programs [so] we have to bring in people with more experience. So, where you would generally hire a faculty member with a few years experience with maybe a master's degree, you get them at \$40,000, you might have to hire a PhD with 15 years experience and have a salary at \$75,000.

Many of the faculty developed upper division courses, which interviewees perceived as an exciting time to grow their knowledge in their content areas. "I think positively, I think in my particular area, English, that we're offering upper level classes, literature classes which has been good for the faculty, give them a chance to experience, to redefine those areas." "I think it was a really kind of fun motivator for the faculty, you know, the idea of offering upper division courses, being able to break out into more and new and different topics." One interviewee discussed a personal story:

I think I've alluded to this before; it's exciting; it's fun to teach classes in your area of specialty. It's fun to work with students at higher levels of learning and have the opportunity to mentor them for longer periods of time, but it's hard work and people are getting tired. I think actually it's improved our recruiting. I think the hires we've made in the years since adding the four-year programs has been remarkable.

Many of the interviewees talked about the close relationship that faculty develop with their students.

The faculty are inclined for the community college type student that is to help the student see that they can be better than they are and see that their potential is unlimited. And if you talk to students who have had those teachers, that's what they would talk about. The reason they have enjoyed those classes because they have a personal association and felt better after having been in their class.

One of the concerns of the interviewees was that the size of staff: "Our staff, it's small, that you'll have the same teacher for too many classes so you won't have the breadth of experience from different points of view, different ways of being taught. That's just the nature of being small."

In conclusion, the majority of the interviewees perceived the four-year programs as impacting the faculty in three ways: (a) an increase in the number of faculty, (b) an increase in the number of faculty with doctorates which demand higher salaries and brought greater diversity, and (c) developed a renewed sense of enthusiasm for one's content subject. The number of faculty increased as well as those with doctorates. With recruiting for instructors with doctorates came diversity. The college recruited from other parts of nation, bringing instructors from urban areas and the East. The college also had to pay higher salaries to those instructors with doctorates. Many of the interviewees saw the baccalaureate degrees as a renewal of study while developing the upper division courses. The faculty enjoyed teaching the upper division courses. The interviewees

expressed concern for the small number of faculty in certain areas that teach the students several courses, not providing for a breadth of different instructors.

**Faculty workload.**

In 2004 a workload policy was created to accommodate for the diverse teaching positions of the faculty. In Great Basin College's Procedure and Policy Handbook, it states that all instructors will teach a 15 credit workload per semester. The policy outlines specifically the equivalency of credits. The workload policy allows for reassigned credit workload or course development credit workload. The Nevada System of Higher Education created a step salary schedule for each of the community colleges in the state based upon experience and education. All faculty workload is based upon teaching, the creation of courses, or reassigned time for administrative duties. Research is not mentioned in the policy. Service to the institution, service to the community, and service to students are required duties. Data on faculty workload began to be kept in fall 2005 after the workload policy had been enacted. During the years 2005 through 2008 more faculty had reassigned time related to developing of upper division courses as well as developing online courses. Since 2008 the amount of reassigned time has decreased. The average amount of workload per faculty has been remained constant throughout all of the years.

Some of the interviewees expressed concerns about the development of a two-tiered faculty system. Although five interviewees expressed this concern, all of them said it did not occur. One expressed this idea:

I do remember people kind of fearing this two-tiered thing that would happen. I don't think that has happened. I think that people are pretty collegial and work together just fine. I think we think a lot more seriously about those upper division classes. It's caused us to be more serious in our approach to how we think about the college and how we teach.

Two interviewees explained that all faculty are on the same salary schedule with the same required workload.

The faculty were expected to be on the same salary schedule as the faculty we had then teaching the one and two hundred level courses. This is not a research institution, so they were expected to teach the 15 credits, the same as the one and two hundred level associate degree faculty were.

It's not like a division of those having doctorates and those that don't have doctorates. That is reflected in the current workload policy. We don't make the distinction between workload and compensation in terms of lower division and upper division offerings. I mean part of that is addressed in the salary schedules, and of course you move over in terms of pay and compensation if you do have a doctorate.

Some faculty take on administrative duties for the baccalaureate degrees. Those faculty who oversee a baccalaureate degree get a credit release of six credits. The faculty are also given an equal amount of credit release to develop a new course or create an online version of a live class.



Several interviewees alluded to the extra work it takes to teach an upper division course or the lack of students registered for a class so it is offered as an independent study. “I think in some ways it’s great, faculty getting to teach the upper division courses, but in some cases it’s really increased the work load because we don’t have the students to have classes, so we have to offer them as independent studies which take for an instructor the same amount of time that but our, we are paid much less, but not that anyone is in it for the money.”

In conclusion all faculty have the same workload, which is 15 credits per semester. Some of the faculty have release time for the administrative duties of the baccalaureate degrees.

### **Governance.**

Most of the interviewees reported that the governance of the college had not really changed much except the creation of deans and workload release for the oversight of the baccalaureate degrees. Several years after the baccalaureate degrees were developed, the organization of the college was examined, and three dean positions were to be created; one for the applied science degrees, one for the human and health services degrees and one for the rest of the academic areas. The last dean did not come to fruition because of the fiscal issues of the state. Each of the baccalaureate degrees has a full-time faculty member who receives release time to oversee the degrees. Each department has a department chair. The interviewees explained the governance of the college. “The governance has not changed that much that I perceive. There has always been a fairly good relationship between the faculty senate and the administration and there are more

members of the faculty senate, and there are more administrators.”“We have been able to add two deans because of the baccalaureate programs. But, beyond that, we’ve had the department chair structure; we’ve had that in place.”“We have put people in the position of lead faculty, people who lead the four year degrees.” “Department chairs have more responsibilities as part of governance than perhaps they did in the past.”

The college also requires that all two year and four year degree programs have an advisory committee to oversee the program and provide suggestions for the program’s efficiency and effectiveness. “The only thing that’s really changed is the development of committees and advisory groups specifically for the bachelor’s degrees.” Each of the baccalaureate degree committees report to faculty senate as an ad hoc committee. “Faculty senate now has committees that are under the umbrella of our shared governance that focus on our bachelor degree programs.”

Several of the interviewees noted that policies had become more formalized. “We now have much more bureaucracy. We have procedures and policies, tenure committees, and search committees.”

In conclusion the governance of the college changed to include deans and lead faculty to oversee the baccalaureate degrees. Advisory boards were created to oversee the bachelor’s degrees which report to Faculty Senate.

### **Culture.**

The interviewees articulated that the culture has changed in three ways as a result of the inception of the baccalaureate degrees: (a) the name change, (b) the sense of

legitimacy or purpose, and (c) the diversity from the new faculty. One interviewee explained the culture of the college:

The culture of the college does not have to change by offering [the baccalaureate]. The culture is what the teachers and students value as the reason they come to work each day. All those things are enhanced by the baccalaureate program rather than decreased.

Many of the interviewees believed the culture change began with the name change. “I have a Bachelors of Education from Northern Nevada Community College. So, the name had to change, you know, that was part of the cultural change.”

Many of the interviewees felt offering baccalaureate degrees created a sense of legitimacy within the community. “It seems as though when we had the bachelor’s degrees it gave us a perception of legitimacy that was stronger than what we had before.” “Now we’ve finally got to the point where we’re growing enrollment, we’re, I think, a college of first choice for many people.” “We’ve definitely gained in professionalism.”

Below are quotes from several interviewees that expand upon the idea of legitimacy:

But actually once we started doing that; it was almost instantly the community’s perception of us was elevated, and people began looking at us more as a place of first choice, not a second booby prize or something like that; a place just for technical education. We became- what was the word I said? Legitimacy. It gave us kind of a stamp of legitimacy at a higher level than maybe the perception. . . You know, it really didn’t

change our teaching philosophy or the quality or anything else. It was a perceptual change.

It's made it feel like a more of a traditional college. I really think we have more respect within the community, I think, as a result. It feels good to the faculty. It feels good to students. Still, people who can afford it are still going to opt to go to university. But I think that there are a lot of people who are happy to have Great Basin College around. I think it's done nothing but help students and I think the majority of faculty have really enjoyed having that.

We've gained traction. What do I want to say? Really a reputation for offering quality programs across the board, for certificates all the way to bachelor's degrees and I would see us maintaining that tradition and also that balance with having a hybrid mission and offering a variety of different degrees and programs.

With the recruiting of faculty with doctorates, several interviewees believed this brought about a cultural change. "We are a very different institution because of new people coming in and it's sort of a blending of the old heritage and the new heritage; it's the GBC way."

I think it has certainly brought a higher level of educated faculty members to the campus and with that a much broader diversity and just overall outside influences because we've brought people in from all over the United States. I think we have some people from out of the United States

working here. It just lends to a broader range you can do, cultural activities, things you bring in for activities.

Some of the interviewees referenced culture change because of the new faculty and the new students:

I think that's changed the culture of the campus at least among some student groups and among some faculty. Just gives a whole different sense of purpose that we are actually able to do that bachelor's degree. I think maybe it brings some students to the college that wouldn't have been here. We've even got the post baccalaureate students now for the teacher ed. or for actually some of our other bachelors and that certainly enhances the culture and the ambiance of the college.

In conclusion the interviewees perceived that the culture has changed in three ways since the addition of the baccalaureate degrees: (a) the name change, (b) the sense of legitimacy or purpose, and (c) the diversity from the new faculty.

### **Facilities, equipment and library.**

All of the interviewees discussed the transformation of the college during the past ten years. They talked about the beautification process of the college with the Reynolds's Foundation Grant and the increase in facilities. "Our facilities have changed, gotten bigger and better." "Everybody who comes here always mentions how beautiful the campus is. So it's gone from cow pasture to really an attractive campus that people are impressed with." Three of the interviewees talked about the changing physical facilities:

The Reynolds's foundation grant, over 5 million dollars to beautiful our campus, the clock tower, the running stream, the GTA building. When I started here, I built my own office. Then when we moved into GTA I thought that was great, I had an office just like every other faculty member so that's grown. The EIT building- I think the technical programs have really pushed this college, stretched the college to say that. And, it is because of our local industry, the mining industry most definitely.

We used to be two buildings sort of sitting in the middle of a farm that was what we were. We had physically really grown in terms of the works of the campus, the number of buildings, and the number of things that we offer. We're pretty high tech now.

I think we just had the two buildings: McMullen and the library. And there was just this patch of dirt between, and we would get together and sometimes we would plant flowers to try to bring a sense of place to it. But they were homegrown efforts, and then when we got that money to build this pond and this bridge. I thought that was remarkable. I'm always amazed that you come to this place; you walk over a bridge, over sparkling water. There's a carousel raining and fountains. I mean what a great place to come to work, and it's just a little Podunk place in the middle of the desert that has this. This sense of place is very important to me.

They also talked about the increase in library holdings. Several of the interviewees mentioned the benefits of improved resources for all students on campus, not just the four-year students:

We see an increase in library holdings which I mentioned has benefited not only bachelor's degree students but associate degree students and those in the community that want to use the college's resources at the library.

With the library holdings for example, one of the things that's required by accreditation is that when we start conferring degrees at the baccalaureate level, is that we need to maintain a number of different data bases, journals, books, and resources for the students. And not only do the bachelor's degree students get to take advantage of those resources, but also, the lower division students, the associate's degrees and certificate students get to take advantage of those holdings, as well as the community.

One of the interviewees believed the community had a lot of influence on how the college changed physically. "There were a lot of community interests of the community buildings, the theater and the gym and the community center. They were built with community dollars with that idea."

In conclusion, all interviewees referenced the change in the facilities, but they give credit to the Reynolds's Foundation Grant and the technical programs for the campus improvements and facility expansion. Nobody linked these changes to the

baccalaureate degrees, except for the library holdings. Accreditation for the baccalaureate degrees mandated an increase in the number of library holdings. The interviewees believed this benefitted all students and faculty.

### **Curriculum and general education.**

All of the interviewees mentioned the change in curriculum as probably the most significant impact the baccalaureate degrees had on the college. The momentous changes in the curriculum include: (a) reconceiving the general education, (b) the development of prerequisites, (c) the demand for standardization of the curriculum process, (d) the development of the upper division courses, and (e) the focus on outcomes. When the baccalaureate degrees were added, Great Basin College revised its general education curriculum. Several participants' comments provided documentation. One said, "The best thing that happened was the redefining and articulation of the general educational goals and competencies. So everything was built on that foundation." Another stated, "The level and articulating the general education foundation, the five competencies and outcomes." A third commented, "We need to reinforce our core curriculum. Because that is where we are going to get a lot of students in, inclusion of mathematics, general studies and those sort of things."

Below are quotes from several participants that illustrate their perceptions of the change in curriculum:

Going through the gen ed., creating the gen ed. objectives and, and taking that, that was a lot. That was year's worth of meeting, meeting, meeting,



hard work and revising things and arguing about one word means versus another; it's not easy; it's challenging.

The general education core, developing that, forced us to sort of think about education, or at least to bring to the forefront the idea that there's a greater purpose maybe behind education besides just getting a job, and I think that our focus had been. We were just busy putting up classes and you know, but suddenly general education. There was an admission at least there are things that an educated adult should know that has nothing to do with your job or anything else. These are things that an educated person should know. It was the first sign that people kind of felt we had a bigger purpose.

The faculty kind of had to step in and say, "No, we can't just let students take a class because they there, they do have to do the placement tests." ...And then, moving on from that, when we went to the bachelor degrees we had a major revision of the general education program. It used to be that what we call the Chinese menu approach, with everybody put as many classes in different discipline categories that they could so that the classes, so students would take them. So we had a lot of very small classes. So we changed the general education program to make sure it was focusing on what students should learn. It was a one-year process. And we identified what we should do and then we decided to fewer courses that would meet those. And so we became more efficient, by funneling

more students into fewer classes of higher quality. Yeah and so there was the placement testing enforcement, gen ed. development.

We have always been trying to align our curriculum with the four-year programs at the universities and that has been a difficult task, but I would say by having four-year programs here, we've been able to work that out so we probably have a better relationship with universities that are students going on in then we would have had if we didn't have baccalaureate programs.

Below are quotes from several interviewees that illustrate the impact that revamping the curriculum had on the college and the faculty:

Well, the prerequisites, the 300 level classes, that's impacted. If everything has to build on each other getting back to the prerequisites has probably driven a little bit by the bachelor's degree. They have to be prepared when they get to that class so the curriculum has changed in that regard. The general ed., that's changed; there's a committee for that.

That's about the time we started the bachelor's degree. We added a general education committee that was formed and has driven standards in the general education which I don't think is a bad thing; it's a good thing.

So we are much more programmatic than we used to be. We don't have dabbling in this and dabbling in that to the extent we used to have. So, we had to fine tune our curriculum, the gen ed. grid. All of that was important because it focused us on the kinds of things our students should

learn. Now, we haven't been perfect in how we've evaluated that, how we measured that.

It's made us consider curriculum more carefully, I think- you just don't want to teach a class and you add it anywhere. You've got to figure out where it fits. I mean there are some classes that are just added for community, for whatever, but most of our classes we have to figure out how they can fill several needs. And so, we can't, we can't just be offering classes because they were in our special area. We've got to figure out how to make them work for all the bachelor's degrees.

In my department we've tweaked prerequisites and done some things, articulation wise, to bring courses in line with the other institutions and opened up opportunities for online classes which is difficult to do in my department because of the labs. We've tweaked the lower division curricula in ways that I think we're streamlined, more solid.

One interviewee explicitly stated that the development of the baccalaureate programs improved the two-year degrees:

The four year programs got a lot of people very excited about what they were doing here, and I think the effort that went in to the four-year degrees has sharply improved our two-year degrees. I have no doubt about that at all. You have to think more coherently if you want upper division to succeed. Your lower division courses have to be solid, so you think more about those lower division courses, what you're doing in them, are you

adequately preparing students for upper division courses. So, I think we are a stronger two-year institution as a result of having four-year degrees. Again, I see no dichotomy here. That whole thing is ridiculous to me because I know we have self-consciously improved our lower division offerings to meet the challenges of four-year degrees.

Several of the interviewees spoke directly about the Bachelor of Applied Science and the upper division integrated seminars. The integrated seminars are four general education upper division courses which are taught across disciplines in math, science, social science, and humanities. The topic of the courses is about current issues and change on a regular basis. All of the bachelor's degrees require the integrated seminars. Several interviewees discussed the importance of requiring general education courses at both the lower division and the upper division.

How the commitment to an AAS degrees- the two-year technical education makes a big difference for the upper division courses. I'm convinced that the two areas of expertise that people need and the earlier they get those the better. It is management and information systems. . . what I see is the level of experience that is required by the business world is four years of education just like it was a several years ago when the community college was started. It was felt that two years of vocational training was sufficient, but these 15 or even 20 years, the employers have been demanding more education. The people knew how to do a particular job but couldn't write very well, couldn't speak very well, and all the

other general ed. types of exposure. . . Addition of the four integrative seminars in the general education . . . 12 credits of integrated studies, integrated seminar in business, so for social science, humanities, math, science and the school at the upper division, those students were required to take a seminar which had intensive reading, writing and talking about a pertinent issue of the day . . . they took basically liberal arts kind of seminar atmosphere. When I came here and saw that these integrated seminars were taught at the upper division level that made a lot of sense to me. . . I would say 90% of the students are all nontraditional students. They've been out of school for a long time, but they always have this lifetime goal of a baccalaureate degree, and once they realized they could complete that degree on top of what they've already experienced in life and develop their general education skills.

One of the major impacts has been the integrated courses in the upper division. That was brought on by several key professors, and of course we have the BA, BAIS program now. That was definite curriculum change. That is sort of a little hard to maintain, but people are still coming up with courses.

Many of the interviewees also discussed the standardization of the process of developing curriculum and enforcing prerequisite skills for courses. Some believed this has drastically changed. One said, "We were kind of a two-bit operation." Below are

quotes from several participants that illustrate their perceptions about the standardization of the college's policies and procedures of the curriculum.

It used to be that we let students sign up for any class that they wanted; they had the right to fail. They could take a math class; they could jump into calculus if they wanted to; there was no prerequisites- no co-requisites in the beginning. Now there is all the prerequisites students have to take- this class before that class . . . a lot more hoops for students to jump through.

It's made it more standardized which is ok; we don't have the same flexibility for a fun topic, or a fun class, because we have to make sure we get required classes. Hopefully anyone leaving here can fit in anywhere else. So in that way it's been a little more restrictive in terms of what we can offer, but that might be a good thing because then it's more standardized.

An interviewee spoke about the change in mindset, while creating and teaching courses:

Become more complicated, you wanted to teach a class, you'd put it in the schedule and you'd teach it. Now there has to be a syllabus that goes through curriculum committees, and we have to have measurable assessment. Just this whole emphasis in the whole country on accountability and how can you know that you're really teaching what you say you're teaching. We didn't used to have that. And so it was much

looser. I'm not saying it was any better; it probably wasn't as good because you know if we didn't teach to any standard, we did whatever we did. But there was that sense of freedom that we could almost pull anything together and teach it. It didn't have to fit any particular degree program or curriculum, didn't have to go through so many committees; now that is much more regulated. Which it has to be because we're up in the big league now, dealing with those students who have to be able to function when they transfer so that requires a whole different mindset.

One interviewee summarized the experience as having to change to fit into a larger system:

Well, we've really had to bring ourselves up to the four-year degree level. Faculty had to do that. We have to have certain requirements you have to have in certain degree programs that we may not necessarily been the ones that we came up with this because now we're part of the bigger system. And it requires a little more dedication on the part of faculty. There's a lot more busy work, but it's probably busy work that has to be done because of the bureaucratic system that we're now a part of, and we got to do it if we want to be up there and play in the four-year league. We got to do it.

In conclusion the interviewees explained the laborious process of changing the curriculum to accommodate for the baccalaureate degrees. They reported that the general education was improved, and the lower division degrees were strengthened in the process. Several interviewees also discussed the standardization of the process of

developing curriculum and enforcing prerequisite skills for courses. They attributed the addition of the baccalaureate degrees for the increased standardization and enhanced requirements.

### **Students and student services.**

The interviewees reported that the students have become younger and offering the baccalaureate degrees have attracted students that may have gone to a university. “I think there’s been change by nature of the student population by our expanding to many campuses and our expansion of number of degrees offered and types of degrees.” “The students were my age or approximately my age or older and now they’re younger and it’s hard for them to relate, for them to relate to me and for me to relate back to them, so that might be part of it.” Although the faculty perceived that the students were becoming younger, according to the Great Basin College Fact Book (2009), the age of the student has not changed much and the percentage of full-time students has remained at approximately 30%. The number of students under the age of 18 has increased due to the development of dual credits. Below are quotes from several of the interviewees that illustrate their perceptions about the students:

The students have definitely evolved from non-traditional to beginning to see more traditional ones. When I was first here, if I wanted the most students, I would have taught every class at night because the day classes were almost empty. There were very few traditional students that would come. There were some homemakers and so forth that would take classes in the day, and then there were a few regular students, but mostly they



were working people coming in off shifts or working rotating shifts. So, most of my earlier career I taught three of my five classes at night, like on Tuesday/Thursday from 5:30 to 6:45 and each of those nights would be followed by a 7:00 to 9:45 class. I'd have three of my five classes on two evenings. That has been the biggest change now is that we have a lot of day classes. The 5:30 time is still the most important because we still do have a high percentage of traditional community college students that work all day. The traditional students want classes in the day. This has been a remarkable change, just an incredible change.

I think we've had a change of getting the higher percentage of better students from the high schools, the ones that are kind of hunkering down and staying close to home with the economy. And we are still getting some that aren't totally prepared like the ones that we've had before, but I think second state is that we are getting a core of really good students.

I would say generally that having four-year programs has enabled us to attract maybe a little bit higher level students; students who had choices to go somewhere else, but specifically chose to come here.

Students who might have had to leave the community and would have been university bound and now they realize they can accomplish what they want. So, I think it's really brought us, despite all my

complaints about the low level of students, some of the higher end students as well, including the post-baccalaureate students.

The other thing that's changed for me is that most of our students were women, returning to school after having been housewives or in the work force. We were heavily female and older and what we evolved to now is our students are getting younger and younger. We still have some of the older, female students, and we have more male students probably because of our bachelor's degrees.

One interviewee noted that, by offering four year degrees, Great Basin College was providing access to the baccalaureate, as well as increase partnerships with businesses.

These students do not have to move across the state to be in a four-year program. They don't have to choose between job/home and education but are working on finding a balance. They are making GBC their college. The programs requiring internships save students from having to travel...and increases GBC's partnership with local businesses and agencies. It's a win-win for everyone.

Two of the interviewees expressed their excitement about watching students progress for four years and completing a baccalaureate degree:

We've always had a surprising number of solid, bright, willing-to-work hard students. There's always been a core of those students and many of them caught fire with the four-year degrees. That was one of the most

exciting thing about this change- was watching- having the ability to watch students progress from ground zero to getting their bachelor's degrees and watching them grow. That was a phenomenal thing, both as a personally, professionally satisfying thing.

It seems in some respects that, I've been here almost 20 years, and it's really hard for me to remember a time when we didn't have baccalaureate programs. I've seen how students have gone through the associate into the baccalaureate programs and now what they've been able to do with their careers. I am very thankful that as an institution we've stepped out there and did it because these people are still here within the community, and they probably never would have had the advantage of having a baccalaureate degree had we not been able to offer it.

One interviewee thoughtfully reflected on the selective process of being admitted to a four-year program which is different than the open access policy, "I know when the elementary education program first came. Having a selective process to get into the program was new to the campus. You know with a two-year mission, everyone's welcome."

One interviewee believed the students have been more engaged:

One of the difficulties we've had is having a student body that's active because of the nature of our college. Our student body is becoming more engaged. I think that is a chapter that is yet to be written, but I've seen the starts like even with the protest with the budget issue that we've had.

That's the first time in the years that I've been here that I've seen students take a stand on anything. So, I was very proud of them. I think having our literary magazine in which students participated is another good sign. I think our current student government has good ideas about how to engage students.

One interviewee discussed the change in the involvement of the student body and the relationships of the students:

The four-year program students have a greater opportunity to bond with other students through sharing classes, making friendships, developing strong cohorts within their programs just by spending more time together. Education students have been like that from the start, but just within the last couple of years, I've seen the same kind of culture within the business, social sciences, and natural resource programs. They're waiting to take classes together and forming stronger study groups.

One faculty member believed that having four-year degree students raised the expectations for two-year degree students. "Even a few four-year students raise expectations both in the faculty and their fellow students. Our two-year students know that some of the folks in the classroom are pursuing four year degrees, and I think this helps everybody." Below are quotes from several of the interviews that illustrate the impact that baccalaureate degrees had on student services:

Offering four year degrees has really ratcheted up not only the expectations but also the focus on student advising. When I first came

here, we had your certificate degree programs and your associate degree programs but really, the focus was just on classes; the focus wasn't really on the programs. I think the bachelor degree and the funding have provided us with the resources and the expertise-different faculty and staff to really increase the effectiveness of and focus on student advising. So, the focus has gone from just individual courses to actual programming.

I think housing is a big thing, and it's all in concert with expansion of programs and . . . because of the four year programs, students are around more; they're around more in Elko; everybody gets to know them better and that leads to, and along with housing, to more of a campus feeling than we had before.

Then the arrival of the services for students was a biggie. Once we got housing then people could come, stay on the campus. It was kind of a commuter college for a while there. That was a biggie, when café X opened, that brought a sense of dining, the gathering place.

With the addition of baccalaureate degrees, rules and regulations were different.

One interviewee conversed about these requirements:

And, I know for us in the student services area, we had to make sure we were completely compliant with all the rules, regulations. Financial aid, that was another big thing, because you just, you don't automatically begin offering financial for a baccalaureate programs. It has to be approved. And so as an institution we were extending ourselves the first

semester in providing aid for students and, so that was interesting because if we hadn't gotten approved, basically as I recall, the institution would have had to eat it.

In conclusion the interviewees perceived the student body had become more traditional and more involved in the college life. Interviewees reported the baccalaureate degrees attract students that are more prepared. Some spoke about the relationships they created with the students in the four-year degrees and how exciting it was to see individuals who may not have been able to earn a bachelor's degree without the college's offering the baccalaureate degrees. The interviewees also expressed the amount of work that was undertaken by student services to include residential living, dining, financial aid, structured advising and student activities that promoted a social setting.

### **Central Research Question**

The central research question was how has a community college, Great Basin College, evolved while adding five baccalaureate degrees? How has a community college transformed to a community college with five baccalaureate degrees? What impact has offering four year degrees made on the community college mission?

Nineteen interviewees perceived Great Basin College as maintaining the current mission as a community college while adding baccalaureate degrees to the mission. Only one of the interviewees envisions Great Basin College becoming a state college. The other of the interviewees stated they embraced the community college mission, believed Great Basin College is living up to the community college mission, and through offering baccalaureate degrees, Great Basin College is providing access to the baccalaureate for

students in the rural areas of Nevada. All of the interviewees reported Great Basin College is responding to the workforce training needs of its service area. Great Basin College created baccalaureate degrees that fill a niche in their service area, especially in hard to fill positions like nursing, teaching, and social work. They noted that the majority of their graduates remain in their communities. “Well, I think now going into the baccalaureate, we continue to do that but we’ve taken it to the next level as well.” “I don’t think it’s changed in that they have definitely kept the community college concept. I don’t think that’s changed.” Below are quotes from several interviewees that illustrate their perceptions about the mission of Great Basin College:

We basically built a case that said, our students are place-bound and we want to open the door to the baccalaureate. We don’t want to stop somebody at an associate degree level. And many of them [the students] have the capabilities of going further and we want to do that. So, I see the four-year college growing really out of the community college mission because it’s always been to serve the community. Now the community has enlarged and we had all these little tiny centers all over the place.

The founders were aware that a generation of Elko youth was lost to other cities. Because Elko had no college, they left to obtain a college education. Many of these trained young people saw no reason to return and were forever lost to Elko. The founders wanted to stop this loss and convert it into a gain. Because of Great Basin College, Elko, Winnemucca, Ely and now Pahrump have an influx of students instead of

a loss. The founders wanted Elko to become a better city with a finer lifestyle and quality of life. The college has made a significant impact on all of us. It has challenged us and improved us. It has made us more appreciative of art, music, theater and travel. It has provided a fact, of which those of us who were raised in college towns were very aware. The institutions of higher learning make the communities special and change them in a positive and beneficial way.

None of us, however, had the vision of the innovative teaching opportunities and methods which have developed and been pioneered by Great Basin College. None of us visualized the influence of Great Basin College in other communities extending from Idaho, to Oregon, to Utah and California. None of us anticipated that there would be a need to expand our major associate degree programs to baccalaureate status. This has resulted because of the vision, ability and energy of three outstanding college presidents...In reviewing the 40 years of Great Basin College; I have tried to determine how closely its original goals have been achieved. The founders wanted it to be a community college with approximately 60% vocational technical education and 40% oriented toward college parallel and community service. The proportion has been maintained. They wanted cooperative involvement with the high schools. They wanted a blending curriculum to inspire continuing education and improvement in education in all institutions.



These institutions are to be congratulated on their efforts and achievements in this challenge. They wanted the college to be flexible to in its ability to anticipate the needs of business and industry. If a business or industry had specific educational needs, they wanted the college to be able to fulfill that need. This adaptability has been demonstrated most dramatically in fulfilling the educational needs of the mining industry employees. The cooperation of industry and the community college is to be commended...

Another interviewee discussed the expansion of the community college mission to include the baccalaureate degrees:

Our community college mission is a little broader than some because we have 62,000 square miles, and rather six large counties in Nevada. So ours is to provide quality student-centered education for rural Nevada, and we also have something in there about dignity and respect. And that's our particular mission, but really . . . stemming from that one basic mission; then we have a lot of other subcategories that do that, and it ranges from the developmental education to get people up to speed that need it, to providing courses for transfer or work force training, traditional associate of applied science type and certificate types, those things. There is community service, community interaction and that's kind of been the traditional community college, but then we have added this one to serve our community. We need some bachelor's degrees and those were not

being delivered to the communities, to place-bound populations. So we see that, the bachelor degrees in the community colleges as being an extension of serving the community. There is a definite need for something, and we're the only ones that are providing it in those cases.

Some of the interviewees explained the purpose behind offering the baccalaureate degrees and the students they serve. Below are the interviewees' quotes expressing their beliefs:

It [Great Basin College] still has maintained our community college image. I think, as far as that goes, we still serve the high school students coming out, the terminal degrees, we still serve those needs. We've also expanded to serve those that can't travel to the university, so they can come to Great Basin College and get their bachelor's degree.

We see that with offering bachelor's degrees, with offering and valuing the associate's degrees in the different areas. So, yes, and just from an academic and professional level and even personal level the faculty are committed. They see the value in the associate's degrees and the community college mission. Adding bachelor's degrees is just a nice compliment to the community college mission. I mean you can do both; it's like having a hybrid mission.

They were all planned extensions which gave the people opportunity for advancement in their education. It was designed with them in mind, rather than trying to get some glory at the college.

I think, again, it goes back to our mission statement. We are serving our community, serving rural Nevada, northern Nevada, Nye County, all of our service area. We're doing what we said we're going to do. It's the right thing to do. You know, where else are they going to get a bachelors degree if they don't get it here... We've struggled with it. I think it's caused us some growing pains. Different issues have come up that we've struggled through, but now that we've been doing it for several years. I think we've got it down, and I think we do a good job of it.

And the original educational philosophy, which continues to this day, is that the purpose of the college is to teach students. Programs, classes have been of grass roots origin. The mission dictated the needs of the students to fulfill the requirements for jobs in the labor market. Even though the name community college has been eliminated from the college name, the college now has baccalaureate degrees in several fields; the community college philosophy remains intact. These new degrees are an expansion of pre-existing vocational technical programs which have become necessary to meet modern educational needs. And early in its history the college recognized the need to expand outreach to all Northeastern Nevada. . . Success is assured if the college adheres to its core values. It must have as its overwhelming objective the welfare and education of the student. It is important to avoid programs that primarily exalt the institution and the faculty. Fame and recognition should come

from doing an outstanding job of educating students. It must avoid programs imposed upon it from above and stick with programs that fulfill community needs. They should always remember the 66%; they will always be present and will always need your help. Costs must be kept low. An institution is worthless if students cannot afford to attend. This requires that the funds for every program, faculty member and employee should be justified. Unintended financial consequences of new programs and their adverse effect on tuition costs must be considered.

Frankly I think of it as an extension, I don't think of it as a deviation from the community college mission. I think it is an extension on it. I think it's impacted us mostly in a positive way. I think it's given us more influence with people that we provide more choices; that we produce graduates for our community.

I think we clearly defied those people and proven that we can take on select bachelor's degrees and still retain the community college mission. We have done that clearly and in fact, it's enhanced our community college mission because we do more things for the communities that we serve that need those things to be done. And, I think it's worked out great; it's the best thing to ever happen to the college and it was clearly the right thing to do.

I think the greatest impact we'll see is on the individual lives of people who have been impacted who – . . . otherwise would have not been

able to receive a degree because of being place-bound or financial circumstances or otherwise – came to our school because it was convenient in many ways and succeeded and who have continued to succeed in the business world. I don't know how one measures that, but to me that is what an education is all about – helping the student improve and having them feel that they made a contribution – can't measure that. You know it when you see it.

Many of the graduates remain in the local area after earning degrees (Great Basin College Website). An interviewee articulated that the service area benefited from having local graduates:

Even our professional people are working in the area so I think if we have done anything we've made our service area even better with the people we have, local people, train them and they stay because they really don't want to leave. That's what I think we're about. What we should be doing.

One interviewee explained the economic sense of offering the baccalaureate degree:

I would suspect that associate degrees are most costly to produce graduates from than baccalaureate degrees are. And so, if you can marry the two-year associate degree with a two-year bachelor program then you've expanded and increased the efficiency and reduced the cost of education for what you do student by student. So I think it makes a total economic sense for a community college to offer baccalaureate degrees.

I've never felt that was ever an issue. I think that a community college will no longer exist if they don't increase their academic standard to a baccalaureate, and Great Basin has proven that.

In conclusion 19 of the interviewees defended the premise that offering the baccalaureate was part of the comprehensive community college mission. "We're quite comfortable with having a diverse mission that includes certificates, offering certificates, associate degrees and bachelor's degrees." They did not perceive that the mission had changed; it had been extended. Although the respondents embrace the community college mission, offering baccalaureate degrees has impacted Great Basin College in several ways. Some of the impacts were planned, and some were unforeseen.

Seven impacts were clearly delineated: (a) hiring more faculty with doctorates, (b) rewriting the general education, (c) expanding the library holdings, (d) standardizing policy requirements, (e) defining faculty workload and adding of deans, (f) increasing student services, and (g) changing the culture and how the college is perceived by the community.

The first impact is the accreditation requirement to hire more faculty with doctorate degrees. The percentage of faculty with doctorates increased from 6% to 24%. By recruiting outside of Nevada, the culture changed resulting in a more diverse faculty with experiences from other locations. The college has a greater number of perspectives and experiences to view issues on campus. Hiring faculty with doctoral degrees has impacted college finances mainly because faculty with doctorates are more expensive

than those with master's degrees. Baccalaureate degrees also increased the number of faculty. The number of faculty increased from 44 in 2000 to 68 in 2009.

A second impact was on the curriculum. The general education curriculum had to be rewritten; in fact, the general education was "reconceived." Courses had to be revised to accommodate for the new general education requirements. This impact is perceived as positive as it strengthened the two-year degrees. Another impact of the curriculum was the excitement that developing upper division courses brought to the faculty.

Respondents enjoyed delving into areas of expertise and rejuvenated with the complexity and depth of course content. Several interviewees mentioned that workload increased to develop the courses.

A third was facility expansion, specifically the library holdings. Accreditation required the college to increase databases and library holdings to accommodate the baccalaureate degrees; this requirement strengthened the college overall and benefitted all degrees and students.

A fourth was standardization, and policy requirements were put into place to meet accreditation requirements and baccalaureate degrees. Respondents emphasized the need for placement exams, prerequisites for classes, required outcomes for classes, and standard syllabi components. Courses must be seen as program related and faculty must make a commitment to updating courses.

A fifth was on the organizational structure of the college. The faculty senate and administration collaborated on a new workload policy that mandated that all faculty teach 15 credits. The new policy provided reassigned time for faculty to serve as lead faculty

for the baccalaureate degrees; they were expected to oversee the program's admission policy, program policies, advising, reporting, and maintaining data bases for programs. The college governance was restructured to include deans. However, due to an economic downturn in Nevada, not all of the organization changes have been implemented.

A sixth was the increase in student services. Financial aid requirements differ from four-year degrees, thus financial aid had to be implemented differently. Advising, an integral part of the baccalaureate programs, became structured and program oriented instead of course focused. The college strategically planned for an increase in student life to include residential housing, an active student government, organized student activities and organizations.

The seventh and last impact was on the overall culture of the college and how others perceive the college. The community saw Great Basin College as a more legitimate place of higher education. The "community's perception of us was elevated, and people began looking at us more as a college of first choice instead of last choice." Respondents viewed students as more traditional students who spend more time on campus; the campus appeared to have "more energy." In effect, "a sense of place" had developed on campus. Respondents believed this to be a significant change in the evolution of the college.

### **Summary**

In this chapter I based answers to each of the topical research questions on how the interviewees perceived the evolution of the college. I then verified them with data. I concluded the section with an answer to the central research question.



## Chapter VI

### THEMES

Simons (2009) wrote about the importance of analyzing and interpreting the data to reach the case study story. She suggested moving from one transcript to categories or stories and then from several transcripts to deriving themes and patterns and then finally writing as an interpretation to represent the story. In this chapter, I describe the two major themes that emerged from Great Basin College's evolution as it developed five baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. These two major themes and associated sub-themes were derived from the 20 transcripts of the interviewees and the collected data. The two major themes are change and the connectedness with the community. The associated sub-themes of change are (a) change is inevitable, (b) change is directly related to the leadership of the college, and (c) technology is a key factor of change. The two major themes and associated sub-themes are depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1 Theme One: Change

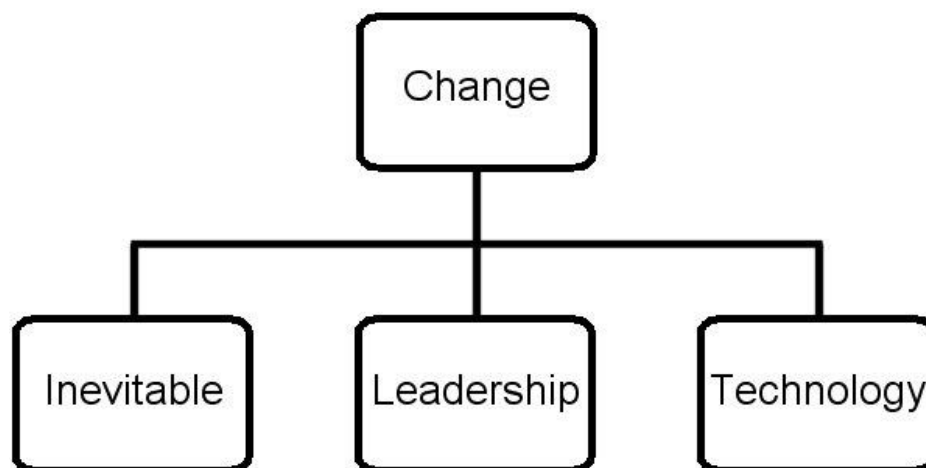


Figure 2 Theme Two: Connected with Community



### Change

Cohen and Brawer (2008) stated:

Community colleges are forever evolving. Community colleges do not even follow their own traditions. They change frequently, seeking new programs and new clients. Community colleges are indeed untraditional, but they are truly American because at their best, they represent the United States at its best. Never satisfied with resting on what has been done before, they try new approaches to old problems. They maintain open channels for individuals, enhancing the social mobility that has characterized America, and they accept the idea that society can be better, just as individuals can better their lot within it (p. 41).

### **Inevitability**

Great Basin College appears no different than the typical community college described by Cohen and Brawer. Most interviewees noted change as an everyday occurrence and as part of who they believe they are. They noted the community college mission as the one constant at the college and everything else as evolving. Typical comments included:

“I think that flexibility and access are going to continue. I think we’re going to have to be a lot more creative.”

“I think we’re going to be change; I think we’ll have to change and reassess things a lot, all of the time.”

“We’ve done lots of different things for lots of different people to serve rural Nevada, so things have changed a lot over 26 years I’ve been here.”

One interviewee emphasized change:

You have to change, everything changes. That is the only absolute I think there is; everything changes. And you better change too because you don’t want to be left waiting at the station watching the train pull out on the tracks. I think there will be changes, and I hope there will be changes, but there won’t be changes in basic idea of the community college; that will never change.

Another interviewee shared her thoughts about change:

The curriculum is going to have to change with society and what the needs are. With our community, if industry changes, we’re going to have to

change; curriculum is going to have to change. We're going to have to continue to research to find out what the best methods are; we're going to have to educate ourselves; we're going to have to do what's right and continue to stay abreast of everything that's new and innovative.

An interviewee reflected that possibly change is brought about by people: Change, I think we are always changing. Change in leadership, the changes in attitude, the changes in students; we get different students now than we did when I came here. Everything has kind of evolved together and changed together, and students have changed as the programs have changed, and there've been more opportunities here, like education and things like that. So I would say, you know, the people change more than bringing more change.

Another expressed the relationship between change and survival:

You know, if you're just going to be, stay in one spot and the world is going to go right on by, it's not a choice. So I think all of the above will change, somehow, I don't know how.

The respondents viewed change as their past, their present, and their future – change -- was inevitable. They emphasized the link between change and leadership and change and technology.

### **Leadership**

The interviewees reflected upon the evolution of Great Basin College and how leadership played an important role in defining who Great Basin College is today and

how it achieves its mission. The interviewees directly related their experiences and Great Basin College's evolution to the leadership during each era of the college. When asked about the evolution of the college, thirteen of the respondents moved through the times of the college based upon the administrator. "So there have been a lot of changes in administration, a lot of changes style, both style and substance of the administration." "Well that's probably some of that change in attitude, some of that has come from the new administration, looking at the college differently." "We've just been very fortunate to have good administrators." "So, you know, having the right people on the bus is an important concept." "Some of the different administrators that changed over; there were some changes. I think there are some things that have a better fit now for what the area is with the community and actually not just the community but the whole service area. We've got people [administrators] there now; they've got a lot of time invested in supporting the President, he's been here a long time." "It had its origin in a community that was ready and willing to be challenged. All it needed was the leadership to make it work."

Twelve interviewees gave credit to a particular administrator, Dr. Ron Remington for his ability to lead the college. Dr. Remington was the president from 1989- 2001 during the era of the development of the first baccalaureate degree. One said, "I really credit President Remington for that because it didn't happen overnight." A second reported, "The second thing was probably when, I would say, probably the hiring of Remington that brings up the 'Be All That We Can Be'."

Kouzes and Posner (2003) wrote, “We know, through our research, experience, and readings that ordinary people can learn how to get extraordinary things done... Leadership is a relationship between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow” (p. 1-2). The authors outlined five practices of exemplary leaders: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. When speaking about Dr. Ron Remington these traits were mentioned numerous times. “I do know, that Ron and Dorothy were keys and had a vision that this could be done in Elko.” “Ron, but he was kind of like a steady force for quite a few years there. I think when he left; we had a loss.” Another expanded on this idea:

When I started, he was a vision person; he was one of those people who didn't worry about the trees; the details somebody else had to pick up after him, but the vision, he influenced a lot of us; it was his vision that Great Basin, or that Northern Nevada Community College needed to do whatever it could to serve these educationally underserved areas of Nevada.

Another interviewee included the hiring of Dr. Ron Remington as a significant event:

The most, one of the highest most significant events is Ron Remington taking the presidency. . . I think Ron Remington was exactly the right person at the right time and he never, he lead by, he lead cooperatively. He said to us early on, you know, shared governance doesn't mean you get to carp at those of us who are making the decisions, you help us make

decisions, give us your perspective, and we share in making the decisions; that mean you have go get to work, you don't just sit; you're not sitting there complaining and criticizing; you have to get involved, and we did.

In conclusion, 13 interviewees explained the evolution of Great Basin College in terms of the administrators and leadership styles. Twelve interviewees mentioned Dr. Ron Remington as a pivotal leader in shaping Great Basin College as it is today. Leadership is key to change and the how an institution develops and evolves.

### **Technology**

Technology also played a role in the evolution and changing of Great Basin College. Although Great Basin College has a defined service area like other community colleges, its service area is tremendously large. From the beginning, Great Basin College searched for new means to overcome the challenges of distance. Because of its vast service area, Great Basin College pioneered interactive video conferencing and distance education starting in the early 1990s. One respondent said, "I think, of course, the ability to use the video conferencing and the new techniques have been pretty much pioneered by Great Basin; it's an extremely important thing." Fifty-seven percent of the courses offered at Great Basin College are distance education; a 91% increase over the past nine years. Thirty to 35% of total enrollment is through distance education. In 2011, Great Basin College advertised two bachelor degrees solely on-line: nursing and surveying. There are no two-year degrees solely on-line. Although Great Basin College has few total programs completely on-line, the majority of courses are offered via distance education in order to meet the needs of the students in the service area.

Many interviewees perceived technology as a momentous factor in Great Basin College's evolution. One said, "New technology has been a challenge for us." Another stated, "There is also, yet to be fully realized but it certainly was very significant, distance education, online and interactive video has been huge, huge thing for the college." Another added, "Technology is changing so fast that they don't understand things. Yeah, I think that's part of it, I think that our society now for one thing." Another mused, "It's kind of interesting- the online classes versus the interactive classes versus the live classes, then you got the hybrid classes. Technology has really effected how we deliver what we do, and I only imagine that growing, getting bigger." Other interviewees offered perspectives about their perception of how technology played a role in change:

But of course distance education, look how much that's changed. I taught the first online class in like 92 or 93 maybe. And look how much that has grown today, and that's addressing the needs of the students I guess, indirectly or directly. I am not completely sure that's addressing the needs of the students the best way that. It's a sign of the times I guess.

Distance education came on a little before we changed to a four-year mission. That was if I'm not mistaken in the early 90s that we began to move toward IAV. We began to get computers. . . IAV was the first big challenge for most of us. I think it works pretty well if you don't have too many sites. The more sites you have the more students you have that are not engaged.



The whole distance learning thing fits in there somewhere with both the IAV and the internet and that's been a massive change. Generally speaking, enhancement to what we can deliver to rural Nevada is another big, big piece.

We've seen technology play a huge role, especially for us here because we have more and more students take advantage of technology that avails more classes and more programs. Using the GBC Library online has been a terrific step for our students in their research. They're still looking for quality education, for quality programs.

Things have changed a little bit since the 1990s especially with electronic resources and with distance education. So, some of the issues have been, have been lessened because of distance education and get enrollment into areas where I thought we wouldn't have enough enrollment.

And again, technology has played a huge role. When I started, one of our biggest obstacles was trying to get some of those students who lived far away in for classes twice a week. Or, they had the Internet and it didn't always work. Sometimes, they'd have to go on one side or another of the road if they lived in a really rural area to do their homework and now they're hooked up and they can successfully complete online classes. However, some still drive those many miles to come in for class.

I think that distance education, online so forth and so on. We were a leader in that in Nevada and in many places. I still think we do a good job but I think that the future will depend on how well we do distance education.

Two interviewees questioned how technology might impact Great Basin College's future:

I think there will be a great development in technology that will even be more economically viable to reach out to our whole area, to a very large area. Without a tremendous development of the technology, we will struggle to deliver.

That's kind of counter balanced by so many online programs. I don't know where that's all going. I'm looking ahead now of online programs, even for someone living across the street . . . they have schedules that they have [to] meet. Nevada, in particular, has people who work, and mining people, and the hospitality industry, the working hours are so weird so . . . we have that here.

Eighteen interviewees mentioned that increasing the service area to include Nye County was a major event in the evolution of Great Basin College. Nye County increased the service area to 62,000 square miles. This addition evoked greater need for technology in order to deliver education further distances. In fact, adding Nye County has prompted some respondents to report positive impacts as well as added challenges. One interview noted that technology provided Great Basin College with a diverse economic community,

so funding would not be so dependent upon one geographical location. Another interviewee noted that technology had improved communication with adjunct faculty. A few interviewees noted the challenges that came with a greater distance and adding a new culture. The majority of the interviewees believed this increase was in line with the current mission of serving rural Nevada. One said, “Our community college mission is a little broader than some because we have 62,000 square miles, and rather six large counties in Nevada. So ours is to provide quality student-centered education for rural Nevada.” Another agreed, “Obviously we are simply covering a great service area. The Pahrump addition was a major tactical challenge.”

One interviewee discussed the importance of the broad base economic backgrounds to support the college:

It increased us from five counties to six counties and from 47,000 square miles to 62,000 square miles, a long distance. It’s a rural population like we are used to dealing with. It’s in Southern Nevada and for us it’s just part of rural Nevada. The people outside of our college say what you are doing in Southern Nevada because we have a north south battle going on here and you’re in the middle of it. So it did extend us geographically, but it also gave us a more diverse population and a broader population base, actually an economic base that’s different.

One interviewee talked about an unanticipated consequence of increasing the service area:

The geographic growth of Nye County has been a strain but had a benefit that I didn't anticipate. The full-time faculty pay more attention to the adjunct faculty in a way that I had not perceived. And so now there is a much closer connection between the full-time faculty and the entire adjunct faculty. It's made us have some stronger bonds. Even the connections between the centers and the directors of the centers with the departments have definitely changed for the better.

One interviewee explained the challenges that an extended service area brought: Pahrump has changed everything, not everything, but, in my mind, it has been a big change for the campus. It was hard enough delivering what we were delivering and that community came to us dissatisfied with what they had. And so, that made more of an onus on us to make sure we did the right thing. And it's been very demanding and for whatever reason our service area prior to Pahrump had a culture for better or worse, and I think that those folks in Pahrump had a different culture. They were attached to a different unit, and I think we see sometimes feel some points of tension with the two cultures trying to mesh and it seems like we've spent a lot of time and a lot of money trying to work these things out. I feel like that was a big, big change.

One of the interviewees perceived that the increase in service area diverted attention from other functions:

I think enlarging our service area has taken a lot of time and effort away, just two days in a car, not being able to do much. I think the change in transportation. It's harder, harder to get out there and get together with other people around the state.

Although the cultures differed, one interviewee thought that it was important the Great Basin College provide education to the individuals in this part of the state:

Nye County is definitely going to be part of the future. It is the most undereducated area of the state in a rural state so we need to do a lot of work to bring them into the fold and make them part of the whole thing and not feel like they're outsiders.

Several interviewees questioned the defined service area of the community college and the idea that technology blurred boundaries, "The relationship with online teaching has changed a lot and that's not been an easy transition either . . . we've got this peculiar stance on this thing, hoping to get people from everywhere but on the other hand they're very defensive of our legislative territory. So there are a lot of unresolved issues there." Another stated, "We will continue to do distance education that may go beyond our service area."

In conclusion, technology and distance education has played a key role in Great Basin College's development. The interviewees perceived technology as pivotal in the development of Great Basin College, as a means for meeting its mission of serving rural Nevada, and as a challenge for the future.

### **Connected with the Community**

The interviewees expressed a strong sense of pride when speaking about Great Basin College. They talked fondly of the moments they had on campus and being a part of the evolution of the college. All of interviewees reported the college as being greatly grounded in the community, with the belief that the community will always play a role in the community college. The community created the college, assisted the college in evolving, and the interviewees felt a strong sense of commitment to the communities they serve and meeting the communities' needs. The beginnings of the community college is recognized by most of the interviewees as a significant event. One of the interviewees shared his memories about the early days when the community created the college:

When one now looks at a community college system that serves so many citizens of the state, the former missing education niche that it occupies, its acceptance by the people, the educators, the politicians and industry, it is easy to forget the years of struggle and education that made it possible. To a major extent this was the role of the advisory board of the college, the policy-making authority of the school. The members were the individuals who visited the legislature and educated them and Nevada citizens about the nature of a community college. We fought for recognition and course offerings and for funds for the first building on the campus. The advisory board is still important, but its role has changed. It helps the administration and faculty and supports the college and is a sounding board for their program. They have only the best interest of the college.

Another interviewee also shared his experiences of the beginning of the college: It was really a grass roots thing; it's beginning. There was that excitement that this was something we created. With the entrepreneurial spirit of some of those early pioneers and the sacrifices this community gave to kind of get the whole thing started. The students just kind of think oh it's the college and that's where we can go but they don't understand the history.

Other interviewees expressed the importance of community involvement. "The needs of the community always change. We have to keep up with those things. I would say we are pretty good in that arena." "Probably the community involvement has always made the biggest impact." "We are all one college. Great Basin College has no more 'stepchildren centers' and no division among the centers and main campus--there was a time when that wasn't true." "We are rooted in the community." "I think that it's been very adaptable to what the needs of the community are."

The interviewees foretold the future of Great Basin College as a community college with varied programs. "We want to be a community college, but we want to offer the bachelor's degrees that we need to serve the communities. We still maintain the two-year mission as our foundation. I see nothing but support for that." ". . . as far as curriculum wise, we will look at different programs and degrees and that will be in response to the community needs as well as the state needs."

Another interviewee talked about the importance of the college's future by utilizing the communities and advisory groups. "The involvement in the community as

far as having focus groups look at our programs and how they work.” “I think we’re going to continue to be flexible, to meet the needs of the community whatever they are, I think we’re going to continue to offer as much access as possible.” “We’ll always stay a community college and that is our focus, or one of our main focuses- community involvement offering classes the community wants and also offering the four-year programs and transferable programs.” “For the college to be successful...constantly looking for educational and community needs that the college can fill. Solve these needs locally. if at all possible. Depend on yourself not on others. Utilize advisory boards and other citizen groups for input to remain a community college.”

The interviewees articulated that they will continually respond to the communities in which they serve. “There is no way they can avoid the community college mission. They will always be a school that reports and accepts influence from the community.” Below are quotes from several interviewees that expressed the college’s relationship with the community:

I don’t see that we’ll be ever not be responsive when a mayor or a city councilman or a pertinent employer calls and says could you create something like this. I need these kinds of people. I see us always being responsive to that, so if that’s the way we identify or define community college, then it will always be that.

At GBC we’ve always tried to keep the community involvement; we have focus groups that work with different programs and the faculty



respond to them and to meeting their needs when we can. We're still very focused on what they want.

Education is important and it's life changing. It's the only investment you can make that somebody can't take away from you. I think of the impact it's made an impact on the town in terms of the economic impact. It is pretty big on rural Nevada where you've got people paid professional wages in the communities where they live. It's brought educated people, college-educated people to places that haven't had them before or hadn't had those kinds of resources in their community. It's been a community resource for a variety of things. If you want to get something started, you come up to the college and talk to somebody. The college has been involved in every major project. All of us have to do a community service at one time or another. If you made a list of the different organizations that we contribute our time and effort and skills to in this town, it would be very long.

When thinking about the evolution of Great Basin College, several respondents mentioned the commitment to community and how hard people worked to make access happen. Below are several quotes from interviewees sharing their thoughts:

When one now looks at a community college system that serves so many citizens of the state, the former missing education niche that it occupies, its acceptance by the people, the educators, the politicians and industry, it is easy to forget the years of struggle and education that made it possible.

It has been made possible by a wonderful faculty who have challenged themselves to make Great Basin College this fine institution. It has been encouraged and facilitated by the outstanding, understanding and actions of the members of the Board of Regents. Without their sustained support the community college dream could never have succeeded. It has been made possible by the support of the citizens of Elko and other communities. You have supported it financially and in many other important ways.

As we've gone along we've had good presidents, and we've had excellent faculty. I've always said that when I'm needing my battery recharged, I come here and meet with the faculty senate because many faculty senates greet you with I don't have this, I don't have that, I don't have something else, but the faculty up here has always come with the idea, this is what we're doing, now to honestly do more we have to have more money. So, I've always appreciated that, but when you look back and think from whence that college came, it's amazing, absolutely amazing.

One interviewee shared his experiences with students:

I have seen students that came through that with maybe very limited English speaking skills and now have achieved their associate and they're working towards their baccalaureate. So to me it's exciting. When I attend graduation and I look at those students. . . I know what it has taken

to get that student to walk across the stage and it's like, "Hallelujah they made it!"

Several interviewees stated Great Basin College was a viable, quality option.

"Because so many students are coming to us now as kind of an economic decision as well as a quality decision, I think we are being more fully realized as a designated entity."

"Quality education in rural Nevada, we can hold our own next to any other institution."

Below are quotes from several interviewees reiterating this point:

And then, in more recent times, just because of the economy, I think people have looked to as a highly legitimate place for the local people to come. They've just said that this is as good as anyplace else. I think students that have gone other places have come back have increased our reputation because they come back and told students this is a lot better than other places.

Offering bachelor's degrees has certainly given us a name. People recognize our name since we were one of the early ones to do it. Our models that we developed are looked at and accepted by other institutions. Our status has improved. We are now a college of first choice instead of second choice.

I think those programs have helped strengthened us, made us more visible within the community. To let the community know you can continue the education here and attain your goals going through GBC, that's been positive.

It's increased our responsibility to this community. You still have your community college but now it's increased our responsibility to present a program that we feel very good about- that we have set up. The students that graduate leave and say that they've graduated with this kind of degree from Great Basin College and they're going to feel some sense of pride that they're well prepared and they'll represent us. And I think that's a hard mission.

Several interviewees expressed the importance of inspiring life-long learning in individuals which in turns improves the community:

The institution and faculty members should inspire the citizens to increase their knowledge so that they can have a more fulfilling life. Each professor and employee should be an ambassador to the community.

Offering bachelor's degrees has made us deliver to these place-bound students and develop and allowed a lot of people to remain in the communities and be a better contributor. You know if you can educate people where they are and they get a better job, they pay more taxes and have a better life. That is probably the most important thing. It improved our status and improved the lives of the people; I mean it gave them more opportunity.

Several interviewees expressed a strong sense of pride and purpose. "I think that's an improvement, too. I think we take ourselves more seriously. I think that we are pretty proud of ourselves."

I do have the best job in the world! Because I get to work with students, adjunct and full-time faculty and administration, and sometimes, it is nice to be at a distance. I believe in what a community college stands for—I think we give people another chance if they missed it before. But people here appreciate Great Basin College and it's good to be a part of that—and I love it.

I am just glad I was part of this evolution of GBC. I was here when it started—through both good times and not so good, but GBC was able to build a program that we can all be proud of and being a part of that in itself has been an honor for me.

I think in general we're proud that we teach at Great Basin College. I think we like each other. We're not nearly as political or get into turf oriented kinds of arguments that departments get into. I think that you can tell. People typically stay here for a very long time. Often, you feel like you belong and you're contributing. I think that's a big thing. We think we are contributing to something larger than ourselves. It is pretty exciting. We really have the sense of building something from the beginning and ever since I've been here I've had that sense that we are building something, we can go a little further, and we give one more for the Gipper because it's something that we're proud of it. We can contribute.

In conclusion, the interviewees perceived that the only constant is the community college mission. They stated that responding to the community needs and offering new programs is a priority. “I see us maintaining our community college mission by offering a variety of different programs.” “It is and it changes, depends on what the community does. For the most part it is meeting the needs.” “I think we would continue to search for programs that would better serve our residents.” The interviewees perceived the college and the community as connected. The community impacts the college and the college impacts the community.

### **Summary**

The interviewees explained the community and the college interdependently connected. They acknowledged the change with the communities, the change with the students, the change in people, the change in technology and the importance of the college staying in tune to those changes and meeting the needs that result from change. They expressed satisfaction with Great Basin College and the role it plays in assisting individuals to better themselves. “I guess we’re the little college that has the attitude that we have: I think I can, I think I can, the little train makes it up hill.” This sentiment was expressed by an interviewee.

But my experience over almost 30 years here, there has been a lot of change; there has been a lot of regrouping and rethinking things and trying to meet the needs of the community. I don’t think without the community we could exist as a community college or as a four-year school because I think we’re pretty closely in tune to those.

One of the founders summarized this idea:

I believe that I speak for all of the founders when I say that the hope we had for the community college goal in education has been achieved and has exceeded all our hopes and expectations. It has been a privilege and great pleasure for me to have been involved in the college for forty years.

## Chapter VII

### SUMMARY, INTERPRETATIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical “portrait” of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. Specifically, I explored, through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty, how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college.

The central research question that guided this instrumental case study was: How has a community college transformed to a community college with five baccalaureate degrees? What impact has offering four-year degrees made on the community college mission? The five topical questions drawn from this main question are:

1. What do the respondents perceive as significant events in the history of Great Basin College and the evolution of Great Basin College?
2. How has offering four year programs impacted the traditional community college mission? As Great Basin College added four-year programs, was it able to retain its institutional identity mission as a traditional community college as perceived by the respondents?
3. What do the respondents believe about the college’s investment in maintaining the community college mission?



4. What are the respondents' perceptions of how the four-year programs impacted other functions of the college?
5. How do the respondents perceive the impact of the four-year programs on the faculty, the curriculum, governance, the culture of the college, faculty workload, facilities and equipment, or students services?

First I created a timeline of the evolution of the college and collected historical information. Then I conducted 20 interviews of faculty and administrators. After the interviews were transcribed and data were analyzed, additional data were collected to confirm or disconfirm the interviewees' perceptions. Data were analyzed and major themes emerged.

In this chapter I summarized the impact the implementation of baccalaureate degrees had on Great Basin College as reported by interviewees. Although the development of the baccalaureate degrees was perceived as an important event, major themes emerged from the interview data. In this chapter I interpret these findings and explain the implication of these findings. I conclude with recommendations for community college leaders and further research.

### **Summary of Findings**

Nineteen of the interviewees were adamant that Great Basin College continues to live up to its community college mission while offering the baccalaureate degrees. They do not believe the mission has changed; it has been extended. Although the interviewees embrace the community college mission, offering baccalaureate degrees has impacted

Great Basin College in seven ways. Some of the impacts were planned, and some were unforeseen.

### **Impacts**

Seven impacts were clearly delineated: (a) hiring more faculty with doctorates, (b) rewriting the general education, (c) expanding the library holdings, (d) standardizing policy requirements, (e) defining faculty workload and adding of deans, (f) increasing student services, and (g) the changing the culture and how the college is perceived by the community.

The first impact is the accreditation requirement to hire more faculty with doctorate degrees. The percentage of faculty with doctorates increased from 6% to 24%. By recruiting outside of Nevada, the culture changed resulting in a more diverse faculty with experiences from other locations. The college has a greater number of perspectives and experiences to view issues on campus. Hiring faculty with doctorates has impacted college finance because faculty with doctorates are more expensive than those with master's degrees. Baccalaureate degrees also increased the number of faculty. The number of faculty increased from 44 in 2000 to 68 in 2009.

A second impact was on the curriculum. The general education curriculum had to be rewritten; in fact, the general education was "reconceived." Courses had to be revised to accommodate for the new general education requirements. This impact is perceived as positive as it strengthened the two-year degrees. Another impact of the curriculum was the excitement that developing upper division courses brought to the faculty. Respondents enjoyed delving into areas of expertise and rejuvenated with the complexity

and depth of course content. Several interviewees mentioned that workload increased to develop the courses.

A third impact was facility expansion, specifically the library holdings. Accreditation required the college to increase databases and library holdings to accommodate the baccalaureate degrees; this requirement strengthened the college overall and benefitted all degrees and students.

A fourth was standardization and policy requirements were put into place to meet accreditation requirements and baccalaureate degrees. Respondents emphasized the need for placement exams, prerequisites for classes, required outcomes for classes, and standard syllabi components. Courses were developed for program requirements and faculty had to make a commitment to updating courses.

A fifth was the organizational structure of the college. The faculty senate and administration collaborated on a new workload policy that mandated that all faculty teach 15 credits. The new policy provided reassigned time for faculty to serve as lead faculty for the baccalaureate degrees; they were expected to oversee the program's admission policy, program policies, advising, reporting, and maintaining data bases for programs. The college governance was restructured to include deans. However, due to an economic downturn in Nevada, not all of the organization changes were implemented.

A sixth was the increase in student services. Financial aid requirements differ for four-year degrees, thus financial aid had to be implemented differently. Advising, an integral part of the baccalaureate programs, became structured and program-oriented instead of course-focused. The college strategically planned for an increase in student life

to include residential housing, an active student government, organized student activities and organizations.

The seventh and last impact was on the overall culture of the college and how others perceive the college. The community saw Great Basin College as a more legitimate place of higher education. The “community’s perception of us was elevated, and people began looking at us more as a college of first choice instead of last choice.” Respondents viewed students as more traditional students who spend more time on campus; the campus appears to have “more energy.” In effect, “a sense of place” had developed on campus. Respondents believed this to be a significant change in the evolution of the college.

### **Themes**

The respondents told the story of continuous change throughout the history of the college. They believed change is a part of their past, present and future. This is indicative of a traditional community college (Townsend & Dougherty, 2006; Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The interviewees attributed differing leadership styles and innovative technology advances as the major factors of change.

The majority of the respondents described the evolution of the college in relation to the leadership of the college. The interviewees described the leadership style, then the events that occurred on the campus. Ron Remington was noted as a president that was visionary and moved the college towards reinventing itself. Leadership played an integral role in the evolution of Great Basin College.

Technology created change at Great Basin College in two ways. First, technology became more sophisticated, and Great Basin College was challenged to respond to the continuous advancements in technology. Secondly, the expansion in Great Basin College's service area resulted in utilizing technology to teach students over long distances. The delivery of education had to progress to meet the students' needs from all regions of the state. Although the respondents viewed technology as a challenge, they noted it as vital part of Great Basin College's evolution.

The second theme was the college and the community's interdependent connection on each other. There was a strong desire by the college to be committed and respond to the needs of the community. By being innovative and flexible to the needs of the communities it serves, Great Basin College offered not only the baccalaureate degrees but the Manpower Training Consortium (MTC) program and other programs that were desired by its communities. The workforce programs and continuing education are viewed as critical to the communities' growth and sustaining business and industry. The respondents also stated they were committed to educating individuals and "improve[ing] the lives of the people...gave them more opportunity." In turn, the interviewees perceived the community as benefitting from having an educated citizen and cultural enrichment opportunities.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

In *The Community College Story* (2000), George Vaughn outlined the mission of most community colleges as shaped by the following commitments:

- Serving all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students
- Providing a comprehensive educational program
- Serving the community as a community-based institution of higher education
- Teaching and learning
- Fostering lifelong learning

Interviewees believed that Great Basin College meets the commitments of the traditional community college mission by offering baccalaureate degrees in select areas. It provided the comprehensive programs that were necessitated by its community. The focus of the college persisted in its focus on teaching and meeting the individual goals of each student.

Vaughn (2000) noted that community colleges have a history of innovation and responding to the national and local events of the time. "Each community college remains uniquely committed and the colleges continue to find innovative ways to strengthen their educational offerings and remain linked with their communities" (p.27). Great Basin College, representative of this innovation, developed five baccalaureate degrees and found a way to strengthen its educational offerings as deemed necessary by its community. The five baccalaureate degrees were developed with the community, based upon the vocational and educational needs. The communities serve on the advisory boards and continually refine the curriculum.

As Great Basin College underwent these changes, it remained committed to the mission of the community college, but is now encountering challenges brought on by its

changing service area and the increased demand of distance education courses and upgrades in technology. “In addition to remaining flexible and responsive, community colleges must maintain open access admission and comprehensive programs to serve an ever changing population, just as the nation must remain committed to universal higher education” (Vaughn, 2000, p. 29). Great Basin College reflects Vaughn’s beliefs through continued open access and providing comprehensive programs.

In spite of remaining committed to the community college mission, the college underwent change based upon the requirements of four-year institutions. This was brought about by accreditation and state officials. This confirmed Brint and Karabel’s (1991) neo-institutional theory that one of the main sources for institutional action and change is institutional agents such as state officials and profession which brings about conformity and standardization. The interviewees believed that the baccalaureate degrees resulted in legitimacy and standardization and conformity. Brint & Karabel predicted that these requirements would result in institutions becoming more similar over time.

Levin (2004) modified the neo-institutional position in regards to the community college baccalaureate. Levin (2004) concluded in his literature review that “markets, not citizens are the focus of higher education institutions. . . . Change in the purposes of colleges and universities in the past two decades are arguably a result of global competition and a marketplace orientation of higher education institutions” (p. 3). Because of globalization, community colleges reflect global identities and local identities, “While the global can penetrate the local, the local can also retain its historical character” (p. 2). Levin (2000) believed community college missions would expand even further

because of globalization and technology. With the expansion of technology blurring the lines of geographic locations, the community college mission would have to be responsive to a greater community in which they serve (Levin, 2004). According to Vaughn (2000) technology will continue to influence the teaching and learning process at community colleges. With the increased use of technology and distance learning, community colleges will have to continue to respond to the needs of the immediate geographic area, but they will have to respond to issues created by the blurred boundaries of the college's service areas. He speculated that the community college's successes will continue to depend on its ability to respond to a changing environment.

The story of Great Basin College confirmed Levin's theory and Vaughn's prediction. As its geographical region grew and technology improved, Great Basin College adjusted to meet the needs of its new community, as well as individuals beyond its service area. Although Great Basin College did not intend to provide education to individuals outside of its service area, the demand of distance education to serve its vast geographical region resulted in individuals outside of its service area taking courses. As the interviewees shared, "We are committed to the local culture of our communities, meeting the workforce needs of our communities, and educating our communities' citizens." The unintended consequence was blurring the lines of its geographical region. As the interviewees stated, "The relationship with online teaching has changed a lot and that's not been an easy transition either. . . we've got this peculiar stance on this thing, hoping to get people from everywhere but on the other hand they're [politicians and elected officials] very defensive of our legislative territory. So there are a lot of



unresolved issues there,” and “We will continue to do distance education that may go beyond our service area.”

Unlike Levin’s study (2004), Great Basin College did not create a dual identity with two values systems and two subcultures. Based upon the interviewees, Great Basin College blended the transfer mission with access to the baccalaureate. The interviewees perceived one identity with the belief that the four-year degrees strengthened the two year programs. Like Levin’s study, Great Basin College created programming to develop a workforce to compete in the global economy. Great Basin College remained true to the community college values of access and responsiveness. Yet, standardization and policy required them to behave as a four-year institution with the increase in the number of faculty with doctorates, increased standardization, and formal policies. Nineteen of the interviewees stated that the institutional identity remains committed to that of its community.

This study contradicts the findings of Plecha (2007). Her research provided evidence to support the concept of isomorphism; that over time, community college baccalaureate institutions more closely resemble four-year institutions. In the case of Great Basin College, the institutional identity as a community college flourishes.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

At this point, initial dissertation studies have been conducted on community college baccalaureate programming on faculty (Ross, 2006), on costs to taxpayers and students (Bemmel, 2008) and to graduates (Shah, 2010). Further studies need to be

conducted to determine the impact that community college baccalaureates have on the communities in which they reside.

Research needs to continue to determine the viability and effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate over a longer period of time. Ten years is not a good indicator of what will happen in higher education. Will the graduates be viable candidates in graduate schools and competitive with the graduates from four-year institutions?

Will the community college baccalaureate remain true to the community college core values of affordability and accessibility? With the demands of standardization and more faculty with doctorates, will the community college baccalaureate be able to keep costs minimized which in turn keep costs less for students?

Will the community college baccalaureate maintain the traditional functions of community colleges? Some community colleges that began offering baccalaureate degrees became state colleges; while others, like Great Basin College grew stronger in other areas of its mission. Can predictors be created to determine which community colleges may become state colleges or remain community colleges?

Because of the advancements in technology, will community college service areas be challenged? Many states define the service areas of community colleges, but students are becoming more consumer driven. Will the community colleges start reaching out to a greater region?

What role does leadership in the vision and future of any organization, as well as the direction of the mission? As people come and go at the college, will the community

college continue to be grounded in its rich history and preserve the connectedness with the community?

Because Great Basin College is a rural college, studies need to be completed on urban community college baccalaureates to determine whether technology and distance education has an impact on the delivery courses and the impact on service area. Being a grass roots initiative, Great Basin College is rooted in the community. Will other colleges that are created by state officials be as grounded in the community as Great Basin College?

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I presented a summary and interpretation of the findings. I connected them to the existing related literature. In addition recommendations for further research were presented.

The purpose for conducting the study was to provide a historical "portrait" of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2009-2010, as it developed five baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. Specifically, I explored how offering four-year programs impacted the students, faculty, curriculum, governance, and culture of the community college through archived data and interviews with 20 administrators and faculty.

The study concluded that Great Basin College remained committed to the traditional fundamentals of the community college: open access, comprehensive programs, serving the community, teaching and learning, and fostering life-long learning. The respondents perceived the addition of the baccalaureate as providing access to

individuals who may not have opportunity and strengthening the other functions of the college. The baccalaureate was perceived as an extension of the community college mission as a means of responding to the community's needs. The interviewees predicted that Great Basin College will remain in tune with the needs of the communities in which it resides, and it will continue to evolve as the community demands. The respondents expect the college to change in programming but remaining true to the community college core values. Leadership and technology will play an integral role in how the college will continue to evolve.

Although adding baccalaureate degrees was an important event, the respondents identified the continual change in the community's needs, the ever changing developments in technology, and the change of leadership as significant factors that attributed to the evolution of this community college.

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**APPENDIX A**

*Letter Approval From Great Basin College*



April 9, 2010

Dr. Barbara La Cost, Associate Professor  
 University of Nebraska Lincoln  
 Educational Administration  
 141 TEAC  
 Lincoln, NE 68588

Dear Dr. LaCost:

I approve Bonnie Hofland to complete her dissertation research at Great Basin College located in rural Nevada.

The dissertation title is A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate Degree: What Happened in Ten Years? Her purpose for conducting the study is to provide a historical "portrait" of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2008-2009, as it developed four baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. The study will explore how offering four year programs have impacted the students, faculty, finances and culture of the community college.

Sincerely,

Michael J. McFarlane, Ph.D.  
 Vice President for Academic Affairs

**ELKO MAIN CAMPUS**  
 1500 College Parkway  
 Elko, NV 89801  
 775.738.8493 • fax 775.738.8771

**ELY BRANCH CAMPUS**  
 2115 Bohcat Drive  
 Ely, NV 89301  
 775.289.3589 • fax 775.289.3599

**PAHRUMP VALLEY BRANCH CAMPUS**  
 551 East Calvada Boulevard  
 Pahrump, NV 89048  
 775.727.2009 • fax 775.727.2014

**WINNEMUCCA BRANCH CAMPUS**  
 5490 Kluney Canyon Road  
 Winnemucca, NV 89445  
 775.623.4824 • fax 775.623.1812

***APPENDIX B***

*Interview Protocol*

## Interview Protocol

**Title of Study:** A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate Degree: What Happened in Ten Years?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time of interview: Start \_\_\_\_\_ End \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me. I will be recording and then transcribing what we say today. After the interviews are transcribed, I will be asking you to review the transcription. You may add or delete any comments. I am interested in finding out how offering four year programs have impacted the students, faculty, finances and culture of Great Basin College. Please feel free to openly discuss your views. I may ask you some additional questions as we go along in order for me to clarify what you're saying. Please keep in mind that your responses will remain confidential and your name will not be used in the study. Results of the study, including all collected data, may be published in my dissertation and in possible future journal articles and professional presentations.

- 1) What are traditional community college values as defined by the mission?
  - a) Provide an example of how these values look at a community college.
  - b) Do you believe Great Basin College lives up to these community college values?
  - c) Can you provide examples of this?
  
- 2) What is Great Basin College's mission?
  - a) Has the mission changed?
  
- 3) How invested are the faculty in maintaining the community college mission?
  - a) What do faculty do or not do that makes you perceive they are or are not committed?
  
- 4) Do you believe Great Basin College has met and/or is meeting the community's needs?
  - a) If not, please explain and provide details.
  - b) If yes, can you describe a "best practice" in detail?



- 5) How do you perceive the evolution of Great Basin College?
  - a) Explain
  - b) Provide specific events that have changed Great Basin College
  - c) Why do you think it is evolving like this?
  
- 6) What five events do you perceive were significant in the history of Great Basin College?
  - a) What impact do you think they made on Great Basin College? Describe the impact.
  
- 7) If an author came on campus to write a book about Great Basin College, what would you recommend for each chapter?
  
- 8) If the values continue as you now perceive them to be, how would you describe the future of Great Basin College?
  - a) What will the curriculum look like?
  - b) What will the faculty look like?
  - c) What will the physical campus look like?
  - d) What will the students look like?
  
- 9) How has offering four-year degrees impacted Great Basin College?
  - a) Has it impacted the students?
  - b) Has it impacted the faculty?
  - c) Has it impacted the curriculum?
  - d) Has it impacted the governance?
  - e) Has it impacted the climate or culture?
  
- 10) Do you have anything you would like to add that may assist me in understanding the impact that adding four year programs has made on Great Basin College?

### **Closing Notes**

I appreciate you taking the time and effort to complete this interview today. I assure you that your comments will remain confidential. I will be contacting you later to look over the transcribed notes. If you have any questions, or think of any additional comments you'd like to include, please contact me at 753-2226.

**APPENDIX C**

*Consent Form*

## **Informed Consent Form**

**Title of Study:** A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate Degree: What Happened in Ten Years?

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Bonnie Hofland. The researcher conducting this study will describe the study and answer all your questions. Please read the following information and ask any question you might have before deciding whether to take part in the study. You may ask questions to either Bonnie Hofland or Dr. LaCost at any time. Your participation is entirely voluntary. You can refuse to participate without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You can refuse to participate at any time, and you can decline to answer any questions at any time. Simply tell the researcher that you wish to stop participating. All data collected before you stop will be destroyed and not used in the data analysis or results of this study. The researcher will provide you with a copy of this consent form for your records. A summary of the study results will be provided to you upon request.

### **Purpose**

The purpose for conducting the study is to provide a historical "portrait" of Great Basin College, from 1997-98 through 2008-2009, as it developed four baccalaureate programs while maintaining its community college functions. The study will explore how offering four year programs have impacted the students, faculty, finances and culture of the community college.

### **If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following:**

Participate in an approximately 45 minute, audio-recorded interview.

Review a transcript of your interview tape for accuracy.

The total estimated time that you will be involved in this study is one hour.

### **Location of the Interview**

The interview will take place on an agreed upon location on Great Basin College's campus in Elko, Nevada.

### **Potential Risks**

There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts involved with this research.

**Potential Benefits**

Data obtained from this study will provide community college professionals and policy-makers information about how adding a baccalaureate degree impacts a community college.

**Compensation**

There is no compensation for this research.

**Confidentiality**

Your identity in this study will be treated as confidential. Results of the study, including all collected data, may be published in my dissertation and in possible future journal articles and professional presentations, but your name or any identifiable references to you will not be included. Only the researcher and the transcriber will see the data. The transcriber will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement concerning the study. All data will be destroyed 18 months after the completion of the study.

**Freedom to Withdraw**

You are free to decide to not participate in the study or to withdraw at any time. You can withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or with Great Basin College.

**Questions about Participant's Rights**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant or wish to report any concerns, you may contact the UNL Institutional Review Board at 402-472-6965.

**Subject and Researcher Authorization**

I have read and understand this consent form, and I volunteer to participate in this research study. I understand that I will receive a copy of this form.

---

Participant's Name (printed)

---

Participant's Signature

---

Date

---

Principal Researcher's Name (printed)

---

Principal Researcher's Signature

---

Date

Bonnie Hofland (Principal Researcher)

Dr. Barbara LaCost (Secondary Researcher)

Office: 775-753-2226

Office: 402-472-0988

[hofland@frontiernet.net](mailto:hofland@frontiernet.net)

blacost1@unl.edu

**APPENDIX D**

*University of Nebraska IRB Letter of Approval*



May 4, 2010

Bonnie Hofland  
Department of Educational Administration  
527 Cripple Creek Dr Spring Creek, NV 89815

Barbara LaCost  
Department of Educational Administration  
127 TEAC, UNL, 68588-0360

IRB Number: 20100510778 EX

Project ID: 10778

Project Title: A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate Degree: What Happened in Ten Years?

Dear Bonnie:

This letter is to officially notify you of the approval of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as Exempt Category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 05/04/2010. This approval is Valid Until: 12/31/2010.

1. The approved informed consent form has been uploaded to NUgrant (file with - Approved.pdf in the file name). Please use this form to distribute to participant. If you need to make changes to the informed consent form, please submit the revised form to the IRB for review and approval prior to using it.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:

\* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;

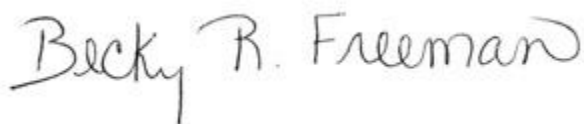
\* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;

- \* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
- \* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
- \* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,



Becky R. Freeman, CIP  
for the IRB



**APPENDIX E**

*Auditor's Letter*



# Memo

**To:** Dissertation Committee of Bonnie Hofland, University of Nebraska

**From:** Barbara A. Henderson-Forrest, M.A.

**Date:** 7/29/2011

**Re:** External Audit Attestation

---

Bonnie Hofland requested that I complete a qualitative research audit on her dissertation entitled, *A Case Study of the Community College Baccalaureate: What Happened in Ten Years?* The purpose of the audit is to confirm if the findings were congruent with the statements made by her interviewees from Great Basin Community College. One of the four criteria set forth by Guba and Lincoln (1994) for evaluating research is neutrality or objectivity and is defined as confirmability from the qualitative research approach. Confirmability means the degree to which others corroborate the results. It is confirmability that I examined in this audit. The audit was performed during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Initially, I read her research questions that were approved by her institution's IRB and obtained a list of the 20 interviewees that had signed consent forms. I listened to and transcribed the 20 mini cassette taped interviews. After transcribing, I re-listened to the tapes to ensure accuracy of transcription of the interview as well as confirmed that each interviewee appeared on the approved list. Additionally, I confirmed that Bonnie had asked each interviewee the same approved questions. I found the interview transcriptions to be accurate with negligible errors, none affected the data and those few that were deemed inaudible were reviewed and comprehended when the tape was slowed.

After Bonnie had coded the interviews, I read her results to guarantee they were consistent with the statements made by the interview subjects. From the coding, two predominate themes emerged. The first was change and subsidiary to that is that change is inevitable with leadership and technology playing a key role facilitating the change. The second theme is the interdependent relationship Great Basin Community College maintains with its community. I agree with those themes and concur they accurately reflect the opinions of the interview subjects and accurately reported in the product.

In summary, Bonnie has met the criteria for confirmability of findings.

**APPENDIX F**

*Coding Categories*

### AXIAL CODING CATEGORIES

Axial Category	Sub-Category	Data confirmed	Behavior-4 yr or community	Precipitating Factors		Degree of significance or change
				Bachelor degree	other	
Significant Events	Event # 1	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 2	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 3	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 4	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 5	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 6	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 7	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Event # 8	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
Impacts on other functions of the college	Key words	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Developmental education	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Transfer degrees	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Community service	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Vocational/workforce degrees	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Continuing education	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
Mission of community college	Other	yes or no		yes or no		typical- significant
	Community college	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
	State college	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
Values of community college	Key words	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
	Access	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
	Affordable	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
	Open-door policy	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
Impacts on college	Key words	yes or no	4 yr or CC			typical- significant
	Faculty	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Curriculum	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Governance	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Culture of college	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Faculty workload	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Facilities and equipment	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
	Students and student services	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant
Other	yes or no	4 yr or CC	yes or no		typical- significant	

**APPENDIX G**

*Great Basin College's Mission Statement*

*(Great Basin College Catalog 2010-2011)*

### **Great Basin College's Mission Statement**

Treating everyone we encounter with dignity and respect, Great Basin College provides superior, student-centered, post-secondary education in rural Nevada.

Commitment Statement:

As an institution of the Nevada System of Higher Education, Great Basin College is committed to responding to the programmatic needs of our service area by providing opportunities in university transfer, applied science and technology, business and industry partnerships, developmental education, community service and student support service in associate and baccalaureate programs. We do so by:

- Effectively addressing the ever-evolving and often disparate needs of our students — career seeking/enhancing, degree seeking, and casual — by means of innovative practices and technologies, resourcefulness, insight, and foresight, both inside and outside the classroom.
- Promoting the mutual enrichment, ongoing development, and collegiality of our faculty, staff, and administration toward the pursuit of excellence, while maintaining the personal, accessible presence of a real community college.
- Attuning with and anticipating the needs of business, industry, and government entities in our service area and tailoring our academic programs to serve them well both now and in the future by matriculating students who are competent and confident, able and willing to enter the workforce, step up in the workforce, or pursue a higher degree.
- Continually seeking improved methods and technologies for delivering education at a distance, across our rural 62,000 square mile service area.
- Celebrating the rich and unique history of our region and its indigenous peoples while also cultivating appreciation of the diversity among us, in the region and the world, during the present day, so that that after they complete their time with us, our students are prepared to actively participate as members of the global community.
- Fostering awareness of our physical, natural environment for the benefit, enrichment, and edification of future generations.
- Offering cultural enrichment opportunities — performances, lectures, concerts, exhibits, and the like — for communities in our service area.
- Making responsible, resourceful, and worthwhile use of our funding and honoring the objectives and intentions of its sources.

**APPENDIX H**

*Timeline of Events at Great Basin College*

May 1967	The College Committee hears facts about a community college from Dr. Voris, a consultant to the committee.
May 1967	Day's Pay Drive for College Fundraising begins. Ten local businessmen executed a fundraising program within the community of Elko called "One Day's Pay" The program was a success and raised \$46,000 in just thirty days.
July 1967	At a meeting of the Elko County Board of Trustees, the college was officially created. In addition, an advisory board was appointed.
September 1967	College classes opened. The college held its first classes under the name Nevada Community College. Students, mostly part-time, enrolled in community service and adult education classes are scattered around Elko in makeshift classrooms. Many citizens of Elko, whether the course was of interest to them or not, participated by helping fill classes so that the legislature would take the effort of starting a community college in Elko seriously.
February 1968	Senate gives unanimous consent to AB 22 but the Assembly must agree to name change, i.e., Nevada Community College is to be called Elko Community College.
May 1968	The college raised a total of \$85,000 during the past year, \$70,000 contributed directly by residents of Elko County. He also said that 1,407 people accounted for 37,397 student hours. Forty-nine instructors taught 80 separate courses. Thirty thousand dollars was in the form of fees collected.
May 1968	Governor Laxalt announced that Howard Hughes agreed to donate \$125,000 to sustain the Elko Community College for one year's operation. Another \$125,000 was earmarked for a statewide study of a community college system in Nevada. Control is with the State Board of Education. A Howard Hughes aid delivers a check for \$250,000 to Governor Paul Laxalt.
July 1968	Five full-time vocational courses were organized for the college. They are highway technology, secretarial science, business management, law enforcement and corrections, and heavy duty and automotive mechanics. Forty-one semester credits of vocational-technical courses plus twenty-three credits in general education allowed students to earn an associate in science degree.
September 1968	Richard C. Lynch is named president of ECC.
January 1969	Governor Laxalt delivered State of the State message asking for funds for the Elko Community College.
April 1969	Assembly Bill 659 passed, transferring control of Elko Community College to the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada System. Funding from the State was also provided in the amount of \$1,000 for each full-time equivalent student up to a maximum of 150 students.
June 1969	College Advisory Board was created.
September	Elko Community College held its first day of classes as a comprehensive,

1969	open-door, two-year community college. The college is working on the accreditation process. It offers Associate of Arts and Associate of Applied Science degrees.
November 1969	ECC receives a \$100,000 gift from the Fleischmann Foundation to start its library and learning resources program.
December 1969	Silver Stage Players debut with a play called "Star Spangled Girl Play."
December 1969	ECC's basketball team opens first game with a 89 to 64 loss to College of Southern Idaho.
May 1970	First graduation is held.
July 1970	Elmer Kuntz named head of Elko Community College by University of Nevada Board of Regents.
1970	Elko Community College exchanged 100 acres of land, donated to the University of Nevada and located northwest of the city along the Mountain City Highway, for the 58 acres of city-owned land remaining in the old Ruby View Golf Course.
1971	Licensed Practical Nursing program was transferred from the Elko County hospital to the college. Agriculture program was begun, which in its prime had 30 students, all coming from ranches in the area.
1971	Programs expanded to the five county service area.
1971	Elko Community College received approval from the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher schools as a "Candidate for Accreditation". This classification is given to fully operative collegiate institutions which appear to be offering students at least a minimally satisfactory level of education and opportunities implied by its objectives.
1971	Elko Community College wins building approval. The signing of a \$375,000 appropriation bill by Gov. Mike O'Callaghan for construction of an Elko Community College vocational education building means the Elko school soon will take an important step toward developing a permanent campus and will be in a position to perform the pilot project role previously assigned to it by the legislature.
1971	Elko College receives grant of \$68,519 from US Department of Health, Education and Welfare. This grant goes toward the \$533,000 needed to complete the college's first building.
1972	Elko Community College has been approved as a candidate with the Northwest Association of Secondary and Higher Schools.
1973	First building was completed. Classes held in the first building.
1973	Board of Regents changed the name of the college to Northern Nevada Community College (NNCC).
1973	Second building was completed.
1974	The college obtained full accreditation from the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.
1975	NNCC made its first significant movement into community services with the Pioneer Arts and Crafts classes and activities, which touched nearly



	everyone interested in the folk-life and folk-art of the area. The famed Cowboy Poetry Gathering has its origins in the movement and graced the NNCC campus.
1980	The Fleischman Foundation granted nearly \$200,000 to NNCC to develop the Computing Center and to build an exemplary playground near the Child Center. Fundraising begun; the faculty and staff made donations, and several flea markets were conducted which netted \$6,000.
1981	The one-year diesel mechanics training program moved into its own facility on campus. In late 1981, the idea to form a fundraising group came as a result of the faculty senate and college-wide meeting where it was announced that the Legislature would be inflicting major cutbacks in the college's budget. The college became extensively involved in using telecourses to serve small population groups in isolated areas.
1982	The NNCC Foundation started fund-raising campaigns where the faculty, staff and administration raised the first money, several thousand dollars through personal donations and proceeds from flea markets.
1983	The science department began to develop a two-year Geotechnical Science Degree program to train technicians to work for the area's mining companies. The program is now called Mining Technology. The college was once again accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges.
1986	NNCC's third state-funded building was constructed on College Parkway to house student services, faculty offices, and a multipurpose area.
1987	Student survey indicated an eating area, a real bookstore, an area for study and a place for indoor exercise and performing arts was needed in the Student Center.
1988	The Student Center was designed for a cost of \$1,200,000 and that a performing arts area attached to the student center would double as an indoor exercise area for an additional \$1,300,000 for a total of \$2.5 million.
1989	Rom Remington was hired as president.
1990-94	Faculty numbers doubled. Programs were defined. Nursing received full accreditation from National League of Nursing.
1994	NNCC received full accreditation with commendations from Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities.
1995	The name is changed to Great Basin College (GBC) to reflect its service area.
1996	Ely's community built a \$1.85 million dollar facility to house GBC; Winnemucca's community built a facility to house GBC.
1997	Donald W. Reynold's Foundation provided \$4.54 million grant for landscaping for Elko campus. This included a clock tower, amphitheater, a solarium, a watercourse, footbridges, walkways and outdoor seating.
1998	A feasibility study concluded there was a demand and support for a baccalaureate degree in elementary education. A community committee is selected to build the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education.

1998	Mission revised to include the baccalaureate degrees.
1998	Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities did not approve the substantive change. GBC created eight subcommittees to develop a different program.
1999	Nevada Department of Education grants GBC a two-year provisional approval. Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities grant a provisional accreditation.
1999	Great Basin College begins to offer its first baccalaureate degree, the Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education.
1999-2000	General education is reconceptualized and reconfigured.
2000	Manpower Training Consortium developed with local gold mines.
2001	Bachelor of Applied Science is approved.
2002	Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies is approved. The first baccalaureate students in elementary education graduate.
2002	Residential living is added to the Elko campus.
2004	Bachelor of Science in Nursing is approved.
2005	Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education is approved.
2006	Nye County is added to Great Basin College's service area.
2007	The Bachelor of Social Work (3+1 Collaborative program between Great Basin College and the University of Nevada, Reno) is approved.
2010	The community center, Paul and Gwen Leonard Center for Student Leadership, is renovated. The center houses facilities that will enhance student life and student services, as well as an expanded food service area.

Great Basin College Website (2009-2010)

Interviews (2010)

Remington & Remington (2005)

**APPENDIX I**

*Great Basin College Degrees*

Great Basin College Catalog 2009-2010

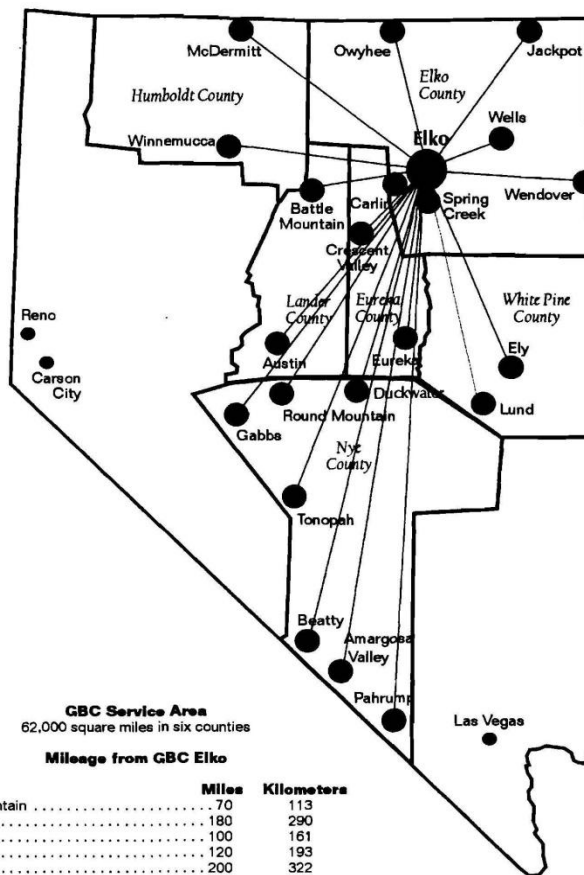
## Great Basin College Degrees

<p>Certificate of Achievement Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting Technician</li> <li>• Business Administration</li> <li>• Diesel Technology</li> <li>• Early Childhood Education</li> <li>• Electrical Systems Technology</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Human Services</li> <li>• Industrial Millwright Technology</li> <li>• Instrumentation Technology</li> <li>• Medical Transcriptionist</li> <li>• Medical coding and Billing</li> <li>• Office Technology</li> <li>• Retail Management</li> <li>• Spanish Interpreter/Translator</li> <li>• Substance Abuse Counselor Training</li> <li>• Welding Technology</li> </ul> <p>Associate of Applied Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture</li> <li>• Business Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accounting</li> <li>○ Entrepreneurship Emphasis</li> <li>○ General Business Emphasis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Computer Office Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ GIS Emphasis</li> <li>○ Graphic Communications Emphasis</li> <li>○ Information Specialist Emphasis</li> <li>○ Network Specialist Emphasis</li> <li>○ Office Technology Emphasis</li> <li>○ Web Specialist Emphasis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Criminal justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Corrections Emphasis</li> <li>○ Law Enforcement Emphasis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Diesel Technology</li> <li>• Early Childhood <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Early Childhood Emphasis</li> <li>○ Infant/Toddler Emphasis</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Electrical Systems Technology</li> <li>• Human Services</li> <li>• Industrial Millwright Technology</li> <li>• Nursing</li> <li>• Radiology Technology</li> <li>• Welding Technology</li> </ul>	<p>Associate of Arts Degree</p> <p>Associate of Science Degree</p> <p>Associate of General Studies Degree</p> <p>Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special Education Endorsement</li> <li>• TESL Endorsement</li> <li>• Post Baccalaureate Elementary Program</li> </ul> <p>Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agricultural Education</li> <li>• Biological Science</li> <li>• Business Education</li> <li>• English</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> <li>• Social science</li> <li>• Post Baccalaureate Secondary Program</li> </ul> <p>Bachelor of Arts in Integrative Studies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Resources Emphasis</li> <li>• Social Science Emphasis</li> </ul> <p>Bachelor of Applied Science Degree</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instrumentation</li> <li>• Management in Technology</li> <li>• Land surveying/ Geomatics</li> </ul> <p>Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree</p> <p>Bachelor of Social Work (3+1) Collaborative Program with the University of Nevada Reno</p>
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**APPENDIX J**

*Map of Great Basin College's Service Area*

## Service Area Map



Population- 142,000 people in service area

**APPENDIX K**

*Nevada System of Higher Education Procedures and Guidelines Manual*

*Chapter 6: Academic Procedures*

## **Section 10. Evaluation Criteria for Baccalaureate Degree Program Proposals at NSHE Community Colleges (*formerly CM 03-01*)**

The NSHE *Master Plan for Higher Education in Nevada* provides for “selected niche baccalaureate degrees” at community colleges. For purposes of this policy, such degrees can be defined as baccalaureate degrees that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- promote the goals of the *Master Plan for Higher Education in Nevada*;
- address a unique educational need of an identifiable population; and
- enhance access to populations which otherwise would not be served due to geographic isolation or other barriers.

The proposal development and review process for the offering of potential baccalaureate degrees at NSHE community colleges is governed by Board of Regents’ policy that may be found in Title 4, Chapter 14, of the Codification of Board Policy Statements (*more commonly referred to as the Board of Regents Handbook*).

To determine which baccalaureate programs will best meet the needs of the students and the state, proposed programs will be evaluated based on standard criteria as stated in this Chancellor’s Memorandum.

Community colleges interested in implementing new four-year degree programs must provide information on the feasibility of the program by submitting a written program proposal with supporting data and evidence that responds to the following topics or questions.

Since, it is not the intention of the NSHE for community colleges to abandon their community college mission; each proposal must address this issue in both a cultural and organizational context.

### Criteria for Proposals

#### NEED AND DEMAND

1. Describe the new program proposal and discuss its structure and content.
2. Is the program in an area of critical concern, and is there a significant shortage of similar programs?
3. Workforce needs:
  - a. Is there proven student demand for the program?
  - b. Is there similar employer demand for the program?
  - c. Does the projected demand exceed supply for the foreseeable future?
4. Append a feasibility evaluation of the program proposal, to include its relationship to current student and employer demand. This evaluation should be done by someone from outside the institution who is a member of the field being proposed.



#### INSTITUTIONAL READINESS

5. Are there qualified faculty members currently on staff? List faculty names, degrees, and areas of specialization. If other faculty need to be hired, include your plan for doing so.
6. Discuss how you will address faculty salary and workload policies.
7. Describe existing facilities and equipment, and provide a detailed plan, if applicable, on how you will complete necessary renovations of facilities and equipment enhancements to support the program.
8. Describe how you will continue to foster a cultural and organizational environment that ensures adherence to the community college mission.
9. Will new services be required to support students in a four-year degree program (*new assessment procedures, career advisement and placement services, testing, etc.*)?
  - a. Provide a plan that addresses how student services will be revised or enhanced to support this proposed four-year program.
  - b. Provide the plan/policy on eligibility and awarding of financial aid.
  - c. Discuss how student recruitment will be handled.
10. Specifically, how will general education requirements be addressed?

#### BUDGET REQUIREMENTS AND IMPACTS

11. Will additional state funding be required to implement the program? Include a five-year projected budget, reflecting anticipated enrollments, staffing needs, revenues, and expenditures.
12. Is the cost to the state less than other available options?
13. Is the cost to the student less than other available options?

#### OTHER RESOURCE ISSUES

14. Is there a similar existing program at a nearby institution which has unused capacity?
15. Can a cooperative program between the institution and a nearby four-year institution be offered more efficiently? If not, explain.
16. Are there duplicate programs offered by other institutions through distance education?
17. How will library acquisitions and information resources be expanded and enhanced to accommodate the four-year degree program? Please provide the proposed budget for all enhancements.

#### IMPACT

18. What impact will this new program have on other programs at the institution?
19. What impact will this program have on the faculty, facilities, or other students?
20. Will this program have an adverse impact on other institutions?
21. Describe the impact of the accreditation process (*the specialized program accreditation, if applicable, and institutional accreditation*). Please provide a proposed budget for these processes.
22. Address other internal impacts that you anticipate of introducing a four-year program at a two-year institution.

**COMPLIANCE**

23. Does the program comply with current statutory requirements of the institution?
24. Would the increase in program length require any change to current institutional requirements?
25. Would any changes to admission requirements be needed?

**IMPLEMENTATION**

26. Is there an existing associate degree base for the degree?
27. Will policy require that admission into the baccalaureate track be dependent upon first earning the associate degree? Please provide the policy.
28. Will the new program be eligible for a specialized program accreditation (*i.e.*, *ABET* or *NCATE*)?
  
29. Will it need to be accredited either to interface with other programs within the NSHE or for graduates to have optimal employment opportunities?
30. What is the plan for preparing and submitting a Substantive Change Proposal to the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges?
31. What is the timeline for implementing the program?
32. Is the implementation schedule dependent upon receiving additional funding, hiring new faculty, remodeling facilities, or acquiring equipment? If so, are there alternative plans if some or all of that funding is not forthcoming?

(Added 6/05; A. 8/07)