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# The baccalaureate community colleges in Florida: A policy evaluation

Nicholas Manias

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The Baccalaureate Community Colleges in Florida:  
A Policy Evaluation

by

Nicholas Manias

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education  
Department of Adult, Career, and Higher Education  
College of Education  
University of South Florida

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Keywords: governance, policy cycles, accountability, teacher shortages,  
teacher education

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## Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the many people that have loved me, supported me, encouraged me, and put up with me. To my Lord and savior, Jesus Christ, He has guided my life, shown mercy on me, and blessed me with abundance, as unworthy as I am. He has blessed me with family and friends unparalleled. I thank my parents, Susan Wischweh, my mother and best friend who has been there for me at every stop on life's journey, without whom I would be lost. To my father Nikitas Manias whose loving heart and inability to hold grudges have been examples of how to treat people with grace. I thank my grandparents, godparents and stepparents for the positive influence they have had on me. To the Manias and Saul families - my sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins - it is hard to describe the foundation they offer. I can't imagine a family that is more unconditionally supportive. I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to all of the teachers who made connections with me and inspired me. Namely, I would like to thank Joe Leopold whose gift for and love of teaching led me to consider teaching as a profession. His impact has helped me become a better person through teaching.

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The Baccalaureate Community Colleges in Florida:  
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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine if community college baccalaureate programs in Florida were fulfilling the goals that were set forth in the legislation that created them. The study examined whether the baccalaureate level education programs at three community colleges in Florida were increasing access to baccalaureate education. The study investigated enrollment trends at all public institutions in Florida, reasons why students chose the community colleges for their upper division education, alternative plans students may have had if these programs did not exist, whether the limited number of baccalaureate programs at the community colleges impacted students' choice of major, and how the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate programs compared with their counterparts at other four-year institutions in the state.

The data included enrollment data, responses from a survey instrument that I created, and data from the National Survey of Student Engagement's (NSSE) data warehouse. The enrollment data included the upper division enrollment in education programs at public institutions in Florida. The survey instrument used open-ended questions and Likert-scale items from the NSSE. The survey's respondents were juniors and seniors ( $n = 140$ ) from baccalaureate education programs at the three community colleges.

Most students chose the community colleges for their upper division education because of location and cost. Almost three-fourths of the students who participated in this study reported that they would have attended another institution for their baccalaureate studies if the upper divisions at the community colleges did not exist. One-fifth of the respondents said that they would not have been able to earn a baccalaureate degree without the community college baccalaureate programs. The overwhelming majority of participants chose to major in education for a traditional reason. Finally, the students from the community college baccalaureate programs seemed to have better schoolwork habits and were more engaged than their counterparts at other four-year institutions in the state. The results of this study suggest that the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at community colleges in Florida are increasing access to baccalaureate education.

## Chapter One

### Introduction and Background

Higher education in America has seen many changes in its four-hundred year history. Originally, colleges in America were founded to educate clergy for the new world (Rudolph, 1990). Over time, colleges and universities grew to include students from diverse backgrounds and to offer varied curricula. Major forces such as wars, the industrial revolution, and the space race all helped shape today's system of higher education. Current forces acting on higher education are students, governments, and the private sector. These groups act on higher education in hopes of delivering maximum benefits to each set of stakeholders. Higher education in America as a whole, as well as individual colleges and universities, are in a state of change. Because colleges and universities serve the public they must do what is in the interest of the public to maintain a place of relevance in American society.

Perhaps one of the best historical examples of change and adaptation in American higher education is the growth and development of the community college system. William Rainey Harper formed the original community (junior) college in Joliet, Illinois in 1901. Harper did this by adding two years to the high school education. Over the last one hundred years community colleges have experienced many changes. From their inception, community and junior colleges continued to grow across the country; however, it was in the 1960's when community colleges experienced their fastest growth

(Vaughan, 1982). Much of this growth was as a result of the report from a decade earlier titled, *The President's Commission on Higher Education for Democracy* (1947). It was part of the committee's recommendations that a national network of public community colleges should be established. The community college movement in the United States has enjoyed so much popularity that in the last fifty years community colleges have shown more growth than any other form of public education (Grubb and Lazerson, 2004).

The ability for community colleges to grow in popularity and number has been attributed to a number of forces. Some of these forces impact higher education generally, but others are more specific to community colleges. Cohen (2001) theorized that alliances between members of the working class, members of the upper class, and universities themselves came together to help community colleges grow. He believed, however, that it was the local actors who often had the greatest influence causing growth of the community colleges. One such example of this was school district officials and community leaders who helped create new community colleges in search of recognition and prestige associated with having a community college in the district as well as the esteem that came with running a community college compared to that of a traditional K-12 school system.

The popularity of community colleges among the citizenry can be traced back to several factors. Generally, community colleges offer members of the local community the opportunity to gain a higher education in their own community without forcing students to move or make major life changes or sacrifices to earn a college education. In addition, community colleges traditionally have offered students lower tuition than four-year colleges and universities. Another benefit to students who attend community colleges is

more individualized attention due to a tradition of smaller classrooms and instructors whose focus is teaching. Finally, community colleges enjoy popularity because they serve many different roles, which allow them to offer benefits to a number of different groups of people.

Systems of community colleges have become the “jack of all trades” in American higher education. Traditionally, they have served four major functions (transfer education, occupational education, remedial/developmental education, and community service) (Cohen and Brawer, 1996). Among the four functions that community colleges serve, perhaps the most common and recognized is the transfer function. The transfer function provides students with an opportunity to complete the first two years of their college education, the general education, at the community college. Upon completion of the general education requirement, many students would then transfer to a baccalaureate-granting institution to complete the upper division requirements of their baccalaureate degrees. To make the transition from the community college to the four-year institution as seamless as possible for students most states worked to create articulation agreements between community colleges and four-year colleges and universities. In the 1960s some community colleges attempted to improve the transition for students by partnering with four-year institutions so that students could take upper division classes offered by the baccalaureate-granting institution at the community college campus (Lorenzo, 2005). This “partnership model” marked the first time students could earn a baccalaureate degree on location at community college campuses.

New hybrids and experiments under the partnership model between community colleges and four-year institutions are continually being introduced and altered. However,

more recently a shift has occurred and some community colleges now grant their own baccalaureate degrees. A limited number of states have recently begun to experiment by allowing community colleges the authority to confer their own four-year degrees. In Florida, sweeping legislation was passed in 2001 to restructure state governance for higher education. Included in this legislation were a provision that created the first baccalaureate community college within the state, and also a provision that created a process to allow other community colleges within the state to apply to the state Board of Education to become baccalaureate degree granting community colleges. The goals behind this legislation were to increase baccalaureate graduates in low baccalaureate producing counties by providing increased access to higher education and also to increase the number of graduates in certain high demand employment fields.

The debate and discussions surrounding the change allowing community colleges to award their own baccalaureate degrees centered on several topics. Those who supported the vertical extension of community colleges cited Florida's relatively low national ranking in the number of baccalaureate degrees held among the population, 38<sup>th</sup> among the 50 states, and 8<sup>th</sup> among the top 10 largest states, a limited capacity for students wishing to earn baccalaureate degrees, and a lack of baccalaureate holding employees in high need areas such as teaching and the health professions (ECS, 2000). However, there were also those who were concerned that vertical extension would not be positive for the institutions, the state, and students. Some feared that allowing community colleges to grant their own baccalaureate degrees would cause mission drift at the community colleges within the state (Mills, 2003). Others also worried that funding the baccalaureate community colleges would waste limited financial resources reserved for

higher education within the state and that the community college baccalaureate degree would ultimately be viewed by many employers and the general public as a second hand degree (Wattenbarger, 2000).

Since the time when the first community college in Florida was granted authority by the state to confer its own baccalaureate degrees, many other community colleges within the state have applied to the state's Board of Education to also become baccalaureate-granting community colleges. Some institutions have been approved while others have been denied. Currently (2006), six community colleges in the state have been elevated into the category of baccalaureate-granting community colleges. The baccalaureate degrees offered are all either Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Applied Science degrees. The majors for these baccalaureate degrees include: Education, Nursing, Technology Management, Dental Hygiene, Veterinary Technology, Public Safety Administration, Orthotics and Prosthetics Technology, Project and Acquisitions Management, Supervision and Management, and Public Safety Management.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

The policy and subsequent practice allowing community colleges in Florida to confer baccalaureate degrees was a major change for higher education within the state. The legislature allocated \$7 million for these programs during the 2004 – 05 fiscal year alone ("OPPAGA", 2005b). At the institutional level, the new baccalaureate-granting community colleges have expanded their mission. The rationale supporting the community college baccalaureate programs was explicitly stated in Florida Senate Bill 1190 (2001) that allowed the first community college in the state to confer its own baccalaureate degrees:



... despite these efforts, Florida continues to rank among the lowest in the nation in the production of baccalaureate degrees, especially in the fields experiencing the greatest workforce demand, and

WHEREAS, these high-demand fields include teachers, health care professionals, and qualified managers for private and public service agencies... (p. 1)

However, to this date there have been no studies evaluating the outcomes of the policy allowing community colleges in the state to confer baccalaureate degrees. An evaluative policy study is required to shed light on the outcomes of programs that allow state funded community colleges to confer their own four-year degrees and determine whether the outcomes of community college baccalaureate programs in Florida are addressing the stated goals of the policies.

#### *Theoretical Framework*

This study is based within the theoretical confines of applied research. Specifically, it can be categorized in the domain of theories relating to Administrative Evaluation, as developed by Howlett and Ramesh (2003). This study is situated within the areas of Performance Evaluation and Adequacy of Performance Evaluation. Regarding Performance Evaluation, outputs are quantified and studied to determine what the policy is producing and is a necessary step to proceed into deeper research. Next is the area of research known as Adequacy of Performance Evaluation. Within this theoretical framework, the performance of the programs is compared with the initial goals and purposes to determine if these are being met. The purpose of this type of research is to provide recommendations for modifying or altering policy (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003).

### *Purpose of the Study*

This study evaluated whether state-level goals for community college baccalaureate programs in Florida were being met. I examined whether the outcomes of selected community college baccalaureate programs matched the initial goals and purposes of the legislation that created them. The rationale behind allowing Florida's community colleges to develop upper division coursework and confer baccalaureate degrees was twofold. First, the state wanted to expand access to baccalaureate degrees to its citizenry. Second, the state wanted to supply employers in certain high need professions with qualified employees. This study examined if the newly created baccalaureate community college programs fulfilled the first goal of the legislation, increased access to higher education for citizens of Florida.

The institutions that are part of this study are referred to through the use of pseudonyms. "Grey College" (GC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an unduplicated headcount of 130,919 students for the 2004-05 school year. "Blue College" (BC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an unduplicated headcount of 51,100 students for the 2004-05 school year. "Red College" (RC) is a small rural community college with an unduplicated headcount of 5,556 students for the 2004-05 school year (Florida Department of Education, n.d. p. 28). These three community colleges were among the first granted authority by the state to confer their own four-year degrees. Two of the institutions, GC and RC only offer four-year degrees in teacher education. The other community college, BC, offers multiple baccalaureate degrees. However, the only four-year program that all of these community colleges have in common is teacher education.

I chose to limit this study to the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the three community colleges for two reasons. First, while the community college baccalaureate programs continue to grow in the state, the teacher education programs at GC, BC, and SC were the among the first community college baccalaureate programs to start and therefore have the largest enrollment numbers in their baccalaureate programs. Second, the major of education is the least scientific and technically based baccalaureate program at the community colleges in the state. To that end, more students are eligible to enroll in these programs than others because of the fewer number of prerequisites required for admission when compared to baccalaureate programs in nursing and technology management.

Since the time when the original three community colleges were granted authority to develop and institute their own baccalaureate programs, other community colleges within the state have gained approval to grant baccalaureate degrees. However, due to a lack of enrollment and/or extremely low enrollment, and lack of commonality in baccalaureate programs, they were purposely excluded from this study.

#### *Significance of the Study*

Nationally and internationally, systems of higher education have been forced to seek new and often cheaper ways to operate. Higher education, along with many other government agencies, must operate in an age of accountability. Citizens and taxpayers expect government institutions to look for innovative ways to improve practice, increase efficiency, and become more responsive to community needs. The policy allowing community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees is one that seeks to produce graduates

at a lower cost to the government while providing well prepared employees for businesses, schools, and other sectors.

The state of Florida has, to this date, allowed a limited number of community colleges within the state to confer their own baccalaureate degrees. Other community colleges within the state have begun the process of applying for this same opportunity (“OPPAGA”, 2005b). These programs have cost the state millions of dollars to initiate (Glennon, 2005). If they do not accomplish their goals, they will likely be viewed by the public as a waste of money. In the age of accountability, outcomes of new educational programs must be measured and compared with the intended goals. This study provides those involved with the new programs, state policy makers, and others who may be interested in implementing similar policies and programs with information needed to make future policy and practice decisions.

This study evaluated whether the new community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education across Florida have met the original goals of those who constructed and subsequently passed legislation allowing community colleges within the state to confer baccalaureate degrees. Specifically, this study attempted to measure whether the teacher education programs at three baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida were increasing access to higher education in the state. I used quantitative methods with a mix of sources to answer the research questions. These methods included examinations of enrollment data and survey data. The results of this study may provide insight into the effectiveness of community college baccalaureate programs in meeting the state’s goals.

### *Research Questions*

This study investigated the following research questions:

1. Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?
  - a. How many individuals have enrolled in the community college teacher education programs since their inception?
  - b. What has happened to enrollment levels at other public institutions offering similar teacher education programs since inception of the community college teacher education programs?
2. Why did students attend the community college for their upper division education?
3. What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist?
4. Would education have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?
5. How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?
  - a. How do responses on selected items from the National Survey of Student Engagement for students from the community college baccalaureate

programs in teacher education programs compare with students in similar programs from other four-year institutions in Florida?

### *Definition of Terms*

Some of the terms within this study may have various connotations and/or may be unfamiliar to the reader, thus they warrant definition.

1. Four-year degree: a baccalaureate degree.
2. Four-year community college: a community college that confers its own baccalaureate degrees.
3. Upper division: the last two years of a baccalaureate degree, this is typically primarily coursework in the major and area of specialization.
4. Vertical extension: when an upper division is added to community college making it a four-year community college (Burrows, 2002).
5. Policy evaluation: “the stage of the policy process at which it is determined how a public policy has actually fared in action” (Howlett & Ramesh, 2002, p. 207)
6. Unduplicated count (unduplicated headcount): “The sum of students enrolled for credit with each student counted only once during the reporting period, regardless of when the student enrolled.” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006)

### *Delimitations*

The findings of this study were based on selected institutions within the state of Florida. There are threats to the external validity of this research. The study was limited in scope to the upper division education programs at community colleges in Florida and other majors at these and other four-year community colleges were not studied in this research. In addition, since the study only examined Florida, the findings may not have

validity within other states or their programs. Because of the design of the research, the findings of this study should not be generalized beyond the settings of this study.

### *Limitations*

It should be noted that I am employee of Blue College, one of the colleges that was part of the study. I am an Assistant Professor of Ethics at the college. I do not work or teach within any of the four-year programs at the college that are part of this study.

The survey instrument that was used to collect the data for this study was tested for content validity. This process was accomplished through the use of experts in the field and the resulting instrument was piloted. Much of the data collected as part of this study was self-reported. Self-reported data created a limitation for this study because self-reported data is generally less reliable than other types of data.

### *Assumptions*

I assumed that participants of this study would want to share their personal experiences. Next, I assumed that the participants within this study were truthful in their responses. The last assumption was that those interested in higher education and effectiveness of higher education policy would be eager to learn more about the outcomes of these new programs in Florida.

### *Organization of the Study*

This dissertation includes four additional chapters. The first is a review of the literature. Within that chapter, I describe the body of knowledge with which I worked and to which I have built new research. That chapter includes three sections: a statement of the purpose, a review of the relevant literature, and an attempt to place this study within the context of previous research. The third chapter describes the methods by which the

data were collected. The chapter includes five sections: the research questions, the research design, a description of the populations and samples, a description of the data collections, and an explanation of the data analyses. The fourth chapter presents the results from the data analyses in this study. Chapter four includes five sections: upper division enrollment trends for teacher education programs at baccalaureate community colleges and four-year institutions in Florida, an explanation of the piloting process on the survey instrument, details on the data collection for the survey data and statistics on those who responded to the survey, results for the responses to open-ended questions, statistical analyses for the Likert-scale items on the survey instrument, and the conclusion. Finally, chapter five includes a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications and recommendations.

### *Summary*

This study focused on the upper division education programs at three baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida. The purpose of this research was to determine whether these programs were fulfilling the goals of the policymakers who passed legislation to allow community colleges in Florida to confer baccalaureate degrees. I compared the outcomes of these three institutions with the specific goal of increased access to higher education for students. This research was based in the areas of community colleges, governance, and policy evaluation – all three of which are relevant and important areas of research on higher education in the United States. The hope was that this study would provide policy makers and practitioners with information that could provide insight into the effectiveness of community college baccalaureate programs. In addition, I hope that I was able to provide a foothold and framework for future



researchers interested in policy evaluation and community college baccalaureate programs.

## Chapter Two

### Review of the Literature

#### *Introduction*

Higher education does not operate or exist within a vacuum. To the contrary, Richardson, Bracco, Callan, and Finney (1999) theorized that systems of higher education are constantly pushed and pulled by stakeholders such as policy makers, the public, employers, and students. The forces that act on higher education in the United States are constantly changing regarding the amount of influence they are able to exert and the direction to which they attempt to move the system. Recent events regarding community colleges in Florida are prime examples of how these stakeholders can change the policy and practice of higher education. The first is the new policy that allows certain community colleges within the state to confer their own baccalaureate degrees. The second has to do with the accountability movement. Accountability is where the public, via its elected officials, requires government agencies to demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency in policies and programs where public funds are expended.

This study examined the outcomes of the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at three community colleges in Florida. These institutions are referred to through the use of pseudonyms. “Grey College” (GC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an unduplicated headcount of 130,919 students for the 2004-05 school year. “Blue College” (BC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an

unduplicated headcount of 51,100 students for the 2004-05 school year. “Red College” (RC) is a small rural community college with an unduplicated headcount of 5,556 students for the 2004-05 school year (Florida Department of Education, n.d. b, p. 28).

Within this chapter, I examine previous research and studies regarding many different issues related to community colleges in Florida awarding their own baccalaureate degrees and the subsequent evaluation and measurement of the outcomes of such new policies and programs. This chapter includes a discussion of works documenting the history of the mission of community colleges and the external forces that came together in the past to mold the modern community college in the United States. Next, I investigated the history of and cases where baccalaureate degrees have been offered at community colleges through partnerships. I then examined the theoretical rationale supporting the development and expansion of community college baccalaureate programs. Next, is an exploration of the community college baccalaureate programs in Florida. This section includes detail on the historical developments that led to community colleges in the state conferring their own four-year degrees. In addition, it presents the relevant legislation that allowed for this change. I then have provided the views and arguments from those who oppose the practice of allowing community colleges to confer four-year degrees as well as from those who believe that community college baccalaureate programs have a historical place in the community college. Following this, I investigated the teacher shortage in Florida - its severity, causes, and possible solutions. The next area of this review of literature looks into the study of policy cycles. This section provides the introduction into the theoretical framework for this study and demonstrates why the study of policy cycles is relevant and necessary. Next, I examined

the work in the area of research known as policy evaluation and accountability. Then, the results of initial data collections on the community college baccalaureate programs within Florida are presented. Finally, the closing of this chapter places this current study in the context of previous research that has been done in all of the aforementioned areas.

### *History of the Mission of the Community College in the United States*

An important topic in this review of the literature is the history of the mission of community colleges in the United States. It serves to chronicle the role community colleges have played in higher education to provide a context for other issues and developments discussed later in this chapter. The community college in the United States has not been studied with a similar depth and breadth as the four-year sector of higher education. In the larger context of research on higher education, little attention has been paid to the community college (Hutcheson, 1999). Hutcheson further contended that one reason community colleges have suffered from neglect among researchers and scholars was due to a lack of consistency among community colleges in how they arose or in what they specialized. In contrast, colleges and universities were more easily classified based on history or specialty. This made colleges and universities more “researcher friendly.” Since 1901, when the first community college came into existence, the institution known as “the people’s college” has grown to serve many different roles. Cohen and Brawer (1996) categorized the traditional roles of the community college into four areas: transfer education, occupational education, remedial/developmental education, and community service. More generally however, the role of the community college in the United States has been to fill the gap that exists between secondary education and colleges and universities. Since consistent models of post secondary education across the country do

not exist and each state's system of higher education was molded by local forces, community colleges were forced to adapt to serve many different roles in American higher education.

A further examination of the literature on its history reveals more specific forces that have shaped the modern community college. The community college movement began to gain momentum in the mid 1900s. As part of the President's Commission on Higher Education for Democracy (1947) strong recommendations were made favoring an expansion of a community college system across the country. It was in the 1960s when community colleges began to see their enrollments grow substantially. From the late 1950s to the 1980s community colleges saw enrollment growth close to four hundred percent (Vaughan, 1982). The forces that shaped community colleges have been disputed, however it is understood that these forces are many and varied. Witt, Wattenbarger, Gollattscheck, and Suppiger (1995) chronicled and classified the many external forces that shaped the modern day community college by decade. Witt, et al. documented how major societal events such as the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War forced community colleges to change. Additionally, those authors illustrated how American ideals and policies such as the GI Bill, social activism and state planning also contributed to changes in the function of American community colleges.

There are others who have focused research on the more general forces that contributed to the growth of community colleges. One such author is Cohen (2001) who proposed a somewhat complex explanation for the growth of community colleges. Cohen theorized that there were four general reasons why community colleges developed and grew. The first was that community colleges were sponsored and supported by members

of the upper class who wanted to maintain their social position by restricting admission to traditional colleges and universities. The second was that community colleges flourished due to an alliance of members from the working class who were searching for upward mobility. The third was that universities helped community colleges succeed so that the universities could distance themselves from students who college and university officials did not want to admit or serve. The fourth, and often believed to be one of the main reasons, was that since most community colleges grew out of school districts, it was the superintendents' and other local administrators' desire for more recognition and prestige that came along with being an administrator at a "college" rather than at a school district that pushed the school districts to develop community colleges. Regardless of the reasons why community colleges grew and thrived, we have arrived at a point where they have a major part and play a major role in postsecondary education across the United States. Currently, there are over 1,100 community colleges in the United States serving over 11.6 million students (American Association of Community Colleges, 2006).

#### *Baccalaureate Degrees Offered at Community Colleges through Partnerships*

The following discussion on the topic of partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions is an important area for the review of literature because it describes the point in community college history where direct access to baccalaureate degrees came to community college campuses. One of the most traditional roles of the community college is to serve as the first two years of college education for students intending to transfer to another institution to finish baccalaureate degrees. This fits into Cohen's category of the transfer function of community colleges. Allen (2003) explained that most states have established a 2 +2 model of articulation. The 2 + 2 model

is one where students can attend community colleges for the first two years of their undergraduate education. Upon completion of the first two years (or the equivalent number of credit hours) the student can then transfer to another institution, usually a traditional four-year college or university, where the student would complete the baccalaureate degree. However, more recently an innovation that has grown in popularity is the partnership model. In the partnership model, community colleges team up with baccalaureate-granting institutions in an attempt to make the transition from the first two years to the upper division more seamless for students.

Research in the area of partnerships has yielded a number of examples where baccalaureate degrees have previously made their way to community colleges through innovative means. Lorenzo (2005) contended that the initial “University Center” experiments were conducted in the 1960s but became more common in the 1980s. Cook (2000) described examples of partnerships that include four-year institutions offering upper division classes at community college facilities, and four-year institutions using technology for distance education to connect with students at community college facilities. In each of these cases, the four-year institutions maintain control of the baccalaureate curricula, instruction, and administration. The community colleges merely house the baccalaureate programs and sometimes offer other types of non-academic support. There are many different models and hybrids of collaboration that illustrate the malleability and workability that partnerships between four-year institutions and community colleges offer to serve the public. The most current classification model for partnerships is credited to Lorenzo (2005) who proposed six models for such classification. Within his taxonomy the partnerships are classified based “on the role of

the community college and its involvement with governance, financing, and operations; and its influence over academic programming” (p. 78).

An example of how partnerships can be used to benefit both students and the general public is detailed by Hagedorn, Newman, and Duffy (2003). In 2000, California appropriated \$10 million to facilitate partnerships between community colleges and the California State Universities. This was in response to legislation that mandated smaller class sizes for public schools. The change in legislation necessitated the hiring of 25,000 new teachers within the state. This forced California to search for innovative ways to educate future teachers faster. An example of innovation and partnerships between a community college and four-year institutions is the work done at Blue College (BC). Furlong (2005) detailed how Blue College partnered with fourteen institutions to bring sixty-two bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral programs to Blue College campuses through partnerships with public and private four-year institutions. Currently, 22 of the 28 community colleges in Florida partner with at least one public university and offer approximately 90 different baccalaureate degrees (OPPAGA, 2005b). These partnerships are not limited between public community colleges and public four-year institutions. Rather, twelve of the baccalaureate-granting institutions that participate in these partnerships are private four-year institutions. When combining the partnerships that community colleges in Florida have with public and private four-year institutions, every community college in Florida except one is engaged in a partnership with a four-year institution. The lone exception is Florida Community College at Jacksonville. This institution instead maintains a strong 2 + 2 arrangement with the University of North Florida, which is in close physical proximity to Florida Community College.



### *Theoretical Rationale Supporting Community College Baccalaureate Programs*

While partnerships help to make the transition from one institution to another more seamless for students it is still a situation in which there are two different institutions. This is why many institutions that have been involved in partnerships have expressed interest in becoming a community college that is allowed to offer its own baccalaureate degrees. Much of the literature in the area of the community college baccalaureate degrees functions to provide a theoretical rationale supporting the development and expansion of community college baccalaureate programs. The National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs (NACCTEP) (2005) created two general categories of rationale supporting community colleges adding baccalaureate degrees. These two categories are classified based on a societal perspective or an institutional perspective. Two arguments from the societal perspective are that the graduates from the baccalaureate programs will help alleviate workforce shortages and that society as a whole benefits by more of the population having a baccalaureate degree. The main argument from the institutional perspective is that the community college should adapt to serve the needs and desires of students to maintain relevance in the society and in higher education. To that end, if the community colleges are going to remain a relevant option for students, community colleges must offer baccalaureate degrees since an increasing number of employers want employees who possess a baccalaureate degree.

Proponents of the community college baccalaureate movement, like Walker (2005), argue that these programs are necessary because the baccalaureate degree is becoming an entry level degree. Community college baccalaureate programs offer

increased flexibility to students and are therefore better able to serve an increased number of working adults returning to college. In addition, the community college baccalaureate programs can increase geographical access to upper division education and increase responsiveness to community needs for specialized programs (Walker, 2001). To that end, Walker (2000) reported results from a survey conducted at Edison Community College where 80% of the respondents said ideally they would want to complete a baccalaureate degree at their current institution, Edison Community College. The most popular reasons students gave supporting this response were accessibility, location, lower cost, and possible access to the type of baccalaureate degree the respondents desired to earn.

Furthermore, there are those who believe that the community college can help deal with state level problems if granted the authority to confer baccalaureate degrees. Furlong (2003) contended that since the state of Florida ranks in the bottom five in terms of baccalaureate degree production more drastic steps needed to be taken to increase baccalaureate production. A belief held by many was that the public four-year institutions within the state had reached capacity. Below is Table 1 and it illustrates total enrollment in all upper division undergraduate programs at public four-institutions in the state for the years 2002 to 2006.

Table 1.

2002 – 2006 Fall Upper Division Undergraduate Enrollment by Institution in Florida and Percentage Change by Year

Institution	Year				
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
FAMU	4,748 NA	4,818 1.5%	2,286 (52.6%)	1,843 (19.4%)	3,055 65.8%
FAU	10,540 NA	12,825 21.7%	13,365 4.2%	13,787 3.2%	13,695 (1.3%)
FGCU	2,099 NA	2,329 10.9%	2,642 13.4%	3,078 16.5%	3,396 10.3%
FIU	12,387 NA	13,055 5.4%	15,532 18.9%	16,610 6.9%	16,925 1.9%
FSU	15,868 NA	16,304 2.7%	16,811 3.1%	17,258 2.6%	17,883 3.6%
NCF	274 NA	295 7.7%	302 2.4%	337 11.6%	347 2.9%
UCF	19,096 NA	20,310 6.4%	21,139 4.1%	22,600 6.9%	23,540 4.2%
UF	17,433 NA	17,554 .6%	17,237 (1.8%)	17,630 2.3%	17,084 (3.1%)
UNF	6,211 NA	6,433 3.6%	6,767 5.2%	7,024 3.8%	7,262 3.5%
USF	18,059 NA	19,272 6.775	20,518 6.5%	21,621 5.4%	22,364 3.4%
UWF	3,540 NA	3,749 5.9%	3,902 4.1%	4,106 5.2%	4,193 2.1%
Total	110,255	116,944	120,501	125,894	129,744
NA	6.1%	3%	4.5%	3.1%	

Source: (Adapted from Florida Board of Governors, 2006)

Furlong also argued that allowing community colleges in the state to confer baccalaureate degrees would help to elevate the state's rank in regards to baccalaureate production as well as provide a larger pool of educated workers for employers to draw from. Furlong specifically cited an annual teacher shortage in Florida in the range of 15,500 – 19,000 for a state that only confers baccalaureate degrees upon 6,300 education majors annually (p. 59). It was his belief that community college baccalaureate programs could produce graduates to fill the need for more teachers more effectively and efficiently than the existing or future partnership agreements with four-year institutions could.

#### *Community College Baccalaureate Programs in Florida*

The community college baccalaureate movement officially made its way to Florida in the late 1990s. Prior to the governance changes that allowed community colleges in the state to confer their own four-year degrees the state commissioned a study for the need for increased baccalaureate opportunities. The report was prepared for the Florida Postsecondary Education Planning Commission (PEPC) by the Education Commission of the States (ECS) (2000). The purpose of the report was to study the need for baccalaureate opportunities in five counties. It was compiled through the use of mixed methods. The researchers examined employment and educational data, interviewed employers, academic leaders and political leaders, and also held public hearings (ECS, 2000).

The report seemed to offer support for those on both sides of the issue of allowing community colleges in Florida to confer four-year degrees. Excerpts from this report are often used by both proponents and opponents of the community college baccalaureate in Florida. Proponents focus on two major findings in the report. The researchers discovered

that Florida lagged behind the rest of the nation regarding production of baccalaureate degrees and stated that there needed to be a statewide expansion of baccalaureate capacity, and not just in the five counties studied. In addition, the report also concluded there was a specific, long-term, need for baccalaureate graduates in the areas of business management, computer science, teacher education, engineering, and health professions. Opponents of the vertical expansion of community colleges in Florida focus on the finding in the ECS report where employers within the state were satisfied overall with the number of potential employees already possessing baccalaureate degrees. The report went on to say that Broward County, only one of the counties in the study, would experience population growth and would require a moderate increase in baccalaureate opportunities (ECS, 2000).

After much debate, both in the public arena and in the halls of the Legislature in 2001, Senate Bill 1190 was introduced into the Florida state Senate, passed, and was signed into law by the Governor. This bill included a number of governance changes for higher education, but specifically allowed Blue Junior College (BJC) to become Blue College (BC) and confer its own baccalaureate degrees. The rationale behind allowing BJC to become BC and enter the world of baccalaureate degree granting institutions was explicitly stated within the bill,

... despite these efforts, Florida continues to rank among the lowest in the nation in the production of baccalaureate degrees, especially in the fields experiencing the greatest workforce demand, and

WHEREAS, these high-demand fields include teachers, health care professionals, and qualified managers for private and public service agencies...

Currently, Florida Statutes (1007.33) allow community colleges to pursue developing their own baccalaureate programs. To be granted this privilege a community college must demonstrate demand for students, employment opportunities for graduates of the proposed baccalaureate program, and adequate facilities and academic resources to deliver the baccalaureate program. Oversight and decision making authority for community college baccalaureate programs is reserved for the State Board of Education. Finally, the state statute reminds community colleges that even if they are granted authority to award their own baccalaureate degrees, their primary mission is to confer associate's degrees and they may not move to eliminate the responsibility of associate level education from the college's mission.

Currently, four community colleges in Florida offer baccalaureate degrees. Below is Table 2, which provides information on the first four community colleges in Florida that were granted authority to confer baccalaureate degrees. Specifically, Table 2 provides the order that the institutions were granted state approval as well a detailed list of the baccalaureate programs offered by each institution.

Table 2.

Community College Baccalaureate Programs in Florida

Order of Approval	Institution	Degree
1	Blue College	Education Nursing Technology Management Dental Hygiene Veterinary Technology Public Safety Administration Orthotics & Prosthetics Technology
2	Grey College	Education
3	Red College	Education
4	Okaloosa-Walton College	Project and Acquisitions Mgt.

Source: (Adapted from OPPAGA, 2005b, p. 6)

Two additional institutions have been added to this list. The two newest institutions are Daytona Beach Community College and Edison Community College. These two institutions began their own baccalaureate programs in the Spring semester of 2006. Both of these institutions only offer baccalaureate degrees in applied sciences. Daytona Beach Community College offers baccalaureate degrees in Supervision and Management. Edison College has a baccalaureate program in Public Safety Management (Florida Department of Education, 2006a).

Grey College, Blue College, and Red College all offer baccalaureate degrees in teacher education. However, some of the areas of specialization are different. Below is Table 3, it provides details on the specializations offered by the three institutions.

Table 3.

Specializations in Teacher Education at Baccalaureate Community Colleges in Florida

Institution	Specializations
Blue College	Elementary Education
	Exceptional Student Education
	Secondary Science Education
	Secondary Mathematics Education
	Technology Education
Grey College	Exceptional Student Education
	Secondary Science Education
	Secondary Mathematics Education
Red College	Middle School Mathematics
	Middle School Science
	Secondary Science Education
	Secondary Mathematics Education

Source: (Florida Department of Education, n.d. a)

*Mixed Views on Community College Baccalaureate Programs*

The community college baccalaureate movement has stirred debate on both sides of the topic. Many current publications have raised questions regarding the practice allowing community colleges in Florida to confer their own baccalaureate degrees. Some



critics fear these changes will create a slippery slope that would eventually draw resources away from universities. To that end, there are those who feel partnerships between community colleges and four-year institutions should be the extent to which community colleges' role in four-year experiments should extend ("Tampa Tribune", 2005). The editorial from the Tampa Tribune admitted that the state faces higher education access and capacity issues, but contended that it was the duty of colleges and universities to deal with those problems and no place for community colleges to tread. Others like Mills (2003) have offered other concerns such as the creation of mission drift that could threaten the open door policy of the community colleges due to an increased focus on the four-year programs. Mills also chronicled the concerns of others who warn that the new community college baccalaureate programs will waste financial resources in a time when education funds are at a premium. To that end, a shift in the allocation of financial resources could hinder access to higher education by creating tuition increases and causing a decline in financial support for the remedial and developmental programs. Those critics argue that two points, low tuition and remedial/developmental support for students, are necessary to maintain equal access for all students.

Some authors have been suspicious of the motives of community college administrators who want their institution to offer baccalaureate degrees. There are those like Eaton (2005), who fear that administrators of community colleges may be tempted and seduced to offer baccalaureate degrees for the higher level of respect and esteem that comes with being associated with a "college" rather than a "community college." In addition, there are those within positions of influence in community colleges who hold cautious views of the motivations of some to make their institutions baccalaureate-

granting community colleges like, Dr. George Boggs, president of the American Association of Community Colleges as chronicled by Lum (2004). According to Boggs,

“‘Community colleges are nimble enough to respond to community needs’ he says, ‘but we already have universities. What about community colleges? If the motivation of a two-year college getting involved with four-year degrees is not of reluctance but of trying to improve its own status as an institution, then it’s wrong. That’s where community colleges can lose sight of their mission.’”

(pp. 54 – 55.)

One of the most outspoken critics of community colleges offering four-year programs was also the “father of the community college system in Florida,” James Wattenbarger. In 1953, Wattenbarger wrote one of the most important contributions to higher education in Florida, A State Plan for Public Junior Colleges with Special Reference to Florida. This document became the master plan for community colleges within the state. Many of the accolades Florida community colleges receive are as a result of the planning done in the early years before the community college system in the state became fully functional. However, Wattenbarger (2000) warned that not only is the community college baccalaureate a waste of financial resources but also that the baccalaureate degrees students receive may be viewed as second hand degrees by employers and the public.

There are those, however, like Townsend and Ignash (2003) who illustrated via an examination of history on community colleges in the United States, that point to a historical role in teacher education at the community college. The first place where teacher education was seen in the United States was at two-year colleges, many of which

went on to become four-year “normal schools” and then public state universities. To that end, Hutcheson (2002) chronicled the history of the normal school as the primary institution for the education of teachers in the United States during the early 1900s. He explained that the normal schools were two year programs for high school graduates specifically designed to prepare students to teach in elementary schools and could be best classified as community colleges. Normal schools continued to be the central institution for teacher education until approximately the 1930s and 1940s when more states began to require a baccalaureate degree for teachers. Changes in states’ policies requiring teachers to have four-year degrees forced the community college’s role in teacher education also to change. Many community colleges changed their focus by helping students prepare to transfer to a four-year institution where they would complete baccalaureate level studies in teacher education. Much of this was done through articulation agreements and the creation of associate degrees in teacher education (Townsend and Ignash, 2003).

#### *Teacher Education at the Community College*

Throughout this review of literature I have provided historical examples of teacher education programs at community colleges in the United States. The present and future role of teacher education at community colleges in the United States is also an area that must be addressed in this review of literature. Different authors suggest varied ways that teacher education programs may surface at community colleges. One such author is Gerdeman (2001), who explored future roles of the community college in teacher education and discussed a number of areas where teacher education will be prominent at the community college. The areas mentioned by Gerdeman included teacher preparation programs, articulation agreements, and partnerships with four-year institutions.

Additionally, Floyd and Walker (2003) proposed a clear typology to categorize the modern and future models where community colleges aid in teacher education. The four categories proposed by Floyd and Walker are the articulation model, the university center model, the certification model, and the community college baccalaureate model. The first is the articulation model that requires community colleges to negotiate and maintain articulation agreements with four-year institutions specific to teaching. An example of the articulation model would be the creation of the Associate of Arts in Teaching degree at community colleges for the purpose of aiding student transfer to a four-year school. The second is the university center model, which is synonymous with partnerships. The third is the certification model, which describes programs at the community college for individuals who are interested in teaching and who already possess baccalaureate degrees but must return to become certified by the state to teach in public schools. Certification programs, also known as alternative certification programs, provide the teacher education component required for previous college graduates to become certified by the state to teach in school systems. The fourth is the community college baccalaureate model, which is the focus of the research in this study.

The community college baccalaureate movement is one of the newest experiments in higher education and is taking place in several states across the country. The National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs (NACCTEP) (2005) stated that eight states had already approved at least one community college baccalaureate program. States have taken different approaches to creating community college baccalaureate programs. Because of this, Shkodriani (2004) created a classification system for community college baccalaureate programs. Shkodriani's model

classifies institutions based on the expansion of baccalaureate programs throughout the community college. The first category contains community colleges that continue to offer primarily associate of arts degrees, but offers a limited number of baccalaureate degrees. The second category contains community colleges that change into a four-year college, and is often renamed, but continues to offer associate in arts degrees. The third category is the partnership model.

Additionally, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has recently modified its classification model to keep track of the community college baccalaureate movement (2006). Previously, the Carnegie Foundation had only one category titled “Associate’s College” to cover community colleges. However, two categories are now used to reflect the changes at the community colleges. The category “Associate’s College” is still used, but it has been clarified to include those institutions that offer associate’s degrees and some baccalaureate degrees, where the number of baccalaureate degrees conferred are less than ten percent of the total degrees awarded by that institution a year. The new category is “Baccalaureate College”. This grouping includes institutions that confer a number of baccalaureate degrees that make up more than ten percent of the degrees awarded by the institution and also award less than fifty Master’s degrees or twenty Doctoral degrees per year (2006).

#### *Teacher Shortages in Florida*

The rationale supporting the practice of community colleges in Florida conferring their own baccalaureate degrees was two-fold. It was intended to increase access to four-year degrees for citizens of the state and to increase the number of graduates in high need professions. An area where a national long term need is projected is teacher education

(Townsend and Ignash, 2003). In Florida, it is estimated that 20,000 teaching positions will need to be filled annually within the state over the next 15 years. Below is Table 4, which illustrates the number of annual hires for classroom teachers in public schools in Florida.

Table 4.

Annual Hires for Classroom Teachers in Public Schools in Florida

	Year			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
New Hires	14,411	15,388	19,317	20,010

Source: (Adapted from Florida Department of Education, 2005)

To demonstrate the gravity of the situation the Strategic Plan lists increasing the supply of highly effective teachers as its first strategic imperative (2005a). The causes for teacher shortages in Florida are a quickly growing student population, a large number of teachers leaving and retiring, and a class size amendment that was passed into law in 2002 similar to the one passed in California that limits the number of students per class and therefore requires more class sections and more teachers. The problem of a statewide teacher shortage requires new and innovative solutions. Traditional recruitment practices and traditional sources of teachers will not provide nearly the necessary number of educators. Currently, only 19% of new teachers in the state were recent graduates from teacher education institutions in the state (OPPAGA, 2005a). However there is hope. Additional research shows that 70% of those who graduate with a bachelor's degree in education will stay to work in the state and 93% will work somewhere in the public sector (OPPAGA, 2005c). These figures support the theory that says an increase in

teacher education programs will help Florida deal with its teacher shortage. If 70% of graduates from baccalaureate education programs stay to work in the state, an increase in teacher education programs will increase the number of graduates which will help to alleviate the teaching shortage.

### *Policy Cycles*

Another topic important in this review of the literature is study of policy cycles because it relates to evaluating policies and practices of government and its agencies. Citizens and organizations have judged the policies and practices of governments since the earliest days of organized society. However, it was after World War II when these practices became more scientific (Howlett and Ramesh, 2003). Prior to this, governmental agencies were evaluated on whether their intentions were in line with the public's agenda; after, specific attention was paid to the outcomes of the policy. Howlett and Ramesh developed a framework that describes five stages of policy cycles and how to evaluate each stage of the policy cycle (2003). The first four stages in this framework are agenda setting, policy formulation, decision making and policy implementation. The research done by Burrows (2002) on entrepreneurial leadership describes many of the events in the early stages of the policy cycle relating to baccalaureate degrees at community colleges in Florida. Burrows detailed the conversion of BJC to BC. Specifically, Burrows' research on the work done by the President of Blue College and a State Senator would fit into Howlett & Ramesh's stages of agenda setting and policy formulation (2002). The President and the State Senator were major figures in making a case for community college baccalaureate programs as well constructing the initial legislation that converted BJC to BC. Indeed, much of the research done regarding the

vertical expansion of Florida's community colleges can be categorized into one of the first four stages of Howlett and Ramesh's framework. However, regarding community college baccalaureate programs in Florida, an area of Howlett and Ramesh's model where research is lacking is the final stage of the policy cycle which is policy evaluation. Policy evaluation is the point where the outcomes of the policy are measured and compared with intentions. For many, it is seen as the most important because it is where governmental programs are evaluated.

#### *Policy Evaluation and Accountability*

Policy evaluation and accountability are closely tied together. Historically, it was in the 1980s when Americans showed more concern with spending and performance of governmental programs than in the past. Burke and Modarresi (2000) argued that in the mid 1980s the goals of accountability changed from accounting for expenditures to a concern for specific and measurable outcomes. In addition, Burke and Modarresi showed that public concern for expenditures continued to grow due to the financial recession of the 1990s when state revenues were declining. The public, at that time, demanded that government become more accountable and demonstrate effectiveness and efficiency. Dunn (2003) provided a basic definition of accountability, as answerability for one's actions or behaviors. In the context of government it means that elected and appointed officials owe an explanation and justification for uses of power and finances to the general public. Burke and Minassians (2002) contended the accountability movement and the pressure from the public associated with it, forced governmental organizations to try to improve quality, cut costs, and increase productivity all at the same time. After concern had shifted from expenditures to outcomes of programs, institutions and



organizations were forced to clearly demonstrate they were effective in achieving goals or suffer the consequences.

The paradigm shift from expenditures to outcomes made higher education an easy target for critics and budget cutters. Other authors such as Alexander (1999) agreed and warned that because of a change in perception, the whole public sector was up for reevaluation. As the accountability movement continued to grow in strength and popularity, the expectation for higher education was that it should be run more like a business. Dowd (2003) asserted that governments became concerned with how state sponsored programs, such as education, could be more efficient. Additionally, the quest for efficiency threatened access to higher education because of the focus on producing graduates. The accountability movement has forced many changes in the last 10 – 15 years, such as the one requiring many states to adopt methods of performance reporting for institutions of higher education. Currently, 44 states have some form of performance reporting related to higher education (Burke, 2003). Some states, like South Carolina and Florida, even went as far as to try to link institutional funding to outcomes measurements (Burke and Modaressi, 2000). The environment of accountability forced colleges and universities to demonstrate effectiveness. The accountability movement required colleges and universities' outcomes be measured and compared with goals to insure that all programs, especially newly developed and instituted ones, lived up to previously stated goals.

*Initial Data Collections on the Community College Baccalaureate Programs in Florida*

Little research has been done to this date to assess the community college baccalaureate programs in Florida. So far, the state of Florida's Department of Education

has collected small amounts of data regarding enrollment in the state’s community college baccalaureate programs. Specifically, the state has only been able to collect data such as enrollment figures, graduation numbers and limited follow up data for students in, and graduates from the community college baccalaureate programs. Below is Table 5, it illustrates final enrollment figures for the 2004 – 05 school year for community college baccalaureate programs in Florida, by institution.

Table 5.

2004 – 05 Enrollment in Community College Baccalaureate Programs in Florida

Institution	2004 – 05 Enrollment (student headcount)
Blue College	1,513
Grey College	477
Red College	43

Source: (Florida Department of Education, 2006a)

Regarding follow-up data, the state of Florida was able to track graduates by the use of the students’ social security numbers. The method for the data collection required the Department of Education to access the graduates’ social security numbers and compare these numbers with unemployment wage records. By cross-referencing these two databases the Department of Education was able to tell whether unemployment insurance was paid on graduates’ behalf by employers. This allowed the state to tell whether graduates were working and how much they were making, based on the amount of money paid as unemployment insurance by the employer on behalf of the employee. The only graduates who were not located by this method were the unemployed, self

employed, or those working for small employers who are not required to pay unemployment insurance for employees.

The results of the first post graduation follow-up data collection by the Florida Department of Education (2006b) were based on students who earned community college baccalaureate degrees in the 2003-04 school year. In total, there were 123 graduates from community college baccalaureate programs in Florida. Of these 123 graduates, 86 were found to have unemployment insurance paid in the graduates' name. This meant that at least 86 of the 123, or 70% of the graduates, from community college baccalaureate programs were employed at the time of the data collection. In addition, it was reported that the average fourth quarter earnings for each graduate of the community college baccalaureate programs was \$10,440 (p. 1).

Initial data has also been collected regarding the cost to the state for the community college baccalaureate programs. At this point the actual data is available for the 2003-04 school year and it is only based on the first three community colleges in the state to confer their own baccalaureate degrees. Below is Table 6, which illustrates final cost figures for the 2003 – 04 school year for community college baccalaureate programs in Florida, by institution.

Table 6.

2003 – 04 Expenditures Per Upper Division Credit Hour

Institution	Cost to the State of Florida Per Credit Hour
Blue College	\$345
Grey College	\$317
Red College	\$2,706
State University Average	\$243

Source: (Adapted from OPPAGA, 2005b, p. 7)

Proponents of the community college baccalaureate would argue that these numbers are skewed due to the high start-up costs related to bringing baccalaureate programs to the community colleges. As these programs grow in size and enrollment and as start-up costs discontinue, the cost to the state per credit hour should drop. However in the case of Red College, while the costs should drop, they will also most likely level off at a much higher point than the other baccalaureate-granting community colleges due to an inability to enroll a large number of students caused by geographic isolation and a limited population from which to draw potential students. Expenditure figures like these will be subjected to cost-effectiveness studies to determine if the programs can become more efficient (Levin & McEwan, 2001). It is a certainty that the results from any cost-effectiveness analysis will be examined by policymakers and administrators. However, this study will not include a cost-effectiveness analysis.

*Summary*

The examination of the literature in the field illustrates that the research that will be done in this study is a natural extension of that which has been done in the past.

Americans in particular are looking for more efficient and responsive government programs. The practice of policy evaluation is done to measure outcomes from many different government programs. The public's expectations for government agencies are higher than ever. New programs and experiments in government and the individuals who supported the new programs are easy targets for critics if these programs do not succeed. Community college baccalaureate programs are among the newest innovations in higher education. If they are judged to be successful in achieving stated goals they will not only be "approved" by the public, but the possibility of expanding these programs will be investigated by many different state governments. All of these factors demonstrate a significant need for research examining the outcomes of these new community college baccalaureate programs.

This study hopes to add to the body of literature on community colleges by comparing the outcomes of the teacher education baccalaureate programs at community colleges in the state of Florida with the stated goals that put these programs in place. The spirit of this study is clearly in line with research done in the past on community colleges and furthermore, flows directly from the theoretical framework provided by Howlett and Ramesh. This study was necessary so the state of Florida may judge whether it should continue to spend millions of dollars to support the development and expansion of the community college baccalaureate within the state and whether changes should be made to bring the outcomes closer to the intentions of those who developed the community college baccalaureate programs and closer to the desires of the public.

This study focused on the Colleges of Education at three baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida. The purpose of this research was to determine whether

the selected baccalaureate programs at these institutions have been fulfilling the goals of the policymakers who passed legislation to allow community colleges in Florida to award baccalaureate degrees. This study attempted to ascertain whether the teacher education programs at three baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida have contributed to increased access to higher education. The results of this study could provide insight into the effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate programs to help meet the state's goal to increase access to higher education.

## Chapter Three

### Methods

#### *Introduction*

This study evaluated whether the new community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education across Florida have met the original goals of those who constructed and subsequently passed the legislation allowing community colleges within the state to confer baccalaureate degrees. To that end, this study specifically measured whether the teacher education programs at three baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida have increased access to higher education. The results of this study will provide insight into the effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate programs to help meet the state's goals to increase access to higher education and provide quality teachers.

This current chapter includes several sections. First, the research questions are reintroduced. Then the research design of the current study is explained. This includes the theoretical framework as well as a more detailed explanation of the structure of the current study. Next, I describe the populations and samples that were used in the study. Following this, the methods for the data collection are detailed. Then, the data analyses for this current study are explained. Finally, this chapter concludes with a summary of the purpose as well as the major points to this chapter.

#### *Research Questions*

This study investigated the following research questions:

1. Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?
  - a. How many individuals have enrolled in the community college teacher education programs since their inception?
  - b. What has happened to enrollment levels at other public institutions offering similar teacher education programs since inception of the community college teacher education programs?
2. Why did students attend the community college for their upper division education?
3. What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist?
4. Would education have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?
5. How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?
  - a. How do responses on selected items from the National Survey of Student Engagement for students from the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education programs compare with students in similar programs from other four-year institutions in Florida?



### *Research Design*

The framing for this study came from the scientific research paradigm of Pragmatism. Pragmatism attempts to answer questions that are more concrete and practical than theoretical (Patton, 2002). More specifically, it belongs in the category of Pragmatic studies known as Applied Research. The purpose of Applied Research is to solve immediate practical problems or contribute to an improved practice. Furthermore, the study was situated within the domain of Administrative Evaluation Research. Administrative Evaluation Research attempts to determine the merit or worth of a program to make decisions about the effectiveness of the program (Patton, 2002). This study was specifically conducted within the frameworks of Performance Evaluation and Adequacy of Performance Evaluation as related to policy cycles by Howlett and Ramesh (2003). Regarding Performance Evaluation, outputs from a policy are quantified and studied to determine what exactly the policy is producing. This is a necessary step to proceed into deeper research that is known as Adequacy of Performance Evaluation. Within this model of evaluation “the performance of a given program is compared to its initial goals to determine whether the program is meeting its goals...” (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 211). This type of research intends to provide recommendations for modifying or altering policy based on the findings of the study.

The study used quantitative methods with a mix of sources. The majority of the study was quantitative in nature, but a portion used open-ended questions to gain a deeper understanding of the views and responses of the participants. The data came from three different collections. The first set of data was collected from institutions (community colleges and universities), the second set of data was collected via a survey questionnaire

created by me, and the third set of data came from Indiana University. The data collected from the institutions and Indiana University were used for quantitative analyses, while data from the survey questionnaire were used for both quantitative analyses and the appropriate analyses of responses to open-ended questions.

### *Population and Sample*

The population of interest for this study was students who were enrolled in a teacher education program at the three newly created baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida. The three baccalaureate community colleges in this study are referred to by the use of pseudonyms. “Grey College” (GC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an unduplicated headcount of 130,919 students for the 2004-05 school year. “Blue College” (BC) is a large urban/suburban community college with an unduplicated headcount of 51,100 students for the 2004-05 school year. “Red College” (RC) is a small rural community college with an unduplicated headcount of 5,556 students for the 2004-05 school year (2006 Florida community college system fact book, p. 28).

I collected enrollment figures and survey data. The first data in this study were the Fall semesters’ upper division enrollment numbers for the three baccalaureate community colleges offering majors in teacher education as well as the enrollment numbers for public universities in Florida that offer baccalaureate degrees in education. The timeframe of these data sets was from the 2002-03 school year through the 2005-06 school year. The second type of data in this study came from a survey of the population of students enrolled in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community colleges in Florida during the 2006-07 school year. There were 140 students who responded to my survey instrument. The third group of data came from Indiana

University. It was the frequencies of responses for selected items on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) for seniors majoring in education at four-year institutions in Florida for the 2005-06 school year.

### *Data Collection*

The first set of data collected in this study came from institutions to answer research question 1, “Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?” This data collection included the Fall semesters’ enrollment data for the teacher education programs at GC, BC, and RC as well as enrollment data for similar programs at the public universities in Florida from the 2002-03 through the 2005-06 school year. I contacted the Colleges/Departments of Education at BC, GC, and RC as well as the Colleges/Departments of Education at the traditional four-year public colleges and universities in the state: Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU), Florida Atlantic University (FAU), Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU), Florida International University (FIU), Florida State University (FSU), University of Central Florida (UCF), University of Florida (UF), University of North Florida (UNF), and the University of South Florida (USF). All of the data collected were anonymous (See Appendices A, B, and E for these data request forms).

The second data collection in this study used survey methods. The survey instrument was sent to all of the students in the teacher education programs at the community colleges in Florida during the 2006-07 school year. The survey data was used to answer research questions 2, 3, 4, and 5. The instrument was titled the Survey of

Students from Community College Teacher Education Programs (SSCCTEP), and was developed by me (See Appendix D for a copy of the survey instrument).

### *Piloting the Survey Instrument*

The survey instrument that I created to collect data for this study was titled the Survey of Students from Community College Teacher Education Programs (SSCCTEP). The survey was piloted to determine whether any of the items on the survey were unclear or confusing to respondents and to obtain an accurate estimate for the amount of time required by participants to complete the survey. The pilot group was students from a single class section in the College of Education at Blue College. This group of students was chosen because of convenience and because the instructor is a fellow doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida. This instructor sent the informed consent notice along with the link to the survey to all of the members of her class. In total, 15 students responded to the pilot survey. Based on the students' comments that were transmitted to me electronically with their completed surveys, I changed the order of the responses of the Likert items and added the options of "Freshman" and "Sophomore" for the class rankings. I was also able to determine that the survey should take respondents on the average less than 10 minutes to complete.

The SSCCTEP was administered to students enrolled in the baccalaureate teacher education programs at GC, BC, and RC. The SSCCTEP was housed online. I sent the internet hyperlink for the survey to designated contact persons at the three institutions. These contacts sent the hyperlink to the online survey to the students enrolled in these programs via email with a message encouraging the students to participate (See Appendix C for the email to students and the informed consent for participants). The participants

were given explicit instructions as to how to access the survey as well as an estimate for the time requirements needed to complete the survey. The institutions resent the link with another note of encouragement of participation to the students via email three to four weeks after the initial email was sent. I do not feel that the online hosting of this instrument acted as a hindrance to potential participants. To the contrary, since these individuals were enrolled in college, it was assumed that they were computer literate and should have felt comfortable with computers and the internet. The hope was that the students would view this method of data collection as user-friendly because completing surveys online is often faster, easier, and more convenient than filling out a survey questionnaire by hand and mailing it back. The SSCCTEP was emailed to 843 students at the three institutions. All of the data collected via the SSCCTEP was anonymous

The SSCCTEP included questions that yielded both quantitative data and data from open-ended questions. The item on the SSCCTEP that was used to answer research question 2, “Why did the students attend the community college for their upper division education?” came from an open-ended question. Previous research into the area of student choice of institution was often based on the theoretical framework provided by Chapman (1981). He theorized that student characteristics as well as external influences contributed to a student’s choice of college. Student characteristics included socioeconomic status, aptitude, level of educational aspiration, and high school performance. External influences included significant persons (family, friends, and high school personnel), fixed college characteristics (cost, location, and availability of program), and college efforts to communicate with students (written information, campus visit, and recruitment).

Walker (2001) posited that increasing community college baccalaureate programs would provide many benefits to students and the community and should be expanded. Many of the benefits Walker cited would fit into Chapman's framework within the category of external influences. Walker argued that benefits to students such as increased geographical, financial, and academic access to upper division education, success among nontraditional or returning students through smaller classes, less rigid course sequencing, and greater scheduling options, ready matriculation and upward mobility for students with associate degrees, and stable family and employment relationships for students while they complete their degrees were reasons community college baccalaureate programs should be expanded. Walker's framework was another that could have been used to develop items on the SSCCTEP. However, there was a concern that constructing a questionnaire that offered respondents multiple choice style items or Likert items, based on the work of these authors or others, might bias the responses from the participants. Due to the newness of the community college baccalaureate programs and the lack of research into these programs, I felt most comfortable using open-ended questions to answer research question 2. The belief was that the use an open-ended question would provide the best opportunity to understand the views and perceptions of the respondents regarding the reasons why they attended the community college for their upper division education.

To answer research question 2, the SSCCTEP included an open-ended question asking the students, "What led you to enroll in the baccalaureate level teacher education program at the community college?" This question was designed using the framework for open-ended questions provided by Patton (2002). According to Patton, researchers should

structure open-ended questions in a way that permits the respondents to take whatever direction and use whatever words they want to express what they have to say (p. 354). Keys to constructing good open-ended questions include avoiding questions that will yield dichotomous answers and avoiding asking “why?”

The SSCCTEP was also used to collect data to answer research question 3, “What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist?” Research question 3 directly flows from the previous research question, which attempted to uncover why the student chose the community college for his baccalaureate studies. I included this open-ended question, “What would you have done educationally or professionally had the community college baccalaureate program not existed?” on the SSCCTEP to answer this research question. This open-ended question was also designed based on Patton’s (2002) guidelines. I chose to use an open-ended question to address this research question because of the wide number and varying type of responses the students might provide. Some of the responses could include other educational directions. Others could be professionally or occupationally focused.

Research question 4, “Would education have been the students’ first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?” also relied upon the SSCCTEP. This research question sought to understand if there was a relationship between the limited number of choices of a major within the upper divisions at the community colleges and the students’ choice to pursue baccalaureate degrees in education. Much of the literature regarding student choice of major comes from the field of labor studies. Specifically, a substantial portion of the

research done on student choice of major has been tied to post graduation earnings (Montmarquette, Cannings, Mahseredjian, 1997) and student perceptions of salaries (Betts, 1996). However, in the case of this current study, the interest was specifically if education would have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended. Because the community college baccalaureate programs in Florida are relatively new and still in their development, there has been no research done as to the possible impact the limited choice of baccalaureate degrees at community colleges have on student choice of major at these institutions. Furthermore, the most appropriate type of data collection and analysis for this research question was through the use of open-ended questions.

For this research question, two open-ended questions were developed as part of the SSCCTEP and were used to gain a better understanding of the students' views and perceptions regarding the impact the limited number of baccalaureate options at the community colleges had on their choice to pursue a baccalaureate degree in education. The first open-ended question asked, "What influenced your decision to major in education?" The second open-ended question asked, "What other baccalaureate program or major (other than education), if any, would you have considered enrolling in had one existed at the time you enrolled in the community college baccalaureate teacher education program?"

Data collected from the SSCCTEP was used to answer research question 5, "How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?" This research question required the comparison of responses of seniors in the community



college baccalaureate teacher education programs to the responses of seniors majoring in education at other four-year institutions in Florida on selected items taken from the National Survey of Student Engagement, 2006.

The NSSE is a survey questionnaire that is used to assess students' collegiate educational experience. It is administered at over 500 baccalaureate-granting institutions across the country. The NSSE's response rate averages between 32% and 49%. The NSSE has been tested for validity and reliability. Testing for validity was done through the practice of factor analyses. The developers of the instrument contend that logical connections exist between the items and the objectives that they are designed to measure. The developers of the survey have calculated a reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) of .82 for the first twenty items on the instrument (Kuh, Hayek, Carini, Ouimet, Gonyea, and Kennedy, 2001, p. 11). I chose nine items from the first twenty on the NSSE to include on the SSCCTEP. Those items that were part of the first twenty on the NSSE but were not included on the SSCCTEP were related to issues such as students' interactions with other students, service learning, and students' communication with faculty members and other students. The items of the NSSE that were included in the SSCCTEP were designed by researchers at Indiana University using a four point Likert scale. I received permission from Indiana University to use the items from the NSSE prior to administering the SSCCTEP (See Appendix F for the request to use items from the NSSE).

The third set of data that was collected was frequency distributions for responses to items on the 2005 NSSE which I included in the SSCCTEP. I asked Indiana University to provide the frequencies of responses for the items on the NSSE for seniors majoring in

education at other four-year institutions in Florida during the Spring Semester of 2006. Indiana University provided me the data for a fee of \$200. The data from the SSCCTEP was compared with the data sent by Indiana University (See Appendix G for the complete list of 2006 NSSE institutional participants in Florida).

### *Data Analysis*

Prior to any analysis, the data was screened to determine if any data were missing, incomplete or incorrect (outside of the possible ranges). The screening of the data attempted to eliminate possible mistakes that could have been made during the collecting, reporting or coding of the data. I plotted the quantitative data in histograms and boxplots and subsequently examined these figures to make sure that the responses were all within the possible range for results.

The data collected in this study were subjected to a number of different analyses in an effort to answer the research questions. The enrollment data and the quantitative data collected via the SSCCTEP were subjected to a number of statistical analyses. In each case, descriptive statistics were examined to better understand the outcomes from the baccalaureate community college teacher education programs, as well as to determine if proceeding with inferential statistics was appropriate. The textual data collected from the SSCCTEP were subjected to data analyses for open-ended questions based on the frameworks provided by Patton (2002) (For a complete list of data analyses that are part of this study see Appendix G).

The data analysis for research question 1 “Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?”

yielded two tables that are included in chapter 4. The first of these tables illustrates the Fall semesters' upper division enrollment trends for the teacher education programs at GC, BC, and RC from their inception through 2006. Within this table the raw numbers of enrollees in the community college teacher education programs are presented based on institution. The second compares the enrollment figures for the colleges of education at the selected baccalaureate community colleges with the enrollment figures for the colleges/departments of education at the public colleges and universities in Florida from 2002 to 2006.

A limitation on the results for this section of the analyses was that I did not collect enrollment data from private colleges and universities in Florida. With this said, there was the possibility that enrollments in these programs were also influenced by the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education. Additionally the private colleges and universities in the state could also have impacted enrollments in teacher education programs at the traditional four-year colleges and universities in Florida. However, since the focus of this study was the state funded programs I felt satisfied in leaving the private colleges and universities out of this portion of the study.

The data collection for research questions 2 through 4 came from two open-ended questions. The responses to the open-ended questions were subjected to appropriate methods of analyses as outlined by Patton (2002) to better understand the reasons students chose the community college for their upper division education. I used the reductionist technique of coding to examine the responses for themes and patterns to identify core consistencies and meanings and assign them into categories. While developing the coding system I looked for convergent themes that tied responses

together. The data was grouped according to the codes based on prominent ideas and wording.

Oliver's criteria for selection of qualitative data were also utilized to help with the analysis of the open-ended questions (2004). Oliver suggested that researchers determine what proportion of the respondents raised a particular issue when deciding to include the issue as a key response. He also stated that researchers should include responses that concur with findings from previous research. Another piece of his framework that was used in this study was to look for a hierarchy in the responses. If I was able to determine that a pattern of hierarchical responses existed I included these data in the results and discussion sections.

Research question 2 asked, "Why did the students attend the community college for their upper division education?" The data from the open-ended question for research question 2 is presented in chapter 4 illustrating the thoughts and ideas of the respondents. That portion of the results includes the categories developed during the reduction of the data and a frequency report of the number of responses placed into each category. Finally, I describe the coding process in chapter 4 as well as provide low inference descriptors to lend credibility to the coding process.

Responses to open-ended questions were also collected for research question 3 "What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist?" The data was used to determine what the participants would have done educationally or professionally if the upper divisions at the community colleges were not an option for the students. The

participants' responses to the open-ended question included in the SSCCTEP were subjected to the same analyses detailed in the previous section.

The data collected for research question 4 "Would education have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?" also yielded data from open-ended questions. The data was used to determine what, if any, influence the limited choices of baccalaureate degree majors at the community college had on the students choices in major. The responses to the two open-ended questions were subjected to the same analyses detailed previously in this chapter.

To answer research question 5 "How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?" I compared the mean responses to nine survey items between the students at the baccalaureate community college teacher education programs and the students at four-year colleges and universities in Florida. These nine items were chosen because they directly related to the schoolwork habits of students. The responses to these items were based on four-point Likert-scale responses, as designed by the NSSE. The responses were converted to numbers ranging from 1 to 4 (4 for very often, 3 for often, 2 for sometimes, and 1 for never). Next, I used these numbers representing the responses and frequencies of each response to calculate the mean response and standard deviation for each of the nine items per groups (students from the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs and students from selected four-year institutions in Florida). The mean response for each item was used to set up comparisons between the two groups.

The data collected from students via the SSCCTEP was compared to the data provided by the Indiana University. *T*-tests were used to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the means of the responses for the items from the NSSE among community college baccalaureate teacher education students and seniors majoring in education at other four-year institutions in Florida. To subject the data to *t*-tests I had to address certain assumptions associated with *t*-tests. The first was that the observations were independent. The second was that the observations were normally distributed within groups. The third was that the variances of the groups were equal. I am confident that the observations were independent. However, the assumption of normal distribution within groups was violated in most cases. But, I am confident that the sizes of the groups were large enough to make the *t*-tests robust to this violation. A total of 68 responses from seniors enrolled in the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education in Florida were used in the *t*-tests. The data from the seniors who majored in education at a four-year college or university in the state, which were provided to me by Indiana University included responses from 228 students. For each of the nine *t*-tests the null hypothesis was that the means of the two groups were equal. I used the value of  $\alpha = .05$  control for Type I error and to determine whether to reject each null hypothesis. If I was able to conclude that the groups differ in a statistically significant way the data were subjected to a test for effect size. In those cases Cohen's *d* was used to ascertain effect size. A limitation that exists regarding the comparison of the data obtained from the SSCCTEP and from Indiana University was that all but one of the institutions in Florida that took part in the NSSE during 2005 were private institutions.

### *Summary*

This study focused on the community college teacher education programs in the state of Florida and evaluated whether the new community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education across Florida were meeting the original goals of those who constructed and subsequently passed legislation allowing community colleges within the state to confer baccalaureate degrees. This study attempted to ascertain whether the teacher education programs at three baccalaureate granting community colleges in Florida were increasing access to higher education for citizens of the state. I utilized quantitative methods with a mix of sources to answer the research questions. These methods included examinations of enrollment data and survey data. The results of this study could provide insight into the effectiveness of the community college baccalaureate programs to help meet the state's goal to increase access to higher education.

## Chapter Four

### Results

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the outcomes of selected community college baccalaureate programs matched the initial goals and purposes of the policies that created them. Specifically, I was interested in whether community college baccalaureate programs were contributing to increased access to higher education in Florida. For reasons explained in Chapter 1, I chose to limit my study to the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at three community colleges in the state. This study used quantitative methods with a mix of sources to answer the research questions. The data collected came from institutions, a survey instrument that I created, and the National Survey of Student Engagement's data warehouse. This chapter includes the following sections: upper division enrollment trends for teacher education programs at baccalaureate community colleges and four-year institutions in Florida, details on the data collection for the survey data and statistics on those who responded to the survey, results for the responses to open-ended questions, statistical analyses for the Likert-scale items on the survey instrument, and the conclusion.

#### *Upper Division Enrollment Trends for Education Programs at Baccalaureate Community Colleges and Four-Year Institutions*

Data were collected in accordance with the protocol detailed in Chapter 3 to determine enrollment trends for education programs at both the baccalaureate community



colleges and public four-year institutions in Florida. These data were used to answer research question 1, “Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?” The first set of data was collected from three community colleges in Florida that confer baccalaureate degrees in education. The first of these programs was started at Blue College (BC) during the Spring semester of the 2002-03 school year. Below is Table 7, it illustrates the enrollment in the upper division teacher education programs at these institutions. Table 7 contains the Fall semester enrollment figures representing the unduplicated headcounts for juniors and seniors for the 2003-04 through 2005-06 school years.

Table 7.

2002-03 through 2005-06 Fall Unduplicated Upper Division Headcount for Baccalaureate Level Education Programs by Community College

Institution	Year		
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
Blue College	229	394	492
Grey College	194	224	240
Red College	0	10	12
Total	423	628	744

The previous table illustrates that from the point of their inception, the community college baccalaureate programs in education have enjoyed growth. Statewide enrollment in these programs for the 2003-04 school year was 423 students. Blue College has continued to grow and is the largest community college baccalaureate level education

program in the state, but the other two institutions, Grey College and Red College have also had increases in enrollment since their inception. Based on the latest data collected in this study, the Fall semester of the 2005-06 school year, 744 juniors and seniors were enrolled in baccalaureate level education programs at these three community colleges.

The second set of data used to answer research question 1 was the upper division enrollment figures for the traditional public four-year institutions in Florida that offer baccalaureate degrees in education from the 2002-03 through 2005-06 school years. This data collection and research did not take into account or analyze enrollment data for private institutions in the state. The institutional enrollment data were used to calculate the total number of enrollees per year in teacher education programs for all public four-year institutions. Below is Table 8, it displays the unduplicated headcounts for juniors and seniors in education programs at each public four-year institution. Table 8 also provides the total for these institutions, the total for the baccalaureate community colleges during the same timeframe, and the combined total for all public institutions (community colleges and four-year colleges and universities) that have upper division programs in education as well as the percentage change from year to year for enrollments.

Table 8.

2002-03 through 2005-06 Fall Unduplicated Upper Division Headcounts for Baccalaureate Level Education Programs by Institution and Percentage of Change by Year

Institution	Year			
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06
FAMU	462 NA	487 5.4%	267 (45.2%)	176 (34.1%)
FAU	1,783 NA	1,795 .7%	1,819 1.3%	1,949 7.2%
FGCU	224 NA	209 (6.7%)	210 .5%	227 8.1%
FIU	881 NA	965 9.5%	1,157 19.9%	1,223 5.7%
FSU	1,217 NA	1,191 (2.1%)	1,178 (1.1%)	1,260 6.9%
UCF	1,876 NA	2,091 11.5%	2,310 10.5%	2,549 10.3%
UF	464 NA	459 (1.1%)	502 9.4%	543 8.2%
UNF	783 NA	770 (1.7%)	754 (2.1%)	892 18.3%
USF	1,558 NA	1,520 (2.4%)	1,554 2.2%	1,384 (10.9%)
Four-Year Total	9,248 NA	9,487 2.6%	9,751 2.8%	10,203 4.6%
Community College Total	NA NA	423 NA	628 48.5%	744 18.5%
Combined Total	NA NA	9,910 NA	10,379 4.7%	10,947 5.5%

Table 8 demonstrates that the upper divisions of baccalaureate education programs at four-year colleges and universities have continued to grow over the selected timeframe. In some individual institutional cases for certain years, the upper division enrollment in the baccalaureate level education programs dropped. However, upper division enrollment in the combined “system” of public four-year Colleges of Education grew from 9,248 students in 2002-03 to 10,203 students in 2005-06. The upper division enrollment for both the four-year and community college education programs was 10,947 junior and senior students for the Fall semester of the 2005-06 school year. Traditional four-year colleges and universities have demonstrated growth in single digit percentages from year to year during the timeframe of this study. An overall increase in enrollment for all upper division education programs (at traditional four-year institutions and community colleges) is present for every year in this study. There appears to be a net gain in upper division enrollment for education programs statewide prior to, and after, the addition of the community college baccalaureate programs in education.

The University of South Florida (USF) saw declines in enrollment in its junior and senior level education programs for two of the three years in this study. This could possibly be explained by the growth in enrollment of one of the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs in USF’s geographical area. However, the same could not be said for Florida International University (FIU). FIU saw enrollment increases in its baccalaureate level education programs for every year that was part of this study. FIU also has a community college baccalaureate teacher education program close to its campus. These results are discussed further in the next chapter.

### *Respondents to the Survey Instrument*

The SSCCTEP was sent to students in the teacher education programs at the baccalaureate community colleges according to protocol in Chapter 3. The data collected via this instrument was self-reported. As discussed in Chapters 1 and 3 of this dissertation there are limitations and weaknesses related to any self-reported data (See Appendix D for the survey instrument).

The students were sent an internet hyperlink that took them to the SSCCTEP so their submission could be done electronically. The SSCCTEP was sent to 843 students at the three institutions. In total, 140 participants completed the SSCCTEP yielding a response rate of 16.6%. The response rates from students at the institutions were uneven. Two institutions were more strongly represented in the responses from the students than the other. Of those who completed the survey 122 were female and 18 were male. The participants had a mean age of 32.7 with a standard deviation of 9.8 years and a median age of 30. Juniors who participated in the survey numbered 72, while 68 of the respondents said they were seniors. The data from three individuals were discarded because these individuals reported a lower division class ranking.

#### *Where did the students complete their lower division education?*

It was important to understand more about the students who took part in this study. The students in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community colleges could come from a diverse educational background. With that said, I included an item on the SSCCTEP that asked students where they completed their first two years of college. The item was multiple choice in design and included the options: current institution, another community college, a private four-year college or university, a

public four-year college or university and other. Table 9, which follows, presents the self-reported responses of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education to the question, “Where did you complete your first two years of college?”

Table 9.

Type of Institution for Completion of First Two Years of College of Respondents to the SSCCTEP

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Current Institution	107	76.4%
Another Community College	22	15.7%
A Private Four-Year College or University	2	1.4%
A Public Four-Year College or University	4	2.9%
Other	5	3.6%
<i>N</i>	140	

Overall, 140 students from the three community college baccalaureate level education programs answered the question, “Where did you complete your first two years of college? The previous table showed that the great majority (76.4%) of students who responded, said that they completed their first two years of college at their “Current Institution.” The next closest category was “Another Community College,” which had 22 students that represented 15.7% of those who answered this question. The other three categories “A Private Four-Year College or University,” “A Public Four-Year College or University,” and “Other” only had a combined total of nine students. Most of the participants in this study attended the same institution for their lower division education.

### *Results from Data for Open-Ended Questions*

The SSCCTEP contained four open-ended questions that were used to answer three of the research questions. These open-ended questions were analyzed in the manner discussed in Chapter 3 and based on the frameworks of Patton (2002) and Oliver (2004). The responses to the open-ended questions were examined for recurring themes. After several reviews of the textual data, I created categories based on emergent themes. At first I had many different groups. But, after further analyzing the data and examining the classifications I collapsed some of the categories and reduced the overall number of sets. When I had the final list of thematic groups, I went back to the original data completed the final analysis and coded the data into the appropriate headings.

#### *What led students to enroll in these programs?*

There has been some discussion and speculation in previous literature (Walker, 2000, 2001, 2005) as to the reasons why students would choose to attend a community college for their upper division educations. The second research question of this study asked, “Why did students attend the community college for their upper division education?” The open ended question on the SSCCTEP that was used to elicit textual responses from students was, “What led you to enroll in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community college?” The range of reasons students chose the community college for their upper division coursework was wide. However, the foremost categories were location and cost. Other participants mentioned things like the ability to have personal contact, prior positive experiences at the institution, the reputation of the institution and the program, and flexibility.

A total of 137 students submitted answers to this question. Some of the recurring themes that emerged from the data were Location, Cost, Smaller Classes, Prior Positive Experiences at the Institution, Flexibility, Reputation, and Ability to have Personal Contact. Table 10 below presents the frequency and percentage of responses of the categories of responses from the students. Most of the respondents listed multiple reasons as to why they enrolled at the community college. Because of this, in many cases multiple responses from the same participant were placed into different categories. There were 231 responses from 137 students included in Table 10 and this is also why the cumulative percentages in Table 10 exceed 100%.

Table 10.

Frequency of Themes for Responses to, “What led you to enroll in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community college?”

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Location	75	54.7%
Cost	51	37.2%
Ability to Have Personal Contact	35	25.4%
Prior Positive Experiences at the Institution	27	19.7%
Reputation of the Institution	27	19.7%
Flexibility	16	11.7%
<i>N</i>	231	

To lend credibility to the coding process I have included some low inference descriptors that provide actual responses so that the reader may have a better idea of what



kind of replies were included in the groups. The first category, and by far the largest, “Location,” included 75 (54.7%) responses from participants such as:

- “I live around here.”
- “This college is closer to my home.”
- “The shorter distance, it was closest to my home.”
- “The school had many campuses near me, so it was convenient.”
- “I only have to drive ten minutes to school.”
- “Convenience of location, I live in another county and travel to any other college or university that had a four-year program for the education major was not convenient.”
- “If I had to travel any further I probably wouldn’t have made the decision to go back to school.”
- “Location, location, location.”
- “It was geographically convenient.”

Most of the students who responded to this question included a reference to geographic proximity to the institution as a reason why they chose to enroll in the teacher education program at the community college.

Other students said that they chose the community college baccalaureate program because:

- “It made the most sense financially.”
- “It was relatively inexpensive.”
- “It is more affordable than other education programs.”
- “I wanted to give it a try without having to spend too much money.”

- “Less prohibitive tuition cost.”
- “The tuition is about half of what they charge at the universities.”
- “The cost per credit hour is less expensive than the local state university.”

In these cases, I felt most comfortable placing them in the category I created and called “Cost.”

In addition to comments strictly related to the cost of tuition, I also included in the category of “Cost” responses from students who mentioned financial aid as a factor in their decision making process. These students specifically answered the question by including the terms “grants” or “scholarships.” Two examples of remarks that were placed in this group are:

- “I knew by staying at the community college, my education would be paid for through scholarships”
- “They offered me a transfer scholarship.”

It was clear that these students believed there were more opportunities for financial aid for which they were eligible at the community colleges. The ability to obtain financial aid at the community college reduced their out-of-pocket expenses. Altogether, “Cost” included a total of 51 responses from students (37.2%). Finances and the perceived monetary advantages of the community college baccalaureate programs obviously made an impact on these students’ choices to enroll in the upper divisions at the community colleges.

“Ability to Have Personal Contact” was another theme that appeared to impact the students’ choices to attend the community college for their upper division education this

category contained 35 answers from students (25.4%). Those that were included were such comments as:

- “I chose to enroll in the teacher education program at the community college because it had been a few years since I attended college. I felt like I needed smaller classes and more accessibility to my instructors through the process.”
- “I wanted more personal attention.”
- “Professors were readily available and the counseling center was a huge help.”
- “I wanted to go somewhere where you knew the instructors and they were more accessible to you when you needed to speak with them.”
- “I was looking for a small program that would allow for a more personal learning experience with classmates and professors – I didn’t just want to be a number.”
- “I wanted to go somewhere the professors knew my name and didn’t know me by a number.”

In addition to the replies provided above, students also responded that smaller class sizes contributed to their decision to enroll at the community colleges. These answers were also included in the category, “Ability to Have Personal Contact.”

Responses such as:

- “Blue College had smaller class sizes.”
- “After checking into the program and learning about the small learning communities I decided to enroll.”
- “The student per teacher ratio is relatively small compared to that of major universities.”

Whether it was the perception that the students could have closer relationships with their instructors, better opportunities to communicate with counselors, or smaller classes, students regarded personal contact as an important reason why they chose the community college teacher education programs.

Another group of 27 students (19.7%) cited “Prior Positive Experiences at the Institution” as a reason why they chose the Community Colleges for their baccalaureate educations. Answers from students that were included in this category were those like:

- “The comfort of already knowing my surroundings.”
- “I went to Blue College for my first two years of college.”
- “It was easier to just continue on than change schools.”
- “I completed my first two years of college at the same school and enjoyed the experience immensely.”
- “I also got my AA from there so I was inclined to continue on.”
- “I have had only positive experiences with Blue College.”
- “It seemed only natural for me to continue at this institution.”
- “I have always enjoyed my instructors and classes at this college so I never thought to look for another baccalaureate program.”

Almost one-fifth of the respondents in this study said that a prior positive experience with the institution impacted their decision to continue pursuit of their baccalaureate education at that same institution. However, it is also possible that the results for this particular question were skewed. Over three-fourths of the participants in this study (76.4%) attended the same institution for their lower division education and this may have had an effect on the prevalence of responses that were in this group.

When further analyzing the responses to the question, “What led you to enroll in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community college?” there were other comments from students that seemed to fit best in the group that I called “Reputation.” A number of students said they were drawn to these upper division programs at the community colleges because of what they had heard. Some of the 27 items (19.7%) included in this category were such things as:

- “Because of the program’s great reputation.”
- “I had heard it was a great program.”
- “Through friends I was told that the college works closely with students.”
- “A person I worked with told me that he learned more during his two years in the College of Education at Blue College than he did when he was at a large university.”
- “Blue College has a more respected program.”
- “Positive feedback from currently enrolled students.”
- “I talked to the principal at my son’s school and he told me that the teachers he had seen from Blue College were dynamite.”

The final category was titled “Flexibility.” There were 16 participants in this study (11.7%) who believed the community college baccalaureate programs allowed them more freedoms than other baccalaureate programs may have. The potential flexibility of the community college baccalaureate programs attracted them to the program. Answers that were included in this group were “I could work on my degree as a part time student”, and “I wanted a flexible class schedule where I only have to come to campus two days a week to work on my baccalaureate degree.” I also included such

responses in this category as “I could still live at home and keep the job I had”, and “I work full time and have children.” For these individuals the ability to maintain relationships and obligations (employment and familial) influenced their decisions to pursue their baccalaureate degrees at the community college.

*What would students have done if these programs did not exist?*

There has been much debate and discussion surrounding the students who would enroll in community college baccalaureate programs. One area of this debate centers on whether the community college baccalaureate programs would increase opportunities for access to upper division educations for students who otherwise would not have continued pursuit of baccalaureate degrees. Some fear that students who enroll in upper division programs at the community college may be redirected from other four-year institutions. Research question 3, “What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist?” sought to determine what the students in the teacher education programs at the community colleges would have done if the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education were not options.

An open-ended question was included on the SSCCTEP that asked the students “What would you have done educationally or professionally had the community college baccalaureate program not existed?” In total, 135 students provided answers to this question. Some of the groupings I created for responses to this question were: gone to another institution, sought employment, gone to another institution and changed major, and not pursued a baccalaureate degree. Table 11, which follows, presents the themes which emerged during the coding process for the responses of the students and the

frequencies of responses which were placed into each category. In contrast to the previous open ended question, the responses to this item were placed into mutually exclusive categories.

Table 11.

Frequency of Themes for Responses to, “What would you have done educationally or professionally had the community college baccalaureate program not existed?”

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Gone to Another Institution	82	60.7%
Sought Employment	18	13.3%
Gone to Another Institution and Changed Major	17	12.6%
Not Pursued a Baccalaureate Degree`	9	6.6%
Not Sure	5	3.7%
Other	4	2.9%
<i>N</i>	135	

There was one theme that came to the forefront and was by far the most evident in the responses of the students. Most of the students remarked that they would have continued to pursue their upper division education somewhere else if the community college baccalaureate program did not exist. Examples from the 82 responses that were placed in this category (60.7%) included statements like:

- “I would have commuted to the next closest college in order to earn my degree.”
- “Traveled to a university father away.”
- “Gone somewhere else.”

- “I would have traveled the inconvenient distance to another college or university that did offer one.”
- “I would have looked to attend a college/university in my local area because being close to home is an important factor in my education choice.”
- “I would have tried to find an online program.”
- “I would have probably gone to one of our big universities, although it would have been difficult due to the expenses.”
- “Moved or had to travel to a college to complete my education degree.”
- “I would have chosen another education program at a different college.”
- “Gone to the University of South Florida for education.”

Clearly, the majority of students who participated in this study believed they would have been motivated to enroll at another institution. However, the students who participated in the study and the methods of data collection for the study may have had an effect on the large number of respondents who were placed in this category. The final response rate for this survey was 16.6%. It is possible that the students who took the time to participate in this study would also have been the type of students who would have more likely pursued a baccalaureate degree at another institution.

Eighteen other students (13.3%) responded in ways that I characterized as “Sought Employment.” These students would not have continued to pursue their upper division education, but would have instead gone into the working world. This category also includes those individuals who said that they would have stayed in the working world, rather than leaving it to pursue a baccalaureate degree. Some of the answers they provided that were put in this category were:



- “Probably just gotten a full-time job.”
- “I would have tried to obtain a job as a director at a child care facility.”
- “Worked as a substitute teacher.”
- “Gotten a job that did not require a college degree.”
- “Attempted to pursue a teaching position in a non-traditional academic setting (state park system or a program like outward bound).”
- “Probably become a bartender.”
- “I would be working to put food on the table.”
- “I would have had to work two jobs and would probably not have graduated from college. My child would not have had his only parent around as often, or have had as many opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities,”
- “I would have stayed with my previous employer. I gave up a job paying \$14.75 an hour as an office manager to become a student.”
- “I would have stayed with my previous employer.”

The students’ responses that were placed in this group seemed to indicate that the respondents would have had no intention of continuing their postsecondary education.

A third theme that became apparent was “Gone to Another Institution and Changed Major.” Not only would these respondents have gone somewhere else for their upper division coursework, but they also indicated that they would have pursued a major other than education. I did not anticipate finding a group of students like this when I designed the study. Some of the 17 students (12.6%) mentioned alternative plans such as:

- “Continued my education at another institution, but not in education.”
- “Pursued architecture at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.”

- “Enrolled in the University of North Florida’s social work program.”
- “Take online courses to get certified in a medical/office related field.”
- “Studied graphic design at another local university.”
- “Gone to trade school.”
- “I have an AS in computer programming. I would have continued on that track at the University of South Florida.”

The research question sought to gain insight into what students would have done in their educational or professional lives if the community college baccalaureate programs did not exist. These students reported that they not only would have sought an upper division education at other institution, but also would have pursued a major in a completely different field.

There was, however, a group of students who said that they would have “Not Pursued a Baccalaureate Degree” if the community college did not offer upper division coursework. For most cases, the answers from students that were included in this thematic category did not offer alternatives as to what the students would have done. Instead, these students seemed less hopeful and generally negative wording was present in their responses, such as: “nothing”, “stopped”, and “not continued.” This group included nine respondents (6.7%). In general, the students whose textual answers were included in this category offered quotes such as:

- “Nothing”
- “I am not sure if I would have been able to attend any more school”
- “I would not have been able to attend college to become a teacher”
- “I would not have gone to college”

- “Because attending a university is financially unrealistic for me, I would have not obtained a bachelor’s degree.”
- “I am not sure I would have been able to attend any more school.”
- “I would have settled for an Associates and never gone back to school.”
- “I would have not been able to continue in my career.”
- “I would have probably stopped after my education at a two year degree.”

These students represent those students who have directly benefited from the expansion of baccalaureate programs to the community colleges.

The last group of students was included into the category of “Not Sure.” These five participants (3.7%) responded in ways that seemed as if they had never given thought to a situation where the community college baccalaureate programs did not exist. I specifically looked for responses like “not sure” or “unsure” to include them in this theme. These students did not seem to have made alternative plans for their upper division education had the community college baccalaureate programs not been in operation at the time they intended to pursue an upper division education.

Overall, the majority of the respondents, three-fifths of the participants, said that they would have gone to another institution for their baccalaureate studies if the community college programs did not exist. Another group of students, about one-eighth, said that they would have gone to another institution and majored in something other than education. Additionally, one-fifth of the students said that they would have sought employment, continued in their previous profession, or stopped their pursuit of a four-year degree. It can be assumed that the students in the latter group benefited from the

increased access to upper division educations that the community college baccalaureate programs can provide.

*Why did the students major in education?*

The research question 4 also used open-ended questions for its data was research question 4 which asked, “Would education have been the students’ first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?” This research question sought to determine if the limited number of choices in baccalaureate degrees at the community colleges had any impact on students’ choices of major. Answering this research question required the administration of two separate open-ended questions. The first of these asked, “What influenced your decision to major in education?” The second open-ended question asked, “What other baccalaureate program or major (other than education), if any, would you have considered enrolling in had one existed at the time you enrolled in the community college baccalaureate teacher education program?”

Students who responded to the open-ended question asking what influenced their decision to major in education provided answers that I categorized into six different groups. Overall, 138 students responded to this open-ended question. The purpose of including this open-ended question was to see how many students responded in a way that would lead me to believe that the limited number of upper division programs at the community colleges in the state had some effect on the students’ decision to major in education. Most of the responses to this open-ended question could be classified as a traditional reasons people get into teaching such as love of teaching, children, or learning; wanting to make difference; some previous experience working in education; someone in

the past had a positive impact on them; or wanting to take advantage of some of the employment advantages of teaching. There was only one small group of students who said that the limited baccalaureate availability at the community college impacted their decisions to major in education. Below is Table 12; it displays the frequencies per category for responses to this open-ended question. Most of the respondents listed multiple reasons as to why they chose to pursue teaching. Because of this, different responses from the same participant were placed in multiple categories. There were 170 responses from 138 students included in Table 12 and this is also why the cumulative percentages in Table 12 exceed 100%.

Table 12.

Frequency of Themes for Responses to, “What influenced your decision to major in education?”

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
Love of Teaching, Children, or Learning	69	50.0%
Make a Difference	39	28.2%
Previous Educational Employee/Volunteer	25	18.1%
Influential People	22	15.9%
Employment Advantages	12	8.7%
Baccalaureate Availability at Community College	3	2.2%
<i>N</i>	170	

The foremost theme ( $n = 69, 50\%$ ) that emerged during the coding process was the “Love of Teaching, Children, or Learning.” Some responses that were placed in this group were:

- “A love for kids in general greatly influenced my decision to major in education. Working with children is my passion.”
- “My love for children and the belief that I have experienced a personal calling to the profession.”
- “I love working with children, watching them learn and grow.”
- “A lifelong interest in children and the love of juvenile literature.”
- “I like working with kids.”
- “The pursuit of knowledge and sharing of knowledge.”
- “I love teaching others information and seeing the progress they make.”
- “I have wanted to be a teacher for a long time and felt that this was the right time for me to realize my dream.”

These participants clearly felt an emotional connection to youth, teaching, and learning.

There was also a group of students who felt an obligation to be a positive force on society. The students wanted to contribute to the future in a meaningful way. Some respondents ( $n = 39$ , 28.2%) who answered the question seemed to focus on wanting to “Make a Difference” as a reason for majoring in education. Replies that were placed in this category were statements like:

- “Wanting to make a difference in the area of special education.”
- “I wanted to be a positive influence on children.”
- “Wanting to make a difference instead of complaining.”
- “I wanted to make an impact on society by providing it with well-educated thinkers.”

- “I’d always wanted to do something I felt was important and that could be a benefit to society.”
- “I wanted to give back to the community.”
- “It’s satisfying to know that I make a difference even though it is usually not recognized.”
- “I always wanted to help people.”

These responses included words like “help”, “influence”, and “change.” In contrast to the previous group, where the attraction to teaching was more emotional, this category included students who wanted to *change* something.

Some of the students who answered the survey had previously served in an educational setting. The experience(s) with education impacted their choice to major in education. There were 25 other students (18.1%) who mentioned a “Previous Educational Employee/Volunteer” experience that impacted their decision to major in Education.

Those students made remarks such as:

- “I am employed as a paraprofessional in the school district.”
- “I substitute taught full-time for five years.”
- “I had a really great mentoring experience in a fifth grade classroom when I was a senior in high school.”
- “Working as an assistant in a private school.”
- “I have been substituting for many years and decided to major in education.”
- “Prior experience as a teacher assistant.”
- “I ran an after school program for eight years.”
- “I volunteered in my son’s classroom.”

- “I had an opportunity to teach art to kids during two summers and enjoyed teaching.”

Some of the community college baccalaureate students majoring in education had clearly been motivated to teach based on past experiences in the classroom and at schools.

There was a group of students ( $n = 22$ , 15.9%) that credited their decision to major in education to “Influential People.” This group cited examples such as, “My teachers and family.”, “My Earth Space Science teacher showed me that learning science can be fun an exciting.”, “My teachers when I was going to school had such an effect on me and I wanted to be able to have that effect on other students.”, “My entire family has a history of teachers. Everyone in my immediate family is a teacher.”, and “Positive role models during my K-12 education.” The individuals whose responses were included in this category had someone in their past who helped steer them to major in education.

The work schedule of teachers is known to have its advantages. Summers, weekends, and holidays off make teaching an attractive profession to some. Others find teaching attractive because it is a high demand work field and there are many job opportunities. “Employment Advantages” was another theme that developed during the coding process. It contained 12 answers (8.7%). The range included such remarks like “Having the same schedule as my own children”, and “Teachers’ schedules will allow me to have hours suitable for raising children.” But, I also chose to include such things as: “I have taught in a pre-school and wanted to make more money”, “Teacher shortage publicity and loan repayment program”, “The need for teachers in Florida”, and “Job potential.” It seemed that all of these answers fit in the category of “Employment Advantages” which were unique to teaching. Whether it was the work schedule of



teaching, monetary advantages of choosing to teach in Florida, or obtaining a degree in a high need area, the students' replies that were included in this group were directly connected to employment.

The final category I created was "Baccalaureate Availability at Community College." These students' responses seemed to make a connection between the limited availability of upper division coursework at the community college and the students' decisions to major in education. Only three respondents (2.2%) fit in this category. However, I feel that it is important to include this group in the discussion of replies from students. I thought that because education was the least scientific and technical of the community college baccalaureate programs there would be a group of students who attended the community college for their upper division education to simply earn *a baccalaureate degree*. I had expected to find more students in this category. The low number could have been related to the participants and methods of data collection for this study. The three responses from students that were placed in this category were: "My main goal was a baccalaureate degree. Second, I wanted to teach.", "Computer science is not offered locally, and I would like to try teaching mathematics.", "I started the degree and just wanted to finish it."

The overwhelming majority of students gave traditional reasons as to why they chose to major in education. Some students cited a love for children, others wanted to make a difference and there were some who wanted to be a teacher because of the employment advantages of it. There was a very small group of students who said that the limited availability of upper division programs at the community colleges had an impact on their choice, but this group was minute compared to those who fell into a category

associated with the traditional reasons that people enter into education. The data collection for this study could have had an effect on the responses seen to this open-ended question because those who chose not to complete the survey may have changed the distribution across the groups or could have been motivated to major in education for reasons that did not emerge during the analysis of the answers submitted.

*Would the students choose another major?*

To answer research question 4, “Would education have been the students’ first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?” a second open-ended question was used to collect textual data from the students. The open-ended question asked, “What other baccalaureate program or major (other than education), if any, would you have considered enrolling in had one existed at the time you enrolled in the community college baccalaureate teacher education program?” A total of 128 students answered this question. This open ended question was designed in a way to determine if students would have said something other than education. Some students listed a number of other majors. However, for this question I chose to only code their respondents’ first answers. This is why the cumulative total in the following table does not exceed 100%. The classifications for responses to this question include: none, science, psychology, helping professions and other majors. Table 13 provides the frequency for each theme from the responses to this question.

Table 13.

Frequency of Themes for Responses to, “What other baccalaureate program or major (other than education), if any, would you have considered enrolling in had one existed at the time you enrolled in the community college baccalaureate teacher education program?”

Theme	Frequency	Percentage
None	54	42.1%
Science	15	11.7%
Helping Profession	13	10.2%
Psychology	10	7.8%
Other Majors	36	28.1%
<i>N</i>	128	

The largest group of responses ( $n = 54$ , 42.1%) fit best under the heading of “None”. Some examples of the replies that were placed in this category were: simply “None.” and “This is what is what I was looking for.” These students indicated that education was their first choice of major and the limited availability of baccalaureate degrees at the community colleges did not lead them to major in education.

There were other respondents who indicated they would have indeed majored in something other than education if it was available at the community college. A total of 15 students (11.7%) suggested that they would have enrolled in other upper division programs that I have grouped under the general heading of “Science”. The range of individual answers that were fit into this area were things like: “Electrical Engineer”, “Astronomy”, “Veterinarian Tech”, “Pharmacology”, and “Marine Biology”.

There was also a group ( $n = 13$ , 10.2%) whose replies indicated that the students would have been interested in a baccalaureate degree in another “Helping Profession” if it was available at the community college. A number of the answers mentioned, “Social Work”, while others contained text mentioning “Criminal Justice” or “Speech Pathology”. A surprising number of students ( $n = 10$ , 7.8%) said that they would have entered a baccalaureate level “Psychology” program if one existed at the community college. Textual responses that I placed in this category were those like “Psychology”, “Child Psychology”, and “School Psychology”.

The final thematic group I created was called “Other Majors”. This group ( $n = 36$ , 28.1%) included a wide range of majors that students said they might have enrolled in if the baccalaureate program was offered at the community college. This category included such majors as: “Law”, “Political Science”, “Business”, “Marketing”, “Architecture”, “English”, and “History”. The largest group, by far, was the students who said that they would not have chosen to major in something else. The methods of data collection could have also affected the outcomes of this open-ended question. Students who were not excited about their major in education might not have participated in the study.

#### *Statistical Analyses for Likert-Scale Items on the SSCCTEP*

The fifth research question of this study asked, “How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?” To answer this question, the SSCCTEP included nine Likert-scale items that were used with permission of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). These items were selected from the 2005 version of the NSSE and were chosen based on their ability to measure schoolwork

habits of students. Each item had responses that corresponded to numerical values ranging from 1 – 4. These responses were: “very often” = 4, “often” = 3, “sometimes” = 2, and “never” = 1. (See Appendix D for the complete survey instrument) These questions asked students how often they had asked a question in class or contributed to a class discussion; made a class presentation; prepared two or more drafts of a paper; worked on a paper or project that required the use of various sources; come to class without completing assignments or assigned readings; worked with other students during class; worked with other students outside of class to prepare an assignment; put together ideas from different courses when completing assignments or a class discussion; and worked harder to meet an instructor’s expectations.

There were 140 students at the baccalaureate community colleges who responded to these Likert items. The data from the NSSE included responses from 228 seniors. To keep consistency in the comparison of the two groups, only responses from seniors on the Likert items on the SSCCTEP were included in this analysis. The group of students from the baccalaureate community colleges (BACC) whose data were included in these analyses was 68 seniors. Below is Table 14; it displays the age distribution for the participants in this portion of the study.

Table 14.

Distribution of Participants Based on Age for Schoolwork Questions

Age Category	<u>BACC Seniors</u>		<u>Four-Year Seniors</u>	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
19 or younger	1	1.5%	0	0%
20 – 23	13	19.4%	145	63.9%
24 – 29	16	23.8%	33	14.5%
30 – 39	14	20.9%	22	9.7%
40 – 55	22	32.8%	26	11.5%
Over 55	1	1.5%	1	.4%
<i>N</i>	67		227	

The age distribution of seniors from the community college baccalaureate programs was much more even across categories than the distribution for seniors from the four-year programs. The largest group of students who participated in this study from the community colleges was in the 40 to 55 year old age group. The biggest numbers of seniors in any category from the four-year institutions were in the 20 to 23 year old age category. The group of seniors from the four-year institutions appeared to be younger on the average than seniors from the community college programs.

The data collected from the students at the community college baccalaureate programs were compared with data provided by the NSSE for other four-year institutions in Florida that offer baccalaureate degrees in teacher education. To determine if there was a significant difference in the mean response on each item, the data from the two groups were subjected to *t*-tests as described in Chapter 3. Below is Table 15; it provides

descriptive statistics for the responses to these items as well as the results of the *t*-tests for responses to the items on the SSCCTEP that were used to measure schoolwork habits for students majoring in education at the baccalaureate community colleges in Florida and students majoring in education at other four-year institutions in Florida.

Table 15.

Comparison of the Mean Responses to Schoolwork Questions on the SSCCTEP

Survey Question	BACC Students			Other Four-Year Students			<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Question in Class	67	3.75	.47	228	3.47	.72	-3.63	.000*
Class Presentation	68	3.54	.61	228	3.39	.73	-1.79	.076
Two or More Drafts	68	2.79	1.1	228	2.57	.98	-1.58	.116
Various Sources	68	3.78	.48	228	3.53	.63	-3.39	.001*
Came Unprepared	67	1.93	.77	227	2.05	.79	1.17	.244
Others in Class	68	3.25	.79	228	2.82	.90	-3.49	.001*
Others Outside of Class	68	2.50	.76	228	3.04	.81	4.86	.000*
Ideas from Other Courses	68	3.47	.59	227	3.19	.78	-3.20	.002*
Worked Harder	67	3.42	.72	228	2.93	.87	-4.18	.000*

$\alpha = <.05$ .

To conduct *t*-tests certain assumptions must be met. The first is whether the observations are independent. Based on the design of this study there is no reason to believe that the observations were not independent. The second is whether the observations are normally distributed within the groups. Based on a visual inspection of the descriptive statistics and graphs created for each item, some of the groups appeared to

be normally distributed but others did not. However, the sizes of the groups (67, 68; 227,228) were large enough to proceed with *t*-tests, even though the assumption may have been violated in some cases. The final assumption is that the variances of the groups are equal. To determine if the groups had equal variances I subjected the data to a test for equal variance. The results of those tests are included below with the results of the *t*-tests.

Each *t*-test used the null hypothesis that the mean for each group of students would be equal ( $H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$ ). I assigned the value of  $\alpha = .05$  to control for Type I error and to determine whether to reject each null hypothesis. Of nine items tested, six yielded statistically significant difference in the means between the two groups. A difference in group sizes sometimes creates a limitation on *t*-tests. Results from *t*-tests that have one group larger than another are considered “conservative” if the larger group also has a larger variance than the variance of the smaller group (Hatcher and Stepanski, 1999). The results of all of the *t*-tests in this study, with the exception of one, would fit into the category of “conservative” based on the guidelines from Hatcher and Stepanski. The following discussion looks deeper into some of the differences discovered through the *t*-tests.

For the first item, “How often have you asked a question in class or contributed to a class discussion?”, the results from the *t*-test showed the students from the community college baccalaureate programs had a higher mean score ( $M = 3.75, SD = .72$ ) than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 3.47, SD = .72, t(293) = -3.63, p = .000$ ). A *t*-test for unequal variance was used for in this case ( $F = 28.46, p = .000$ ). Because there was a statistically significant difference between the two groups, Cohen’s *d* was



calculated to determine effect size. This test yielded an effect size of .46, which is small to medium (Cohen, 1988).

Mean responses to the question, “How often have you made a class presentation?” were compared. The variances for the two groups of students differed enough to use a *t*-test for unequal variance ( $F = 5.43, p = .02$ ). The results from the *t*-test showed the participants’ from the community college baccalaureate programs response ( $M = 3.54, SD = .61$ ) was higher than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 3.39, SD = .73$ ),  $t(294) = -1.79, p = .076$ . The variance of the larger group (four-year students) was smaller when compared to the group with fewer students (community college students). This is the lone *t*-test, of the nine conducted in this study, that could be considered “liberal” (Hatcher and Stepanski). Based on the set Type I error rate of  $\alpha = <.05$  the results from this analysis did not yield results that were statistically significant.

The next comparison looked to see if there was difference in how the respondents answered the item, “How often have you prepared two or more drafts of a paper or an assignment before turning it in?” Based on the results from the test for equal variance ( $F = 1.98, p = .16$ ) it showed that the students from the community college baccalaureate programs ( $M = 2.79, SD = 1.1$ ) had a higher mean response than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 2.57, SD = .98$ ),  $t(294) = -1.58, p = .116$ . The results of this *t*-test were not statistically significant based on the Type I error rate set at  $\alpha = <.05$ .

The students were also asked, “How often have you worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources?” A *t*-test for unequal variance was used in this case ( $F = 25.6, p = .000$ ) For this question, the *t*-test demonstrated that the students’ from the community college baccalaureate programs ( $M$

= 3.78,  $SD = .48$ ) mean response was higher than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 3.53$ ,  $SD = .63$ ),  $t(294) = -3.39$ ,  $p = .001$ . Cohen's  $d$  was calculated to determine effect size. The value of Cohen's  $d$  was .45 which is a small to medium effect size.

The next analysis required the comparison of the responses to the question, "How often have you come to class without completing readings or assignments?" A  $t$ -test for equal variances was conducted ( $F = .187$ ,  $p = .67$ ). It is important to note the wording of this question. In this case, it is better to for the group to have a lower mean. The mean response for those enrolled in the community college baccalaureate programs ( $M = 1.93$ ,  $SD = .77$ ) was lower than the students from the four-year institutions ( $M = 2.05$ ,  $SD = .79$ ),  $t(292) = 1.168$ ,  $p = .24$ . The results of this  $t$ -test were not statistically significant.

Another item on the SSCCTEP asked participants to answer the question, "How often have you worked with other students on projects during class?" A  $t$ -test for equal variance was used in this case ( $F = 1.62$ ,  $p = .20$ ). The group from the community college baccalaureate programs had a higher mean response ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = .79$ ) than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 2.82$ ,  $SD = .90$ ),  $t(294) = -3.49$ ,  $p = .001$ . I calculated Cohen's  $d$  and found the value to be .51, which is a medium effect size.

The next comparison looked to see if there was a difference in the responses from the two groups of students to the item, "How often have you worked with other students outside of class to prepare class assignments?" The data was subjected to a  $t$ -test for equal variance ( $F = .286$ ,  $p = .593$ ). The group that had the higher mean response was the students from the four year institutions ( $M = 3.47$ ,  $SD = .76$ ) than students from the college baccalaureate programs or other four-year institutions ( $M = 3.19$ ,  $SD = .78$ ),

$t(294) = 4.86, p = .000$ . Cohen's  $d$  was found to be .69 which is a medium to large effect size.

The respondents were asked to answer the question, "How often have you put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments during class discussions?" The answers were subjected to a  $t$ -test for unequal variance ( $F = 3.86, p = .05$ ) which showed that the students from the community college baccalaureate programs ( $M = 3.47, SD = .59$ ) had a higher mean response than those from the community college baccalaureate programs or other four-year institutions ( $M = 3.19, SD = .78$ ),  $t(293) = -3.20, p = .002$ . The value of Cohen's  $d$  was .40, which is a small to medium effect size.

The final  $t$ -test compared the mean responses for the question, "How often have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?" A  $t$ -test for equal variance was used for this analysis ( $F = .931, p = .335$ ). The group from the community college baccalaureate programs ( $M = 3.42, SD = .72$ ) mean was statistically significantly higher than those from the four-year institutions ( $M = 2.93, SD = .87$ ),  $t(293) = -4.18, p = .000$ . Following the  $t$ -test Cohen's  $d$  was determined to be .61 which is a medium to large effect size.

Based on the  $t$ -tests, the students from the community college baccalaureate programs seemed to have better schoolwork habits than their counterparts at some four-year institutions in Florida. On all of the items, with the exception of one, the students at the community college baccalaureate programs had better scores. Six of the nine  $t$ -tests demonstrated that the means differed in a statistically significant way. The only item where students from the four-year institutions had a higher self-reported mean was "How

often have you worked with other students outside of class to prepare class assignments?” Because many of the *t*-tests showed a difference that was statistically significant, I attempted to determine if the difference between the two groups is *practically* significant. To do this I used the Cohen’s *d* values to determine if the differences between the two groups’ mean responses were meaningful. A discussion regarding the *practical* differences between the two groups is included in the following chapter.

The students from the community college baccalaureate programs seemed to have better schoolwork habits. One possible explanation could be that the students from the community college were older than those at the four-year institutions. Another possibility is because of the response rate to the SCCTEP. The response rate was 16.6% and it is possible that the group of students in this study may not have been an accurate reflection of the complete group of students from the community college baccalaureate programs. There is also the possibility that the community college baccalaureate programs did a better job engaging their students and teaching them better schoolwork habits. The community colleges’ focus on teaching rather than research may have contributed to this difference.

### *Conclusion*

The purpose of this study was to determine if the baccalaureate-granting community colleges in Florida are increasing access to higher education in the state. This chapter presented the finding from different data collections and statistical analyses as discussed in Chapter 3. The data examined in this chapter included enrollment information, survey data, and data from the NSSE data warehouse.

Since the addition of community college baccalaureate teacher education programs there has been net gain in the number of students enrolled in upper division education programs across the state. Most of the students reported location and cost as the top two reasons they chose to enroll in the community college for their upper division education. Other students mentioned things like flexibility, familiarity and comfort with the institution, and personal contact as reasons why they chose the community college. Many of students would have attended another college or university to complete their baccalaureate studies if the option was not available at the community college. There were also some who said that they would have stopped their education or simply entered the workforce. For the almost 20% of the students in this study who said that they would have stopped their education or sought employment, the community college baccalaureate programs have increased access to higher education.

An extremely large number of students listed a traditional reason like making a difference, love of children, or the employment advantages of teaching as a reason why they chose to major in education. However, many of the participants in this study said that they would have had an interest in majoring in something other than education. These two findings seem to be in contradiction and will be discussed further in the following chapter.

Finally, results also indicated that the students at the community colleges seem to have better schoolwork habits and are more engaged than students in similar programs at other four-year institutions in Florida. In eight of the nine categories, the students from the community college baccalaureate programs had better mean scores. Additionally, six of the nine *t*-test analyses conducted for this portion of this study were found to be

statistically significant. The findings from the data collection and analyses yielded results that merit further examination and discussion. These results will be further discussed in Chapter 5 and will include a discussion of the implications for practice and theory, and recommendations for future research.

## Chapter Five

### Major Findings, Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine whether the outcomes of selected community colleges baccalaureate programs in Florida match the stated goals of the legislation that allowed the community colleges to confer their own four-year degrees. The rationale behind the policy allowing community colleges to develop their own upper divisions was twofold. First, the state wanted to expand access to baccalaureate degrees to its citizens. Second, the state wanted to supply employers in high need professions such as teaching and nursing with more qualified employees. This study investigated whether the newly created baccalaureate community colleges were fulfilling the first of these goals - increasing access to baccalaureate opportunities. The units of analysis for this study were three community colleges in the state that offered baccalaureate degrees in education. This chapter includes a summary of the findings, conclusions, implications and recommendations.

#### *Method Summary*

This study used quantitative methods with a mix of sources. Three data collections took place. The first set of data was enrollment numbers for baccalaureate level education programs in the state. The second set of data came from a survey I created that included Likert-scale items that were used with the permission of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) as well as open-ended questions. The

survey instrument was sent to all students who were enrolled in the community college baccalaureate level education programs. Of the 843 who received the survey, 140 returned completed surveys, yielding an overall response rate of 16.6%. The third data collection was the responses to items from the NSSE for students at other four-year institutions in Florida who majored in education. Indiana University provided these data to me; it included the responses of 228 students.

The data were analyzed through the use of different processes. The enrollment data was used to develop tables that illustrated trends. The open-ended questions were subjected to the appropriate techniques for analysis of textual responses. Responses from the two groups of students to the Likert-style items from the NSSE were subjected to *t*-tests to determine if the mean responses of the groups differed in a statistically significant way.

### *Summary of Findings*

This study used quantitative methods with a mix of sources to answer the five research questions. Each research question is presented below with a summary of findings for each question. The first research question sought to determine what impact the community college baccalaureate level education programs were having on statewide enrollment in education programs at traditional colleges and universities.

1. Do community college teacher education programs contribute to increased access to higher education within the state by increasing capacity for enrollment in baccalaureate level teacher education programs?

The results of this research question lend credibility to the idea that current policies are expanding access to higher education by increasing capacity for



enrollment in upper division education programs. The policy change allowing community colleges to confer their own baccalaureate degrees has helped more students to start on the path to becoming teachers.

Since their inception, the total upper division enrollment in the community college baccalaureate education programs has grown from 423 students during the Fall semester of 2003 to 744 students during the Fall semester of 2005. Enrollment in similar programs at other institutions in the state has also continued to grow. During the Fall semester of 2002 there were 9,248 upper division students enrolled in education programs at public four-year institutions in Florida. For the 2005 Fall semester there were 10,203 students enrolled in these programs. When combining the Fall 2005 upper division enrollment numbers for both community colleges and traditional public four-year programs in education, the total was 10,947 students. Enrollments in both the public four-year programs at community colleges and the traditional institutions grew for every year that was part of this study. Net gains in enrollment in upper division education programs were present prior to, and after, the creation of the community college baccalaureate programs. As detailed in chapter 2 of this dissertation, the State of Florida is facing a long-term teacher shortage. While the enrollment in the community college baccalaureate programs in education was only 744 (2005-06), the ability of the community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees in education could lead to changes in policy and practice that can help the state deal with the long-term teacher shortage if net increases in enrollment continue to be seen in upper division education programs.

The second research question in this study examined why students chose the community college for their baccalaureate studies. Research question 2 is below.

2. Why did students attend the community college for their upper division education?

It seems that most students are attending the community college baccalaureate programs because of location, cost, flexibility, ability to have personal contact with faculty, prior positive experiences with the institution, and the positive reputation of the institution or program.

This research question used the responses to open-ended questions from students in the baccalaureate level education programs at the community colleges for its answer. The largest categories were “Location” (54.7%) and “Cost” (37.2%). “Location” included responses that focused on the physical location of the college as well as its geographic proximity to the student. In the cost category, students said that the cost of tuition or the availability of grants and loans impacted their choice of institution. Others answered that they attended the community college baccalaureate program because of reasons related to flexibility such as flexibility in scheduling, and the ability to maintain occupational and familial relationships.

There were some other students who replied that it was the “Ability to Have Personal Contact” with faculty and staff. These individuals liked the student teacher ratio and others talked about having relationships with counselors. Others had a “Prior Positive Experience at the Institution.” This group of students went to the community college for their lower division education and liked it so much they chose to finish their baccalaureate studies at that institution. Finally, some students were drawn to the community college for the baccalaureate degree because of the institutions’ or programs’ quality reputation. These participants cited other students and members of the community

as sources of positive information on the institution or program that impacted the students' decisions to choose the community college for the upper division education.

The third research question that was part of this study investigated what direction the lives of the students enrolled in the community college baccalaureate level education programs would have taken if these programs were not an option. Research question 3 is below.

3. What might the students in these programs have done (educationally or professionally) if the community college teacher education program did not exist? Many of students who participated in this study reported that they would have attended another institution for their baccalaureate studies if the upper division did not exist at their community college. There were some who indicate that they would have not continued pursuit of a baccalaureate degree and/or sought employment. However, the self-selection of respondents may have skewed the results to this question and therefore the results should be viewed with caution.

This research question sought to investigate what the students in the community college teacher education programs would have done if they had not enrolled at the community college for their upper division education. This question also used open-ended questions that allowed students to share their own ideas and elaborate on what might have been. I expected to find *some* students who said that they would have simply gone to traditional four-year program, but I was surprised by the size of the group, three-fifths of the participants, said they would have continued their upper division education at another institution.

There were, however, two groups of students who were included into the thematic categories “Sought Employment” and “Not Pursued a Baccalaureate Degree.” The respondents from the two groups represent students who were able to pursue a baccalaureate degree *only* because of the community college baccalaureate programs. These students, one-fifth of the respondents, believe they benefited from the increased access to upper division programs in Florida through the baccalaureate level education programs at the community colleges in the state.

Another group of students (12.6%) surprised me with their comments that not only would they have gone to another institution, but also they would have majored in something other than education at that institution. This led me to believe that these students might have *only* been at the community college to earn a baccalaureate degree and did not care as to the major, as long as they were able to earn a baccalaureate degree, or they may have been torn between majoring in education and something else and the perceived benefits of the community college baccalaureate programs were attractive enough to sway their decisions.

If I am to assume that the participants were truthful in the answers and their intentions are to be believed, it might lead to the conclusion that the community college baccalaureate programs may be redirecting some students from other traditional four-year institutions. This possibility should be treated with caution, however, because of the response rate (16.6%). The data collection surveyed the population of students from the community colleges and a limited number of students chose to participate. Students at these institutions were emailed the survey and were asked to complete it on a voluntary basis. It is possible the students who completed the survey were those who were

generally more motivated students. To that end, they might also have been students who would have been more motivated to pursue a baccalaureate degree at another institution, than those who did not complete the survey. More research is needed in this area.

The community college baccalaureate programs in Florida are limited in breadth and scope. Part of this study attempted to determine if the limited number of baccalaureate programs at the community colleges had an effect on the choices of the students in these programs regarding their final decision to major in education. Research question 4 follows.

4. Would education have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were offered at the local community college where they attended?

It is unclear whether education would have been the students' first choice of major if other baccalaureate programs were available at the community colleges. The overwhelming majority of respondents reported choosing to major in education for a traditional reason. However, the majority of participants also said they might have considered majoring in something other than education if it was offered at the community college. More research into this question is recommended.

Research question 4 required the use of two open-ended questions for its answer.

The first open-ended question asked students why they majored in education. The second question asked participants what, if any, other major(s) they might have considered if other baccalaureate programs existed at the community college. The categories that respondents reported concerning their reasons for majoring in education

were “Love Teaching, Children, or Learning,” “Make a Difference,” “Previous Educational Employee/Volunteer,” “Influential People,” or hoped to enjoy some of the “Employment Advantages” the teaching profession offered. These themes represented the vast majority of responses. Furthermore, all of the aforementioned groups, and the responses they contained, could be placed in a larger category called “Traditional Reasons for Teaching.” By creating this super-category of “Traditional Reasons for Teaching” to the question “What led you to major in education?” almost all of replies to the open-ended question could be included therein.

I was specifically interested in looking for those students who may have not fit into traditional reasons one might choose to become a teacher. Very few students (2.2%) said that they chose education because that’s what was available. In these few cases it can be argued that the limited number of majors at the baccalaureate community colleges had an impact on their decision to major in education. For the great majority of students who responded, however, the limited number of options of baccalaureate degrees at the community colleges did not play a role in their choice of major.

The second open-ended question asked students if they would have chosen another major other than education if it were available at their community college. The results showed that the largest group of students said they would not have chosen another major, but this group represented less than half of the respondents. Therefore, more than half of the participants said they would have considered a major other than education if it were available at the community college. Some of the majors that respondents expressed interest in were programs like “Psychology,” and “Science,” or the “Helping Professions.

Based on the thematic analyses of the textual responses from the two open-ended questions that were used to answer research question 4 there is still a question whether the limited number of baccalaureate degrees at the community colleges had an impact on the students' decisions to major in education. The vast majority of respondents reported a traditional reason as to why they chose to major in education. But, a large number of students said that they would have considered majoring in another field. Because there is not agreement between the results of both open-ended questions that were designed to answer research question 4, more research in this area is recommended.

The final research question attempted to compare students from the community college baccalaureate programs in education with similar students majoring in education at other four-year institutions in Florida. Research question 5 is below.

5. How do the schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs compare with students at other four-year colleges in Florida?

The schoolwork habits of students in the community college baccalaureate programs seem to be better than their counterparts at other four-year institutions in Florida.

The responses to the nine Likert-scale items from the NSSE were compared for students in the community college teacher education programs and students majoring in education at other four-year institutions in Florida. The mean responses per group were compared through the use of *t*-tests. The students from the community colleges had better mean scores on the items used to measure schoolwork habits in eight of the nine comparisons. The *t*-tests results showed that the means of the two groups were

statistically significant on six of the nine items. The lone item on which the students at four-year institutions had better mean scores dealt with working with other students outside of class to complete assignments.

The students from the community college baccalaureate programs had higher scores on the items that were used to measure schoolwork habits than students from four-year institutions in the state. This could be explained by the difference in age between the two groups. The students from the upper divisions at the community colleges were older than those from the four-year programs. The differences between the two groups could also explain why the students from the four-year programs scored better on the item that measured working with other students outside of class. Students from four-year institutions have the ability to live near campuses and are often traditional students. Students at community colleges do not live on campus, and many have jobs, families, and other obligations that prevent them from working outside of class with other students.

While most of the differences between the groups were considered to be statistically significant, it is important that they be examined to see if the differences were *practically* significant. For those items where the differences were statistically significant I calculated Cohen's  $d$  to determine effect size. Cohen's  $d$  is used to give an illustration as to how many standard deviations from the means the two groups were apart. Most of these differences would be classified as "small to medium" based on Cohen's guidelines (1988).

### *Conclusions*

The community college baccalaureate programs in Florida are a new experiment for higher education in the state. They have been the center of much state and national



discussion and debate. Policymakers and practitioners are continually trying to find ways to make governmental programs and institutions more effective and efficient. Based on the results and findings of this current study, I have included the following five sections of conclusions, each addressing an important question concerning the value of these programs.

*Are the community college baccalaureate programs in teacher education increasing capacity for upper division enrollment in Florida?*

Yes, more students are enrolling in upper division teacher education programs in public institutions in Florida. The enrollment in both the traditional four-year programs and the community college baccalaureate programs have continued to grow since the inception of the community college baccalaureate programs. Overall, there has been a statewide net increase in enrollment in upper division education programs. More students have started on the path to become teachers since the creation of the community college baccalaureate programs. This conclusion is based on the evaluation of enrollment trends for Florida's community college baccalaureate level teacher education programs as well as the enrollment trends for similar programs at public four-year institutions in the state (see Table 8 for details).

*What were the reasons students chose the community college for baccalaureate coursework?*

Students chose to attend community colleges for their upper division coursework mostly because of the cost, geographic locations of these programs, and the flexibility these programs offered. Most of the students (76.4%) who responded to the survey attended the same institution for their lower division coursework. Some students cited

prior positive experiences at the institution as a reason they chose to stay at the community college for their coursework and it appears that comfort with the institution also played a part in their decisions. Others students mentioned that the reputation of the institution and the ability to have personal contact with faculty and staff also impacted their choices to attend the community college for their upper division education. These last two items, reputation and ability to have personal contact, are both often associated with community colleges in general and more particularly community colleges in Florida. Community colleges in Florida enjoy a positive reputation with the public (Immerwahr, 2000) and are thought to have lower teacher to student ratios and have a more intimate feel than colleges and universities. There was a wide range of reasons why students went to the community college for their upper division education, as found in this study, but location and cost seemed to be the two that were most prevalent.

*Are these programs bringing baccalaureate access to “new” students?*

The baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community colleges in Florida may not be bringing as many “new” as it was once thought they would. Almost three-fifths of the students in this study said that they would have gone to another institution to complete their upper division, either to major in education or to major in something else. There were also about one-fifth of the students who said that they would have either have stopped their pursuit of a baccalaureate degree or sought employment at the end of their lower division education. For the second group of students, the community college baccalaureate programs opened the door to an upper division education. The students who would not have pursued a baccalaureate degree, however, were the minority.

It should also be noted that because of the way that the methods of this study were constructed, more research into this area is needed. The data collection, which used self selection in this study, may have skewed results. The survey instrument was emailed to students to complete and participation was voluntary. It is possible that the students who were intrinsically motivated to complete and submit the survey were also the same students who would have been motivated to continue their upper division education at another institution. Similarly, it is believable that those students who did not have the motivation to complete the survey might also not have been motivated enough to attend another institution to complete their baccalaureate studies. Additionally, just because a student has said that she would have gone to another institution, it is hard to determine what impact that decision might have had on her professional or familial obligations. Finally, if a student reported that she would have gone to another institution to complete the baccalaureate degree, it does not mean that she would complete the baccalaureate degree or, if she did, how long it would take her. For all of these reasons more research into this area is recommended before drawing conclusions that may be too general.

In addition to the majority of students responding that they would have gone to another institution to pursue a baccalaureate degree if the upper division did not exist at the community college there is also some evidence from the enrollment figures that might support the idea that there could be a shift in enrollment from four-year institutions to community colleges. Two of the three baccalaureate community colleges that have upper division education programs, which were included in this study, are located in close physical proximity to traditional four-year universities that have upper division education programs. These institutions are the University of South Florida (USF) and Florida

International University (FIU). For two of the three years that were part of this study USF saw enrollment declines in its upper division education programs. This happened in years when USF saw increases in its overall enrollment in all upper division programs. The largest drop in upper division education enrollment was from 2004-05 to 2005-06, when 170 fewer students (-10.9%) enrolled than in the previous year, during the same timeframe USF's total upper division enrollment increased by 5.4%. FIU, however, experienced increases in enrollment in its baccalaureate level education programs for every year of this study and these increases seemed to be on par with the overall enrollment increases across all upper division programs. Some of the decrease in enrollment that USF's upper division education programs experienced may be explained by the expansion of the community college baccalaureate teacher education programs, but it is also possible that actions and choices at USF may have also contributed to this drop. This is plausible given that FIU's enrollments in upper division education did not seem to be impacted by the presence of the community college baccalaureate program in teacher education in its geographic proximity. More research is recommended in this area. Specifically, it would be worthy paying attention to enrollment trends at traditional colleges and universities that have baccalaureate community colleges in their areas.

*Does the limited number of baccalaureate programs have an impact on student choice of major?*

Based on the results of this study, it is unclear whether the limited number of baccalaureate programs had an impact on student choice of major. The overwhelming number of students in this study said that they went into teaching for a traditional reason. Half of the students cited a love for children, a quarter of the respondents wanted to make

a difference, and about one-fifth had previously served as an employee or volunteer in education. A minute number of students (2.2%) reported the availability of a baccalaureate degree at the community college as a reason as to why they chose education for a major. I expected this number to be much larger than it was. Because the major of education is not technical and requires fewer prerequisites to enter than computer or health science programs, I had assumed that more students might have entered these programs with the goal of *just obtaining a baccalaureate degree*. However, more than half of the students who participated in this study said that they might have chosen another major if it were offered at their community college. Based on somewhat contradictory findings I would recommend more research in this area. The data collection methods could have also had an impact on the results this question. Students who did not respond to the survey could have majored in education at the community college because the choices of upper division programs were limited.

*How do students at community college baccalaureate programs compare with students at other four-year institutions?*

A portion of this research study investigated whether differences existed among students from community college baccalaureate programs in education and their counterparts majoring in similar programs at four-year institutions in Florida. Nine items from the NSSE were included on the survey instrument that was emailed to students at the community college programs. These items were used to measure the students' perceptions of their own schoolwork habits. The mean responses to these items were compared with the mean responses from students at other, more traditional, four-year

programs in the state. The data for the students from the four-year schools was provided by the NSSE.

Overall, the students from the community colleges seemed to have better schoolwork habits than those from the four-year schools. The community college students had higher mean scores on eight of the nine items. Of these eight items where the community college students' means were higher, five were found to be statistically significant. In most cases the differences on these items was considered to be small to medium, based on Cohen's guidelines (1988). These items included issues related to asking questions and contributing to class discussions, making class presentations, preparing two or more drafts for an assignment, using various sources on assignments, coming to class prepared, working with other students during class, using ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments, and working harder than the student thought she would have to. The students from the four-year schools scored better on only one item and it was statistically significant. That item addressed students working outside of class together to complete assignments.

There are many possible explanations as to why the groups differ and the community college students seemed to outperform the students at the four-year institutions. The data that were used to compare the students from the upper divisions at the community colleges with the students from the four-year institutions had some differences. The data for the community college students came from a survey instrument that I created with the items from the NSSE. An internet hyperlink was sent to the students via email through their institutions. The email survey had an overall response rate of 16.6%. Those who participated in the study may have not accurately represented

all of the students in these programs. The data from the students at the four-year institutions came from the NSSE data warehouse. The institutions and the participants at those schools that took part in the NSSE for that year may also have not been a valid representation of the upper division students at other colleges or even at the colleges that participated in the NSSE (For a complete listing of those institutions please see Appendix H). Additionally, the data that were compared came from two different years. The data collected from the community college students were from Spring 2007, while the data from the four-year institutions were from Spring 2006.

Differences existed between the two groups that could have contributed to the observed differences in the data. The students from the upper divisions at the community colleges appeared to be older and more evenly distributed across age categories. Those from the four-year institutions seemed to be younger; the greatest number (63.9%) were represented in the younger age categories (20 – 23). It is possible the better schoolwork habits that the students from the community colleges reported were because of their age and maturity. For reasons of age and maturity, students at the community colleges are often considered “non-traditional.” Along with the benefits that often come with age, such as maturity and wisdom, there are often drawbacks associated with earning a college degree. It is possible that the students from the community colleges also had familial and employment obligations that could have negatively impacted their educational pursuits and made it harder to maintain good schoolwork habits.

It should have been expected that the students from the four-year schools would score better on the item relating to working outside of class with other students on assignments. Because many of the students at four-year institutions are able to live on or

near campus, they have the opportunity to interact more outside of the classroom with classmates than students at community colleges. At the time of this study, none of the community colleges that were part of this study had residence halls, nor would one expect the students from community colleges to have similar living arrangements as those at a four-year institution. With the exception of that lone item, measuring working outside of the classroom with other students, the students from the community college baccalaureate programs had better scores on all of the items from the NSSE than the students from the four-year colleges and universities.

There is also the possibility that the observed differences between the two groups were because of differences in the institutions and programs the students attended. Community colleges have a reputation for being student-centered and focusing on teaching. It is plausible that the students from the community college baccalaureate programs in education were more engaged and had better schoolwork habits because community colleges specialize in teaching.

### *Limitations*

This study had several limitations. The first was that the comparison of enrollment numbers did not include enrollment figures for private institutions in the state. The next limitation was the data that were collected via the survey instrument were self-reported. As discussed earlier in this dissertation, self-reported data have many weaknesses. Other limitations are present because of the data collection. The survey was emailed to the population of students enrolled in the baccalaureate level community college programs in teacher education. Participation in this study was completely voluntary. The students who chose to respond may not have been an accurate cross-



section of the students in these programs statewide. Another limitation was that the response rate for the survey was only 16.6 %. The response rate raises the issue regarding those who did not choose to complete the survey; this could have meant that the data collected was incomplete.

The comparisons of responses to the items from the NSSE also had limitations. The data collected from the students at the community colleges took place during the Spring semester of the 2006-07 school year. The data from the four-year students were collected during the Spring semester of the 2005-06 school year. Furthermore, the data that came from the four-year schools in Florida were from mostly private institutions (for a list of these institutions see Appendix H). It is possible that differences in the nature of community college students and students at private institutions had an effect on the results. It would have made for a better comparison if the portion of the survey that included the NSSE items were sent to students enrolled in public colleges and universities in Florida.

Additionally, since the focus of this study was only the baccalaureate level education programs at the community college it did not include the other baccalaureate programs at the institutions from this study or other baccalaureate programs at other community colleges in the state. The choice to delimit the study to teacher education programs limits in Florida impacted the generalizability of the study. To that end, the study should not be generalized beyond the settings of this study.

#### *Implications for Theory*

Some of the results of this study support previously published literature regarding community college baccalaureate programs. One such author was Furlong (2003), who

contended that the community colleges in Florida could be used to increase the number of baccalaureate graduates. Based on the results of this study it appears that the first steps have been taken for this to become reality. The enrollments in the community college baccalaureate level teacher education programs have grown every year and there was a net increase in statewide enrollment in upper division education programs during every year of this study. Furthermore, the enrollment in upper division education programs at Blue College is already larger than those of two public universities in the state. Because the long term teacher shortage in Florida, cited by Furlong and others, is so large, effectively addressing it will require even more creative thinking on the part of planners and policymakers.

Proponents of the vertical extension of community colleges have presented reasons why students would go to the community college for their upper division education. One champion of the community college baccalaureate movement is Walker (2000, 2001, 2005) who argued that benefits to students such as increased geographical, financial, and academic access to upper division education, success among nontraditional or returning students through smaller classes, less rigid course sequencing, greater scheduling options, ready matriculation and upward mobility for students with associate degrees, and stable family and employment relationships for students while they complete their degrees were reasons community college baccalaureate programs should be expanded.

Walker (2000) conducted a survey of community college students to find out why students would want to complete a baccalaureate degree at the community college. Some of the reasons cited in his study as to why students would go to a community college for

their upper division education were similar or the same as ones found in the current study. The findings of this research confirm many of his findings. Overall, the results of this study seem to support his theories and arguments regarding ways students could benefit from community college baccalaureate programs.

Another author, Chapman (1981), provided a framework for reasons why students choose one institution over another. Chapman labeled what he called “external influences” on students’ choices of institution. These external influences included items that he called “fixed college characteristics.” This group included cost, location, and availability of the program. The results of this study seem to support both writers’ arguments concerning the reasons students would choose an institution and, more specifically, why students would choose to complete their baccalaureate degrees at a community college. Most respondents in this study reported they chose the community college for their upper division education because of location and/or cost, just as Walker and Chapman posit.

Much of the work that has been done in the past regarding student choice of major surrounded post graduation earnings and student perception of salaries in the field (Betts, 1996; Montmarquette, Cannings, Mahseredjian, 1997). The results of this study seem to contradict these assertions. The students who participated in this study seemed to be motivated to teach because of a love of children, teaching or learning, or wanting to make a difference. There were some who discussed the employment and monetary advantages of the teaching profession, but this group was a minority and did not represent the attitudes of most of the respondents in this study.

Changes in the postsecondary climate in Florida and the results of this study remind me of the earlier work done by Cohen (2001). He theorized that there were four general historical reasons why community colleges developed and grew. The first was that community colleges were sponsored and supported by members of the upper class who wanted to maintain their social position by restricting admission to traditional colleges and universities. The second was that community colleges flourished due to an alliance of members from the working class searching for upward mobility. The third was that universities helped community colleges succeed so that the universities could distance themselves from students who college and university officials did not want to admit or serve. The fourth was that since most community colleges grew out of school districts, it was the superintendent's and other local administrator's search for more recognition and prestige that came along with being an administrator at a "college" rather than at a school district that pushed the school districts to develop community colleges (pp. 4 – 5).

Most of the students who participated in this study reported that they would have gone to another institution to complete their baccalaureate degree if the community college program was not an option. However, the perceptions of some students in this study seemed to question if traditional colleges and universities would *want* them. As discussed in Chapter 2 of this dissertation, Florida recently underwent a major governance change for education. The governance changes granted more autonomy to institutions and empowered local boards of trustees at the institutions. These changes have helped to create a more competitive climate for colleges and universities. Universities in Florida that were once considered comprehensive and teaching colleges

have become entrepreneurial. Ambition, coupled with “growth mode thinking” may be creating a vacuum. Many colleges and universities in Florida have advertised a new focus on the research aspects of the institution rather than that of undergraduate education. Cohen’s work on the historical reasons why community colleges in the United States grew could be used or modified to provide a framework to examine current and future reasons as to how community colleges have become engaged in baccalaureate education.

### *Implications for Practice*

The framework for this study was from the perspective of policy evaluation. Specifically, I used the guidelines provided by Howlett and Ramesh (2003). Those authors discussed policy evaluation and adequacy of policy evaluation. Within these areas, outputs are quantified and studied to determine what the policy is producing. The results of initial research are used to guide future research and to compare if the initial goals are being met. One of the goals of creating upper divisions at community colleges in Florida was to increase access to higher education for citizens of the state. The community college baccalaureate programs in education are increasing access in the state. Additionally, some theoretical reasons as to how these programs could benefit students such as offering students a baccalaureate alternative that is cheaper, closer, and more flexible than traditional baccalaureate program, have gained support from this study. Furthermore, the students from these programs seem to have better schoolwork habits than students in similar programs at other four-year institution in the state. It does appear that a large number of these students would have still pursued a baccalaureate degree from another four-year institution had the upper division program at the community college not existed. But, this study also reveals that for some students, the

community college baccalaureate programs were the only pathway to an upper division education. The baccalaureate community colleges in Florida appear to have increased statewide capacity for enrollment in upper division education programs as well as access to baccalaureate opportunities, but the increase in access these programs have created seems to be less than the increase in capacity.

In 2005, an editorial article was published in the *Tampa Tribune* titled, “The Best Place for Four Year Degrees.” The article contended that community colleges should stay out of baccalaureate education and leave it to the traditional colleges and universities in the state. The results of this study contradict many of the points of the article. Much more research needs to be done. If future researchers find results similar to those that I found, serious thought should be given to expanding the role of community college baccalaureate programs. Community colleges enjoy a positive reputation among the citizenry of the state for many reasons (Immerwahr, 2000). Community colleges are located in almost all of the counties in Florida, are less expensive than traditional institutions, focus on teaching, provide more personalized attention to students, and are parts of the community. It appears that characteristics which were for a long time associated with the traditional functions of community colleges (Cohen and Brawer, 1996) may also be present in the *baccalaureate function* of the community college.

Community college baccalaureate programs may seem like something new and risky for the state. However, Townsend and Ignash (2003) illustrated via an examination of history on community colleges in the United States a historical role in teacher education at the community colleges. To that end, many teacher education programs started at normal schools which Hutcheson (2002) classified as the equivalent of

community colleges. It was only after many states passed legislation requiring teachers to hold a four-year degree to possess a teaching certificate that most normal schools evolved into four-year institutions. It is possible that some community colleges (and more in the future) may be undergoing metamorphoses similar to those that changed normal schools into colleges and universities.

Based on the results of this study, the post-secondary educational climate, and the obvious ambitions of colleges and universities in the state, I would also strongly recommend that better statewide planning take place. It appears that community colleges are literally stepping up to educate upper division students. If serious forethought and planning does not take place, however, the postsecondary educational situation in Florida could become the equivalent of a land grab among colleges and universities, where competition, ambitions, and the quest for research dollars ends up costing the citizens of the state millions of dollars due to expensive and risky initiatives and unnecessary program duplication.

### *Implications for Research*

This study has left as many, or more questions, than it provides answers. As discussed earlier, a purpose of policy evaluation is to provide a foothold for future researchers.

The results of this study suggest several areas of future research:

1. Most students in this study listed location as a reason that influenced their decision to attend the community college for their upper division education. This finding merits further investigation. A study of the students' home zip codes could be done to understand the impact of location better.

2. There is a need for follow-up research of graduates from the baccalaureate teacher education programs at the community colleges to investigate post-graduation employment. Specifically, it would be helpful to know how many graduates work in the education field, what is the length of their tenure in education, whether they stay in the county where they received their baccalaureate degree, and if they work in high-need schools and areas, and how these data compare with data from to graduates from traditional four-year programs.
3. A comparison of the pass/fail rates on the Florida Teacher Certification Examinations for students/graduates from community college baccalaureate programs and students/graduates from traditional colleges and universities would be helpful in understanding the level of preparation the students received at these institutions.
4. Follow-up studies of graduates from community college baccalaureate programs should be conducted to investigate whether graduates from these programs feel they were well prepared to succeed in the workplace. Similarly, research should be done to determine if employers are satisfied with graduates from the community college teacher education programs.
5. It might be helpful to better understand the perceptions of employers regarding graduates from community college baccalaureate programs. Do employers view the community college baccalaureate as a “second hand degree?”
6. A statewide cost-effectiveness analysis should be conducted on all community college baccalaureate programs.



7. Public colleges and universities should be studied to determine what role, if any, their decisions and actions have played in the vertical extension of community colleges in the state.
8. A study should be conducted to determine what impact, if any, a perceived unwillingness of lawmakers to add more colleges and universities in Florida may have had on the ability of community colleges to expand vertically.
9. A comparison needs to be done for graduation rates and time-to-degrees for students in the upper divisions of community colleges and four-year colleges and universities in the state.
10. A student profile comparison needs to be conducted between the students in the upper division at the community colleges and at the four-year colleges and universities. It will be important for future researchers to understand the differences that may exist between these two groups.
11. A study should be conducted to determine what effect, if any, the marketing strategies of the baccalaureate community colleges have had on student choices and perceptions.
12. A study should be done to determine what impact, if any, the community college baccalaureate programs have had on universities that are in their close physical proximity. A further qualitative study might investigate in greater detail the unique geographic, demographic, and institutional factors that may impact each of these institutions given the inconsistency in enrollment trends between the Colleges of Education at the University of South Florida (USF) and Florida International University (FIU), and their overall upper division enrollments. Both USF and FIU have

baccalaureate granting community colleges with teacher education programs in their geographic proximity.

*Issues for future researchers.*

When I started my research, I had hoped to evaluate whether the community college baccalaureate programs were not only contributing to increased access to higher education, but also fulfilling the portion of the legislation that stated that community colleges were supposed to produce well qualified employees in high-demand fields. I had hoped to include a survey of graduates from these programs as part of the research. None of the three institutions, however, would provide me with contact information for graduates. In every case, representatives at the institution felt that providing me with contact information for graduates violated student privacy laws, specifically, the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). While I disagree with their assertion that releasing the mailing or email addresses of graduates for research purposes violates FERPA, this is something that future researchers must consider while designing their studies.

In fairness to the institutions, they all were very helpful in transmitting my survey electronically to their students. In addition, they all seemed very eager to see the results of this study. I do not believe that they were hiding behind the FERPA law, but truly feared the consequences associated with breaching the confidentiality of former students. There may be cases at other institutions in the future, however, where colleges and universities might use the broadest interpretation of federal and state privacy laws to shield their institutions from research that could yield unfavorable results.

I also hoped to include in this study a comparison of the scores on the Florida Teacher's Certification Exam (FTCE) for students from the community college baccalaureate programs with their counterparts at four-year colleges and universities in the state. These scores would have been used as an outcome measure to compare the level of preparation the students from these institutions were receiving. Several issues came to the forefront that would not allow for such a comparison.

The first issue was that even though the scores are "scaled", the Florida Department of Education contended that the scaled scores should not be used as dependent variables. After this, I planned to use the pass/fail rates on the Professional Education and Subject Area Exam portions of the FTCE to compare the results for students from the community college baccalaureate programs with students from four-year institutions. This was not possible either. The data were to come from the State of Florida's Education Data Warehouse. The State of Florida is blessed to have an office that is dedicated to collecting and organizing large quantities of data. Because they are so effective and the data are so useful, they receive many requests. They were very responsive to my initial requests. But, when I was about to make the formal request for the data I was informed that since my request was for a dissertation – other requests took precedence. The Education Data Warehouse informed me that it would take approximately nine months for the data to be delivered. For these reasons the study was further limited in size and scope, but these are also issues that will impact future researchers who are interested in policy evaluation studies.

### *Summary Statement*

The community college baccalaureate programs in Florida are on the cutting edge of postsecondary education in America. The purpose of this study was to examine some of the initial results that have been generated from the policy allowing community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees. Additionally, this research was intended to provide a foothold for future researchers interested in this topic. These community college baccalaureate programs appear to be expanding access for students to upper division education. However, there may be some unintended consequences from this policy that may be arising.

Community colleges, their trustees, administrators, and faculty have a unique opportunity to change the face of postsecondary education in Florida and possibly the nation. This opportunity should not be taken lightly, because with it comes the great responsibility to act in the best interest of the state and its citizens. From their inception, community colleges have worked to fill the gap that exists between high schools and colleges and universities. This should remain the primary function of the community college. Prior to any expansion of community college baccalaureate program much more research and planning should be done.

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## Appendices

Appendix A

Introduction Letter to College Administrators at Community Colleges

Nicholas Manias  
2377 Philippe Parkway  
Safety Harbor, Fl 34695  
727 492 3716 – nmanias@tampabay.rr.com

Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for your interest in my doctoral research. My dissertation attempts to investigate some of the outcomes from the Community College Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs. I am specifically interested in enrollment trends within these programs as well as information about the students enrolled in these programs. I believe that this study will provide \_\_\_\_\_, as well as the other institutions involved, with valuable information on these programs. The information which I plan to collect from the students will address several issues: why the students chose to major in education, why the students chose the community college for their Baccalaureate Degree, what the study habits and school work habits are of the students in these programs, as well as other questions.

The data collections for the study have been designed in a way that will not tax the time and resources of \_\_\_\_\_, its faculty and staff, or its students. The data I will be requesting from \_\_\_\_\_ will be enrollment data. In addition, I will ask that \_\_\_\_\_ send an internet hyperlink for a survey to the students enrolled in the Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs. The data from the students will be completely anonymous and the institutions which are part of this study will be referred to through the use of pseudonyms in the published dissertation.

Within this package you will find a document titled “College Prospectus and Consent for Participation.” I would ask that you review the document and sign it if you are comfortable in doing so. At that point, I would also ask that you return it to me by using the self addressed stamped envelope included in this package.

If you have any questions about the study or the data collections please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you so much,

Nicholas Manias  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of South Florida

Cc: Dr. Jan Ignash, University of South Florida

## Appendix B

### Community College Prospectus and Consent for Dissertation Research *The Baccalaureate Community Colleges in Florida: A Policy Evaluation*

*Nature of the study.* The study I am undertaking at your college involves inquiry to better understand some of the outcomes of the Community College Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs. Specifically, I am interested in enrollment trends for these programs and attitudes, perceptions, choices, and study habits of the students in these programs. The study will utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods.

*Duration and logistics.* This study is expected to last for two months. The researcher plans to request that each institution: (1) provide him with information regarding enrollment data for the Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs and (2) email an internet hyperlink to each student currently enrolled in any of the Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs. The hyperlink will take the students to a survey instrument constructed by the researcher that may be completed on the internet. Participation in the survey will be completely voluntary and should not take the students more than 15 – 20 minutes. The data collections for this study have been designed in this fashion so that they will not require substantial investments of time for college personnel or, student participants, and will not require any class time.

*Confidentiality.* Survey data and documents collected will be strictly maintained by me as the principal researcher during the processes of collection, analysis, and write-up. Further, I will use pseudonyms in referring to the institutions within the published dissertation. The data collected from students will be completely anonymous. The researcher will not ask students for their names or any other identification information. The data collected from the Baccalaureate Community Colleges and their students will not be compared to each other. *Each institution will remain anonymous within the published research and the student participants will be anonymous throughout the course of the study and its publishing.*

*Foreseeable risks.* Based on the type of data collected and the methods of collection the researcher does not believe that any foreseeable risks exist to the institutions or the student participants.

*Benefits to the college.* Participation in this study will provide the institutions with an opportunity to view statewide trends in the Community College Baccalaureate Teacher Education programs. In addition, it will also provide the institutions with insight into their students' attitudes, perceptions, choices, and study habits. Important new findings from this study will be shared with college faculty and staff members. I will forward a copy of the final dissertation to the Community College Baccalaureate Teacher Education program at your institution.



Appendix B (Continued)

*Risks.* Although there may be unforeseen risks in any research involving human participants, there is minimal risk involved to any participants of this particular study.

*Voluntary Participation.* Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. The subsequent refusal of any institution or student to participate will not result in any penalty or loss of benefits to the College or individual. Participating institutions may withdraw at any time by contacting me by phone or email. Students may choose not to participate at the point in time when they receive the internet hyperlink to the survey instrument.

*Contact.* For questions about this study, including the nature of the research, and your rights with regard to the study, please contact:

Nicholas Manias

Address: 2377 Philippe Parkway, Safety Harbor, Fl 34695

Home Telephone: (727) 812-4043, email: nmanias@tampabay.rr.com

Cellular Telephone: (727) 492-3716

*Chairperson Contact.* If you need to contact the chairperson of my doctoral committee please contact:

Dr. Jan Ignash, Associate Professor

Department of Adult, Career, and Higher Education

University of South Florida.

Mail Drop EDU 162, 4202 E. Fowler Ave., Tampa, FL 33620-5650

Phone: (813) 974-1575 email: ignash@tempest.coedu.usf.edu

*Schedule:* A tentative schedule for the research is as follows:

- *October- November, 2006* – Apply for USF Internal Review Board approval. Defend research proposal.
- *November- December-* Begin data collections from institutions. Provide the institutions with the link to the online survey for students and request that they send it to their students electronically.

*Consent for Dissertation Research:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Title, Institution)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## Appendix C

### Email Cover Letter to Students and Informed Consent for Participants

Dear Community College Baccalaureate Student,

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the academic background, motivations, and school work and study habits of students enrolled in the community college baccalaureate level teacher education programs. You will be asked, with your informed consent, to provide limited demographic information and complete a survey regarding the pursuit of your baccalaureate degree in education at the community college. The survey can be completed in 15 minutes or less.

#### Payment/Cost for Participation

You will not receive compensation for participation in this survey and it will not cost you anything to participate in this survey.

#### Risks of Being a Part of This Research Study

The research does not anticipate any physical, psychological, and/or social risk for participation in this study. Precautions to minimize these risks include informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality ensured through anonymity. The survey will not ask you for your name or other information which will connect you to your answers.

#### Confidentiality of Your Records

Your privacy and research records will be kept confidential to the extent of the law. Authorized personnel, employees of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the University of South Florida (USF) Institutional Board, its staff and other individuals acting on behalf of USF may inspect the records from this research project. The results of this study may be published. However, the data obtained from you will be combined with data collected from all respondents in the publication. The published results will not include your name or any information that would in any way personally identify you. Responses to the survey will be written to a database and maintained by the principal investigator. Only authorized persons will be granted access to the files. Because this study is being conducted over the internet, it is possible; however unlikely, unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses.

#### Volunteering to be Part of this Research Study

Your decision to participate in this research study is completely voluntary. Choosing to participate or not in this study will in no way affect your student status. You are free to participate in this research study or not and/or to withdraw at any time. If you choose not to participate, or if you withdraw, there will be no penalty.

## Appendix C (Continued)

### Benefits of this Survey

Although you will not receive direct benefit by participating in this study others will benefit. College officials, state policy makers, and other colleges/universities will be interested in the results of this study. In addition, some or all of these groups may choose to use information from this study to make decisions regarding baccalaureate programs at community colleges and students in these programs.

### Questions and Contacts

If you have any questions about this research study, contact Nicholas Manias 727-791-2730 (work) or [nmanias@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:nmanias@tampabay.rr.com). If you have any questions about your rights as a person who is taking part in a research study, you may contact a member of the Division of Research Integrity and Compliance of the University of South Florida at 813-974-5638.

I agree to the following:

- I have fully read this informed consent form describing a research project.
- I have had the opportunity to question one of the persons in charge of this research and have received satisfactory answers (if asked).
- I understand that I am being asked to participate in research. I understand the risks and benefits, and I freely give my consent to participate in the research project outlined in this form, under the conditions indicated in it.
- I understand that proceeding to the survey will serve in lieu of signing a copy of this informed consent form.
- I understand that I can print out a copy of this consent form for my safekeeping.

To access the survey, click on the following link: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in this study.

Nicholas Manias  
Doctoral Candidate – College of Education  
University of South Florida

## Appendix D

### *SSCCTEP*

#### *Survey of Students from Community College Teacher Education Programs*

Dear Student,

You are being asked to participate in a research study. The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the academic background, motivations, and school work and study habits of students enrolled in the community college baccalaureate level teacher education programs. You will be asked, with your informed consent, to provide limited demographic information and complete a survey regarding the pursuit of your baccalaureate degree in education at the community college. The survey can be completed in 15 minutes or less.

#### Section 1 – General Questions

1. In which institution are you currently enrolled?  
Grey College            Blue College            Red College
2. What is your gender? Male    Female
3. What is your current classification?            Junior            Senior
4. What is your age?            \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where did you complete your first two years of college?
  - A. Your Current Institution
  - B. Another Community College
  - C. A Private Four-Year College or University
  - D. A Public Four-Year College or University
  - E. Other \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 2 – Open-ended Questions I

6. What influenced your decision to major in education?
7. What led you to enroll in teacher education program at the community college?

Appendix D (Continued)

Section 3 – Schoolwork Information –

8. In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following?\*
- |    |   |            |       |           |       |
|----|---|------------|-------|-----------|-------|
| A. | Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions?*  | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| B. | Made a class presentation?*   | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| C. | Prepared two or more drafts of a paper or an assignment before turning it in?*                                  | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| D. | Worked on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources?*              | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| E. | Come to class without completing readings or assignments?*  | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| F. | Worked with other students on projects <b>during class</b> ?*   | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| G. | Worked with classmates <b>outside of class</b> to prepare class assignments?*                                   | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| H. | Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions?* | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |
| I. | Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?*                    | Very Often | Often | Sometimes | Never |

Section 4 – Open-ended Questions II

9. What other baccalaureate program or major (other than education), if any, would you have considered enrolling in had one existed at the time you enrolled in the community college baccalaureate teacher education program?

Appendix D (Continued)

10. What would you have done educationally or professionally had the community college baccalaureate program not existed?
  - Item 8 and all of its sub-items were used with the permission from The College Student Report, National Survey of Student Engagement, Copyright 2001-06 The Trustees of Indiana University.

Appendix E

Email to Departments/Colleges of Education at State Colleges and Universities

Nicholas Manias  
2377 Philippe Parkway  
Safety Harbor, Fl 34695  
727 492 3716 – nmanias@tampabay.rr.com

Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,

I am a doctoral candidate at the University of South Florida. My dissertation attempts to investigate enrollment trends for the Departments and Colleges of Education at State Colleges and Universities. In order to answer some of my research questions I am hoping that you would be able to provide me with enrollment data regarding students in the Department/College of Education at \_\_\_\_\_ College/University. Specifically, I would like to know the fall semesters' unduplicated headcounts for juniors and seniors majoring in education at your institution from 2002 – 2005.

Thank you so for your assistance,

Nicholas Manias  
Doctoral Candidate  
University of South Florida

Cc: Dr. Jan Ignash, University of South Florida

## Appendix F

### Request to use NSSE Survey Items

The National Survey of Student Engagement's (NSSE) survey instrument, *The College Student Report*, is copyrighted and the copyright is owned by The Trustees of Indiana University. Any use of survey items contained within *The College Student Report* is prohibited without prior written permission from Indiana University.

In addition, as a non-subsidized, cost-recovery project, the NSSE program may ask researchers who wish to borrow from, adapt, or translate the NSSE instrument to pay a fair price for the time and effort the NSSE staff put into forming such Agreements, and as reasonable estimate of the value of NSSE's intellectual property.

In addition, such Agreements typically entail the following terms briefly described below, but to appear in formal legal detail in the actual Agreement:

1. That all details of the license be negotiated in advance and in writing, which is incorporated by reference into the Agreement;
2. The Agreement does not include any right to sublicense others. Any different or repeated use of the item(s) require an additional license;
3. The researcher agrees:
  - a. To provide to NSSE frequency distributions and means on the licensed item(s);
  - b. On the survey form itself, and in all publications or presentations of data obtained through the licensed item(s), to note that the items were used with permission from Indiana University;
  - c. To provide to NSSE a copy of all surveys that include NSSE items or modified items; and
  - d. To provide to NSSE a copy of all reports, presentations, analyses, or other materials in which the borrowed item(s) are presented, discussed, or analyzed.
4. The Agreement will include an expiration date.
5. Other terms as deemed necessary to govern the Agreement as determined by either party.





## Appendix F (Continued)

### Attachment to: Proposal to Use Items from *The College Student Report*

1. Objective of the survey: The objective of this survey is to gain a better understanding of the students enrolled in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community colleges in Florida. The survey includes items created by the researcher as well as items from the NSSE. The items taken from the NSSE will be used to gather information on the schoolwork and study habits of these students. The responses from the participants will be compared to responses obtained by the NSSE.
2. Specific items to be used: 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1f, 1g, 1h, 1i, and 1r. (9 items total)
3. The survey will be administered to: The survey will be administered to students enrolled in the baccalaureate level teacher education programs at the community college in Florida. These institutions are: St. Petersburg College, Miami-Dade College and Chipola College. The survey will be administered to current students during the 2006-07 school year.
4. The survey will be administered through: The survey will be housed on the internet. The researcher will send an internet hyperlink for the survey to the Colleges of Education at the three institutions. These institutions will then email the link to all of the students who are currently enrolled in these programs.
5. Sampling methodology: The community college baccalaureate programs are a new innovation in Florida. Currently, only three community colleges in Florida (listed above) confer baccalaureate degrees in education. Furthermore, the enrollment in these programs is limited in number. Statewide enrollment in these programs is estimated between 1500 – 2000 students. Therefore, the researcher has chosen to include all three institutions in the study and plans to include all of their students.
6. Maximum number of survey recipients: Based on statewide estimates the researcher considers the maximum number of survey recipients to be 2000 students.
7. Expected start and end dates: The researcher hopes to receive final Institutional Review Board approval in November, 2006. The researcher plans to use the survey to collect data from November, 2006 – March, 2007.
8. Please see the attached survey instrument with the items from the NSSE.
9. Sponsor/Funding: This research is not sponsored or funded. The researcher will use the data collected from the survey to answer research questions in his doctoral dissertation.

Appendix F (Continued)

10. Principal Investigator: Nicholas Manias, Doctoral Candidate, University of South Florida.

Appendix G  
List of Data Analyses

1. RQ 1 – Enrollment Trends
  - A) Table of enrollment numbers at baccalaureate community colleges from inception to end Fall, 2005
  - B) Table of enrollment numbers comparing baccalaureate community colleges to other 4yr institutions 2002-2005Sample = Population of enrollees
  
2. RQ 2 – Why did student attend community college for baccalaureate in education
  - A) Open-ended question AnalysisSample = 16.6% of 843 students = 140 respondents
  
3. RQ 3 – Educational or Professional choices instead of baccalaureate community college
  - A) Open-ended question AnalysisSample = 16.6% of 843 students = 140 respondents
  
4. RQ 4 – Education as first choice of major
  - A) Open-ended question Analysis
  - B) Open-ended question AnalysisSample = 16.6% of 843 students = 140 respondents
  
5. Descriptors for sample of seniors who responded to survey  
Sample = 68 seniors from community college and 228 from four-year colleges
  
6. RQ5 – Answers to NSSE items  
*T*-test between groups per item (9 items)  
Sample 1 = 68 seniors from community colleges  
Sample 2 = NSSE respondents, seniors in education at four-year institutions in Florida = 228

## Appendix H

### 2006 NSSE Institutional Participants in Florida

Barry University  
Lynn University  
Eckerd College  
Embry Riddle Aeronautical University  
Flagler College  
Florida Southern College  
Jacksonville University  
University of Miami  
University of North Florida  
Northwood University  
Palm Beach Atlantic University  
Ringling School of Art and Design  
Rollins College  
Saint John Vainney College Seminary  
Stetson University  
The University of Tampa  
Warner Southern College

### About the Author

Nicholas Manias received a B.A. in Criminology from the University of Florida in 1997 and an M.A. from the University of South Florida in Community College Teaching in 2000, with a concentration in Sociology. He has taught within the Applied Ethics Institute at a community college in Florida since 2001. During his tenure in the Applied Ethics Institute, Mr. Manias developed the award winning course “Ethics in Popular Culture and Entertainment” and started the “Ethics in the Community” program, in which students volunteer for non-profit organizations. He has presented at many collegewide, statewide, and national conferences. Prior to joining the Applied Ethics Institute, Mr. Manias served as Director of Agency Development and later Director of Operations for a regional health care delivery corporation.