AN ABSTRACT OF THE
DISSERTATION OF

M. Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer for the degree of Doctor of Education in Education
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Title: Defining Successful Performance in the Role of the Community College Chief
Academic Officer: A Qualitative Study of CAOs Within the Oregon Community
College System.

Abstract approved:

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Larry D. Roper

This purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the role of the community

college chief academic officer and to describe how CAOs define successful

performance. It examined (a) experience candidates brought to the position; (b) job

duties and responsibilities; (c) knowledge, skills, and abilities required; (d) challenges

and barriers; (d) support systems; and (e) advice CAOs offer to others who aspire to the

role.

Five key areas of competency, identified as critical to successful performance,

include competency in interpersonal dynamics, managerial operations, instruction and

instructional design, capacity development, and collaborative leadership. These five

areas provide the basis for a new leadership model, which is structured as an inverted

pyramid with interpersonal dynamics, the most significant competency, at its apex. The

model can be incorporated into a performance paradigm to demonstrate how CAO

performance is affected by intervening factors and linked to the success of the college

and its students. The model and paradigm confirm that the CAO is pivotal to the

quality of instruction and the success of students and the college.

The data reveal that CAOs tend to see themselves as facilitators and define their own success in terms of the successes of others. A major challenge is trying to balance their demanding jobs with their personal lives. Other challenges include dealing with declining state revenues, budget deficits, the state's funding formula for community colleges, changing technologies, and high employee-turnover rates.

CAOs tend to rely upon each other and their networks for support and assistance, and they note that having a mentor is critical to advancing up the ladder of academe. Most accepted the CAO job to "make a difference" in the lives of students and the quality of instruction offered by their institutions. Their greatest reward lies in witnessing the success of students, faculty, staff, colleagues, and their institutions. Most had served in their positions longer than the national average, and most planned to remain in their instructional leadership roles. Only one aspired to a presidency, which is significant because CAOs constitute the most likely pool of candidates for the presidency.

Defining Successful Performance in the Role of the Community College
Chief Academic Officer: A Qualitative Study of CAOs Within the
Oregon Community College System

by
M. Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer

A DISSERTATION

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DEFINING SUCCESSFUL PERFORMANCE IN THE ROLE OF THE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF CAOs WITHIN THE
OREGON COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

The community college chief academic officer, referred to in this dissertation as

the CAO, is responsible for the breadth and quality of instructional services offered by

the college (Erwin, 2000, p. 13). Inherent in this responsibility is the obligation to

recruit and retain qualified faculty and to ensure the quality of instructional programs.

Since instructional programs lie at the very heart of the community college mission,

they are the institution's "bread and budget" (Kanter, 1994, p. 223). Shouldering

accountability for instruction means that the CAO serves as an "internal auditor"

responsible for maintaining the institution's academic integrity (Vaughan, 1989, pp.

110-111).

In addition to serving in this academic leadership role, chief academic officers

constitute the most likely pool of future presidential candidates at the community

college level. George Vaughan noted in a nationwide survey of community college

presidents that almost 60% had served in the CAO position immediately prior to

accepting a presidency (Vaughan, Mellander, & Blois, 1994, p. 25). In a corresponding

survey of community college CAOs, Vaughan found that 55% reported their career goal

to be that of attaining a community college presidency (see summary of the Vaughan survey in Puyear, Perkins, & Vaughan, 1990, p. 36).

It is important to note before proceeding that the CAO designation is a descriptor rather than a position title, and that CAOs can carry a variety of titles depending on their institutions' structure. Titles most frequently used by chief academic officers include Dean of Instruction, Vice President for Instruction, Academic Vice President, Instructional Dean, or Academic Dean. Vaughan (1989) concluded that "Dean of Instruction" was the most commonly adopted designation from among 51 different titles.

Purpose of the Study

Bogdan and Bicklen (1998) note that "the researcher's primary goal is to add to knowledge," and the "worth of a study is the degree to which it generates theory, description, or understanding" (p. 34). The purpose of this doctoral study at its onset was to examine, describe, and document the perspectives of men and women who serve as chief academic officers in community colleges so that we might better understand the qualities, skills, and abilities required to successfully execute the duties and responsibilities of this linchpin position. But as my research progressed and the study evolved, it became evident that I could develop a CAO leadership model that could be applied to practice.

Research Questions

My research began by searching for the answers to two key questions:

1. How do men and women who currently serve as CAOs define success?

2. How do they describe successful service or performance within the CAO role?

While these two questions remained critical throughout the study, my focus expanded to integrate tangent and supporting data offered by study participants—a phenomenon quite common in good naturalistic inquiry or constructivist discovery where the researcher remains flexible and allows themes and patterns to unfold as the research progresses. Ultimately, the data I obtained helped me to generate a new model for defining and prioritizing five areas of competency required for successful CAO performance.

Significance of the Study

Hans Andrews (2000) notes, "There may be no greater administrative role within community colleges than that of dean (or vice president) of instruction" (p. 19). He underscores that the role of the dean of instruction or CAO requires highly competent and skilled men and women who possess "a sense of fairness, a broad view of teaching and learning, and an ability to put together personnel, curriculum, and budget issues" (p. 19). Yet research of the CAO role, which is only in its infancy, has been woefully lacking and studies have used numbers-oriented quantitative techniques rather than the more in-depth, descriptive qualitative methodologies. As a result, research about the

CAO position over the past 40 years has yielded only limited profiles of persons serving as CAOs and has simply generated lists of duties and rankings of attributes considered important to the position. The rich description necessary to help us understand what defines successful performance within the role and how this performance impacts the success of students and the college is still missing from the existing body of knowledge. At the turn of the new millennium, Robillard (2000) noted that "the field still seems under researched" (p. 3).

This doctoral study contributes to the current body of knowledge about this important leadership role by exploring how CAOs define successful service. Additionally, this study examines the challenges and limitations faced by CAOs as well as the personal rewards they draw from their experiences. It explores how CAO performance directly impacts the quality of instruction offered by the college.

At a theoretical level, this research generated a model for describing the areas of competency required to successfully serve in the CAO position. At a practical level, this work has applications for both current and prospective CAOs, as well as for college officials who recruit and hire new leadership. First, this dissertation can inform men and women who aspire to the CAO position about how to prepare for the assignment and how to succeed once in the role. Secondly, this work can support people who currently serve as CAOs by allowing them to measure their own performance against standards expressed by other CAOs who participated in this study. And thirdly, this dissertation can help college presidents, board members, and selection committees in the CAO hiring process by providing them with a better understanding of the areas of

competency—or knowledge, skills, and abilities—required to successfully execute the duties of the CAO.

Limitations of the Study

Any study has limitations. Two potential limitations of this study include (a) respondent bias and (b) lack of researcher experience in conducting in-depth interviews. The first potential limitation of "respondent bias" arises in any study based on self-reporting by study participants. It is "normal" for respondents to couch their responses to questions in their own personal perspectives, which may include conscious and/or unconscious biases. Admittedly, there is a possibility that these "human factors" can skew the data to some degree, but this is a well-known risk associated with any type of interview process (see Borg, Gall, & Gall, 1993, p. 221).

The second potential study limitation, at least initially, may have been my own lack of experience in conducting lengthy, on-site, personal interviews. This concern quickly diminished, however, as I gained experience with the interview process and developed the advanced skills necessary to conduct revealing in-depth sessions.

Researcher's Disclosures: Research Background and Epistemological Perspectives

This study used a qualitative research approach to collect, process, and analyze field data. Since qualitative analysis involves interaction between the researcher and study participants (in this case, eight chief academic officers), it is important to

acknowledge the researcher's perspectives and predispositions relative to the research. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998), "Qualitative researchers are concerned with the effect that their own subjectivity may have on the data and papers they produce. . . . [They] try to acknowledge and take into account their own biases as a method of dealing with them" (p. 34). As the sole researcher involved in this study, I am providing the reader with a brief description of my research background and epistemological perspectives in the following discussion.

Prior to pursuing a doctorate in Education at Oregon State University, I had an epistemological perspective that could have been described as postpositivistic. My previous research experience had been grounded in scientific scholarship and quantitative analysis. My research objectives included finding "truth," replicating research results using different samples, and generalizing study findings to larger populations.

My exposure to qualitative research began as a student in the Oregon State University Doctoral Program in Education. Qualitative research emphasizes the relevance of a constructivist perspective in which interpretive inquiry demands that the researcher observe, ask questions, listen carefully, clarify assumptions, record accurately, and examine findings for consistent, emerging patterns. I felt relatively comfortable pursuing a constructivist approach, which allowed me to explore patterns of behavior and to "construct meaning" from the interview experience about the phenomenon under study (CAO performance) in its natural setting or context (the community college). According to Schwandt (1998a),

The constructivist or interpretivist believes that to understand this world of meaning one must interpret it. . . . To prepare an interpretation is itself to construct a reading of these meanings; it is to offer the inquirer's construction of the constructions of the actors one studies. (p. 222)

Organization of This Dissertation

Chapter I of this dissertation has thus far introduced the reader to the study. It also has discussed the focus and significance of the research, and posed two key research questions. The remainder of Chapter I provides a discussion of the study context—the setting within which the study was conducted: the American community college. Chapter II offers a summary of studies conducted by other scholars to date regarding the role of the CAO in the community college. Chapter III outlines the qualitative approach and interpretive methodology used to pursue answers to the two research questions. It also discusses procedures used in data collection and data analysis. Chapter IV presents a summary of study findings, while Chapter V views these findings through the lens of leadership. Chapter V subsequently offers a new model for CAO leadership that describes five areas of competency required for successful performance. Chapter VI provides a summary of this doctoral research, offers a discussion of the study relevance and implications, and concludes with suggestions for applying study findings to daily practice. An Epilogue shares personal reflections of the researcher as well as recommendations for future study.

In the following section the reader will find a list of terms and acronyms used in this dissertation. Immediately following this list, Chapter I continues with a discussion of the study context: the American community college.

Definition of Selected Terms and Acronyms

Definitions of the following terms and acronyms used in this dissertation were obtained from *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*.

CAO: Chief academic officer, also known as Dean of Instruction, Vice President for Instruction or Instructional Services, Academic Dean, Vice President for Academic Affairs or Academic Vice President.

PT/PTE: Professional Technical Education (PTE) and Professional Technical (PT) programs. PTE is still referred to as "vocational education" in some states.

CIA: Council of Instructional Administrators (Oregon).

AACC: American Association of Community Colleges.

Model: A structural design.

Theory: The analysis of a set of facts in their relation to one another.

Paradigm: A clear example or pattern.

Competent: Having requisite or adequate abilities or qualities.

Competency: A collection or "package" of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform a task or job.

K, S, A's: Knowledge, Skills, Abilities—a common designation on job descriptions.

Knowledge: Cognizance. The condition of knowing something with familiarity gained through experience or association. Being aware of something.

Skill: The ability to use one's knowledge effectively and readily in execution or performance.

Ability: The quality or state of being able. A natural talent or acquired proficiency.

Study Context: The American Community College

Introduction

The context for this study—the natural environment in which the service of the chief academic officer is explored—is the American community college. This last section of Chapter I provides a brief history of the comprehensive community college. It also discusses its current status as a provider of tertiary education in the United States.

A Brief History of the Comprehensive Community College

The concept of the community college was officially conceived in the late 1940s as a way of addressing postwar needs and the G.I. Bill boom in college enrollment. But today's community colleges trace their earliest beginnings to the junior college movement of the early 1900s. Junior colleges evolved from the K-12 system as part of the general restructuring of secondary education to fill a gap between secondary and higher education. These colleges were designated as tertiary institutions that provided 2

years of "general and liberal education leading to transfer and completion of the baccalaureate degree" (Ratcliff, 1994, p. 4). Twenty junior colleges existed in the United States in 1907. By 1922 there were 207 and the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) defined the junior college as an institution offering 2 years of college-level work (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 3). Just 3 years later in 1925, the AAJC broadened that definition to include new programs designed to meet the needs of the institution's surrounding community (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 3).

As the American junior college responded to students' needs, it evolved into a more community-oriented institution with an expanded purpose. That purpose included providing vocational education, adult education, community outreach programs, and a traditional transfer curriculum. By 1930 the number of junior colleges had grown to 450 located in all but five states (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, pp. 10-11), and the term "junior" college began to embrace the concept of the "community" college. In comparing the two, Byron Hollinshead (1936) wrote the following in an article for the *Junior College Journal*:

> The community college is closer to its constituency; it is more sensitive
> to the life needs of the students; it is less encumbered by an overgrowth
> of departmentalization and by the vested interests which have grown up
> around traditional courses; and it can, therefore, make effective
> adjustments to changing needs. (p. 116)

World War II and a postwar environment profoundly impacted the development of the comprehensive community college. As the United States entered the war in 1941, robust wartime production revitalized the nation's economy—a dramatic shift from the depressed economy of the 1920s and 1930s. Military research produced atomic energy,

the atomic bomb, and other wartime innovations, including the beginning of computer networks and ultimately the World Wide Web. Many of these military innovations were transferred directly to the nation's industrial sector. New technology applications in business and manufacturing required new knowledge and skills to implement these new applications, and it was soon evident that a new kind of highly educated, technically skilled work force was critical to the nation's continued economic growth and future prosperity.

As the war ended in 1945, seven million Americans, who had served in the United States armed forces, were demobilized and returned home. To assist with the transition, Congress passed the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, commonly known as the G.I. Bill, in 1944. This legislation provided benefits to WWII veterans, including funds to pursue higher education. Huge numbers of veterans took advantage of these educational opportunities, and soon colleges and universities across the nation bulged with new enrollments. Higher education resources proved woefully inadequate to meet the overwhelming demand. To address these resource issues, as well as the general state of higher education, President Harry Truman convened the first President's Commission on Higher Education in 1947.

The Commission's recommendations included a call for public education to be made available to all Americans able and willing to pursue it—regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or economic and social status. Within this context, the American community college was formally established and charged by the Commission to fulfill an expansive five-part comprehensive mission.

The five directives required community colleges to (a) frequently survey their communities in order to adapt programs to the educational needs of full-time students; (b) provide opportunities for apprenticeship training and cooperative work experiences; (c) prepare students to earn viable incomes by providing integrated vocational programs and general education; (d) meet the needs of students who want to pursue a more extended general, specialized, or professional education at another college or university; and (e) serve as centers for the administration of comprehensive adult education programs (President's Commission, 1947, vol. 3, as cited in Baker, 1994, p. 19; see also Diener, 1986; "Education for Democracy: The Debate Over the Report of the President's Commission on Higher Education," 1952).

By the 1950s, providing access to higher education for all citizens became a national imperative. Open access to all citizens who wanted to pursue an education became a hallmark of the community college. World War II veterans as well as new immigrants to the United States took advantage of the opportunity to grab a piece of the American dream. In most cases, they would be the first in their families to attend college and pursue professional careers. Philip Sbaratta (1983) supported these concepts when he wrote,

> The community college expressed the egalitarian ideal of education as a passage-way to the American Dream. The community college removed traditional barriers in order to reach out to people formerly ignored or turned away by colleges and universities. It embraced the policy of open admissions and created curricula and support systems for the diverse skills, talents, and interests of students who sat in its classrooms. (p. 22)

During the next two decades (the 1960s and 1970s), the principle of access was coupled with explosive growth in the number of college-age citizens as the nation's baby boom generation reached college age. Community college enrollments doubled in the 1960s and again in the 1970s, reaching 4.5 million by 1980 (Sbaratta, 1983, p. 22). During this rapid growth, community colleges also developed "horizontally" by broadening services to include a wider range of educational opportunities (Johns, 1993, p. 2). By the 1970s, the term "community college" was generally used to denote both the older publicly supported junior colleges and the newer comprehensive community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 4; see also McIntosh & Maier, 1976).

Expansion of the nationwide community college system also provided access to higher education for an increasingly diverse student population. By 1986, women accounted for 53% of community college enrollments nationwide. During the same period, the percentage of minority students grew to 24% of total enrollment. The traditional college student of the past—a white, male student who entered college directly following high school graduation—had been replaced by a more diverse student body. By 1990, community colleges enrolled approximately 43% of the nation's undergraduates and 51% of all first-time entering freshman ("Commission on the Future of Community Colleges," 1988, pp. 5-6).

As the community college system embraced diversity, it grew dramatically in size and organizational complexity. By the 1990s, entrepreneurial leadership skills, which had supported the rapid growth years of the 1960s and 1970s, were replaced by the need for management skills to sustain stable operating systems. In 1990, community

college pioneer Dale Parnell prognosticated: "The decade of the 1990s will require strong, insightful, and perceptive college leaders as well as managers" (pp. 28-29).

<h3 style="text-align:center">Current Status of the Community College</h3>

Even though community colleges have had a relatively short history, they have become a major force in the nation's complex educational system. Today, 1,157 community colleges nationwide provide services to 11.6 million students (6.6 million credit; 5 million noncredit). They serve 46% of all U.S. undergraduates, and confer more than 490,000 Associate of Arts degrees and nearly 235,000 two-year certificates annually. Average tuition and fees total an incredibly low $2,076 per student, and the average student age is 29 years. Minorities represent 30% of enrollment and women comprise 58% of the student body nationwide (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2004).

Despite more than 50 years of concentrated growth and expansion, today's community colleges still embody the ideals of the "comprehensive" institution set forth in 1947 by President Truman's Commission on Higher Education. Most offer a wide range of traditional and nontraditional educational opportunities in professional-technical training programs, academic transfer preparation, continuing education, community service, and, in some settings, remedial education (see Cohen & Brawer, 1989).

The Commission on the Future of Community Colleges emphasized in 1988 that quality teaching lies at the core of the community college success story. The

Commission also noted that the community college is perfectly poised to expand its comprehensive mission to embrace a commitment to building community.

Summary of Chapter I

Chapter I has provided an introduction to this dissertation, stated the purpose and significance of this study, presented two key research questions, and discussed study limitations. It offered a brief description of my evolving epistemological perspectives and noted my background in both quantitative and qualitative research. These concepts are discussed in depth in Chapter III.

Additionally, Chapter I presented an organizational format for the remainder of this dissertation, as well as a list of acronyms and terms used in this document. This first chapter concluded with a brief discussion of the study context—the American community college—its history and its current status. Chapter II, which follows, examines the research regarding the community college chief academic officer that has been compiled to date.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a compilation of the literature I reviewed as part of this study of chief academic officers in community colleges. This secondary research helped me to gain a better understanding of the CAO's role within the community college. Additionally, it helped me to define my research questions and frame my study design. Marshall and Rossman (1995) note, "In citing the methodological literature and discussing pilot studies or previous research, the researcher reveals familiarity with the ongoing methodological discourse and experience in conducting qualitative research" (p. 6).

The literature review summarized in this chapter was remarkably revealing. One dominant theme that emerged from this research was that the chief academic officer serves in a pivotal role by ensuring the quality of instruction provided by the institution. A second major theme was that CAOs compromise the best and most likely pool of potential candidates for future community college presidencies. A third theme was that the job of the CAO has received insufficient attention from scholars in the past, despite the position's significance as a linchpin role in the community college's success.

Chapter II is divided into four major sections. Section 1 presents findings of studies that have defined the duties and responsibilities inherent within the CAO position. Section 2 presents research conducted about the backgrounds and attributes of persons who serve in the CAO role, as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities

required to do their jobs. Section 2 also profiles CAO research samples. Section 3 presents research findings compiled by other scholars related to the pathways followed by men and women who secured CAO positions. Each of the first three sections is organized chronologically in order to simulate the evolution of scholarly efforts over the past 40 years. Section 4 then summarizes the key themes gleaned from this literature review.

Section 1: Duties and Responsibilities of the Chief Academic Officer

Scholarly work that has focused on defining the duties performed and the responsibilities assumed by chief academic officers in community colleges first emerged only 40 years ago. Therefore, discussion of the CAO's role begins with studies conducted in the 1960s.

In 1965, Carl Todd used a regional survey of community college professionals to explore the perceptions of deans, presidents, and staff members regarding 10 major functions CAOs frequently performed to improve instruction. He concluded that the academic dean or chief academic officer (CAO) was viewed as an individual who is integral to the improvement of instruction. He additionally noted that, to be successful, she or he must bring innovative perspectives and theories about learning to curriculum development. He or she also must know how to collaborate with faculty and department chairs in order to improve curricula and programs. And finally, the CAO must ensure

that competent and talented faculty members are hired, retained, and nurtured through ongoing professional-development activities.

In a similar but more narrowly focused study, Maurice Verbeke (1966) surveyed presidents, CAOs, and faculty employed by 23 junior/community colleges in New York and Pennsylvania in order to study the perceptions of leadership behavior exhibited by academic deans. Verbeke described the chief academic officer as the "key administrative officer" charged with recommending and implementing educational policies. Completing his work in the 1960s, an era when the overwhelming majority of CAOs were men, Verbeke depicted the CAO as the "man in the middle" in the hierarchy of the organizational structure:

> He acts as an advisor to the president on all academic matters as well as being the person who is delegated responsibilities and the authority to implement the policies of the institutional governing board. . . . In addition, the dean must be responsive to the members of his own professional staff, the faculty. (p. 8)

Weldon Day and Vincent Gaurna completed their work in the late 1960s when community colleges were experiencing unprecedented growth and governance roles were becoming increasingly more complex. In 1968, Day surveyed 424 community college academic deans and presidents nationwide and asked them to rank 168 duties (commonly associated with the CAO position) so that he could identify those duties that were deemed most important to the job. Day found that the CAOs in his study were responsible for (a) recruiting, hiring, orienting, and evaluating faculty; (b) providing for the ongoing professional development of the faculty; (c) budgeting for instructional activities; (d) planning programs and curricula; and (e) developing educational policies.

Gaurna (1969) used a similar but shorter list of CAO duties (78 in total) and a nationwide survey process to assess the importance of these duties by asking instructional deans to prioritize them as they related to their daily work. The CAOs in his study ranked their duties in descending order of importance as follows: (a) coordinating and supervising the institution's instructional programs; (b) formulating, interpreting, and administering academic policies; (c) approving selection, assignment, promotion, demotion, and dismissal of faculty; and (d) facilitating faculty participation in curriculum development. Gaurna concluded that the CAO's primary duty or responsibility was that of serving as guardian of the institution's instructional programs.

To explore this responsibility in greater depth, Bruce Paulson (1972) used a case-study survey approach to investigate activities performed by academic deans—activities aimed at improving instruction. Paulson's research focused on five Southern California community colleges. He found that instructional deans in these colleges provided leadership in curriculum development. The deans in his study indicated that, in order to ensure high-quality curriculum work, they selected and hired competent faculty, established close working relationships with those instructional faculty, and involved them in all efforts to improve instructional offerings.

K. V. Robin's 1974 survey of 22 deans in three Northwestern states and five Canadian provinces supported the work of Day (1968), Gaurna (1969), and Paulson (1972) noted thus far. Robin found that the 17 CAOs who responded to his survey were responsible for selecting, developing, and evaluating faculty. They indicated that they viewed their work in formulating instructional policies as important to the institution's

success. They also reported that implementing new programs and managing the institution's overall academic program were critical functions inherent in their positions.

William F. Shawl (1974), CAO at Golden West College, enhanced this perspective in his topical paper titled *The Role of the Academic Dean.* Shawl, who had served in the CAO role for 7 years by 1974, cited 41 duties commonly assigned to the dean of instruction. He argued that there were three major roles associated with the position: (a) interpreter of policies and procedures, (b) advocate for the college's instruction needs, and (c) instructional leader. Shawl concluded, "The central focus of the academic dean's role will be as it has always been—instructional leadership" (p. 16). He added, "Perhaps the one aspect of the academic dean's role, which may be its nucleus, is evaluation. Whether formal or informal, the dean is viewed as the evaluator of the instructional program, the central focus of the college" (p. 13). In addition to emphasizing the pivotal role of the CAO in maintaining instructional quality, just as preceding scholars had done, Shawl observed that instructional deans did not routinely think in terms of their job descriptions when discussing their jobs but rather in terms of building relationships to advance the interests of the institution: "The most immediate things are the relationships that exist between the dean and the individuals and groups that he deals with in his relationship role" (p. 2). This observation is important because it is one of the first indications in the literature that interpersonal skills are critical to the successful execution of the CAO's duties.

In the same year that Shawl (1974) published his paper, Richard Miller (1974) published an article entitled "The Academic Dean" for the journal *Intellect.* Miller

underscored the theme that the academic dean is directly responsible for the overall

educational program and for "the *raison d'etre* of the college's existence" (p. 231). He

advised that the role of the CAO was dramatically changing and would become even

more complex in the future:

> The great student, faculty, and building expansions of the 1960s are over,
> probably for at least 10 years, and the academic dean in this changing
> scene will need to become more concerned with professional
> development and the internal mechanics of effective management,
> including evaluation of academic performance. Fiscal implications of
> program decisions will be a dominating consideration, and, in many
> states, the legislature and others will be taking a more active and vocal
> role in the internal management of state colleges and universities. It is
> likely that the next decade will bring many changes in how academic
> deans perceive their roles. (Miller, 1974, p. 22)

Joining the conversation about the evolving role of CAOs and college

leadership, Elaine McIntosh and Robert Maier (1976) emphasized the growing

complexity of college administration:

> Administrators in the 1970s are finding that knowledge of curriculum
> and instruction is not enough. Increasingly, they are being called on to
> handle legal issues, budget and fiscal responsibilities, decreasing funding
> and increasing costs, and collective bargaining. What are needed now
> are people who can view retrenchment as a creative challenge, who can
> gain as much satisfaction out of coping with and balancing a budget as
> the entrepreneur enjoyed from expansion. Financial talent thus assumes
> a high priority—the ability to cut and trim with minimum effect on
> programs, to find ways of doing more with less. (p. 83)

Continuing with the theme of job evolution, Elwood Ehrle (1979), a vice

president for academic affairs at Indiana State University, noted that the dean's job had

evolved (by the time of his writing in the late 1970s) to include three major components:

administration, management, and leadership. Regarding the leadership dimension, he

posited, "It is as leader . . . that the dean makes his/her major contribution" (p. 44).

Leadership, from Ehrle's perspective, was the "formulation and reformulation of coalitions of persons that make administration and management possible" (p. 44).

In the 1980s, Jack Smith, Robert Wolverton, Paul and Patrick Parker, George Vaughan, and Richard Miller conducted additional research about the role and responsibilities of CAOs. Smith (1982) noted that the CAO had become less involved in the articulation process than in the 1950s and 1960s, when enrollments expanded rapidly, and 2- and 4-year colleges were required to coordinate efforts to facilitate student transfers between institutions. He forecasted (in 1982, more than 20 years ago) that academic deans would need to become involved again in the articulation of course work, but this time articulation would mean *from* high school systems and *to* university systems.

Also in the 1980s, Robert Wolverton (1984) prepared a chapter for David G. Brown's book *Leadership Roles of Chief Academic Officers*. While Brown's book focused primarily on CAOs within four-year institutions, Wolverton's article, "The Chief Academic Officer: Argus on the Campus," emphasized that, regardless of the institution's structure (2-year or 4-year), the CAO relates simultaneously upward to the president and governing board, downward to administrators who report to the CAO, laterally to peers responsible for operations and student affairs, and obliquely to administrative personnel. Like Shawl, who noted in 1974 that interpersonal skills were critical to building essential relationships, Smith identified relationships and

communication pathways in the college governance structure as critical to effectively executing the responsibilities of the CAO.

To add to the scholarly body of knowledge about the CAO role, Paul Parker and Patrick Parker (1985) conducted a study of academic deans within the Kansas community college network. They asked respondents to report the percentage of time they spent in seven areas of responsibility: administration, teaching, supervising instruction, clerical work, curriculum improvement, community work, and self-study. The deans reported that administration, instructional supervision, and curriculum improvement comprised by far the largest proportion (80%) of their work load. These findings were consistent with the findings of researchers who were discussed earlier in this section.

In 1988, George Vaughan, a scholar who is noted for his work with the community college presidency, turned his attention to the chief academic officer role and conducted a nationwide survey of instructional deans in 1,169 AACJC member institutions. A total of 619 deans completed and returned questionnaires (Puyear et al., 1990). Following this study, Vaughan (1990) prepared his book *Pathway to the Presidency: Community College Deans of Instruction*, which many scholars consider to be the most extensive work published to date about the CAO. In this book, Vaughan (1990) summarizes the duties performed by community college deans of instruction:

> [They] deal daily with college-wide issues; pass professional judgment
> on all teaching faculty; report to and advise the college president; are
> responsible for the college's programs of study and schedule of classes;
> help with long-range planning; work with the college's public relations
> program; plan, monitor, and spend a budget; deal with external agencies;

and in general, have their fingers on the pulse beat of the entire college in a way that is equaled only by the college president. (p. 11)

Vaughan (1989) was also the first scholar to address the issue of successful performance in the CAO role, as is evident in his portrait of the community college dean of instruction:

> The successful dean of instruction must be a leader with vision, a manager of details, an advocate of the faculty, and a representative of the president's office. Indeed, the dean of instruction's position probably requires more time, energy, and attention to a myriad of details than any other administrative position on campus, including that of the president. Significantly the dean of instruction is the only individual on campus who deals with the entire academic program on a day-to-day basis. The dean of instruction has responsibility to ensure that the college does not stray from its central mission of teaching and learning. Ultimately, the effective dean of instruction serves as an "internal auditor" responsible for maintaining the college's academic integrity. (p. 111)

While Vaughan conducted his nationwide survey of CAOs, the Commission on the Future of Community Colleges (1988) simultaneously addressed issues of institutional leadership. The Commission emphasized the responsibility of college leaders, particularly chief academic officers, to ensure that all members of the college learning community are dedicated to scholarship. The Commission reported,

> In addition to the scholarship of *discovering* knowledge, through research, it is also important to recognize the scholarship of *integrating* knowledge, through curriculum development, the scholarship of *applying* knowledge, through service, and above all, the scholarship of *presenting* knowledge, through effective teaching. (p. 26)

In the 1990s, James Perkins (1991) noted that "the effective academic dean must have a clear sense of the issues that affect education in general and higher education in particular" (p. 4). His analysis of the CAO role provided the following insights:

beyond knowledge of the issues, the effective academic dean must be
able to communicate those issues and their implications for the college to
the president, students, faculty, and staff. By establishing a dialogue
with the college community regarding the future of the instructional
program, the academic dean can assume a position of instructional
leadership within the college and help establish the academic vision
needed to determine how teaching excellence can be promoted, how
curricula should change to reflect the needs of the community, how the
academic program should respond to the public's call for accountability,
and how the balance between general education and technical
competency can be ensured among all graduates. (p. 4)

While Perkins' (1991) work focused primarily on issues of scholarship, he noted

that Vaughan's (1990) study had argued, "academic deans do not often see scholarship

as important to success in their positions and are not actively involved in scholarly

activities" (cited in Perkins, 1991, p. 50). Perkins also commented that the academic

dean can serve as a role model in using scholarship to solve campus problems, thus

encouraging employees to view scholarship as an integral part of their job descriptions

(p. 57). Additionally, he summarized the CAOs most instrumental function as follows:

"The dean's primary responsibility is that of instructional leader. He or she must have a

clear understanding of the issues facing higher education and must be able to

communicate those issues to the campus community" (p. 57).

Susan Cole (1991) supported the earlier work of other scholars regarding the

pivotal nature of the academic officer role as evidenced by her perspective:

The principal responsibility of the academic officer of a college or
university is to articulate the central values of the profession and to
advance the mission of their institution in accordance with those values.
. . . The overwhelming temptation of the contemporary academic officer
is to displace the difficult articulation of professional values with an
undue concern for the constraints imposed by laws and by regulation. (p.
37)

To complete doctoral research in 1992, James Johns (1993) interviewed five community college presidents and five chief executive officers in Wyoming and Colorado to identify and describe the duties and responsibilities of CAOs in those systems. Johns found that the academic dean's role was becoming increasingly more complex and was changing primarily in two ways: (a) The job was growing in size and responsibility, and (b) the duties assigned to the job were undergoing modification. Chief academic officers who participated in Johns' study indicated that their roles included building consensus, soliciting participation, communicating expectations, and coordinating the many and varied aspects of instruction among both internal and external constituencies. The CAOs in his study reported managerial responsibilities of planning, organizing, staffing, directing, reporting, budgeting, and coordinating the efforts of others to improve the quality of the college's educational program. They routinely spent significant time preparing reports, responding to unanticipated events, and interacting with others.

Two recent doctoral studies about the role of the CAO include the dissertations of Arthur Walters, Jr. and Philip Anderson. In 2001, Walters surveyed 300 CAOs nationwide to study their roles and responsibilities in facilities and institutional planning. The sample used in his study is compared to the sample used in this doctoral study in Chapter IV. One year after Walters conducted his research, P. W. Anderson (2002) surveyed 250 CAOs nationwide to identify which of Mintzberg's 10 managerial roles community college CAOs performed and emphasized. Anderson found that the majority of CAOs in his sample performed all 10 of the Mintzberg managerial roles in

the following order of importance: leader, liaison, disseminator of information, monitor

of operations, allocator of resources, entrepreneur, spokesperson, disturbance handler,

figurehead, and negotiator.

In this new millennium, scholars have begun to focus on the "human dynamics"

dimension of the CAO's duties and responsibilities. Hans Andrews (2000) describes the

dean's obligation to resolve the conflicting needs of faculty and the president. He argues

that it is essential that the CAO develop a working relationship with both the faculty and

the college president in order to effectively mitigate conflict and to address a wide

variety of challenges (pp. 19-25). Hans Kuss (2000) supports this perspective, noting

that the academic dean must foster good communications, which are critical to building

good working relationships within a secure environment (pp. 27-32).

George Findlen (2000) underscores the difficult decisions involved in

performing the job of CAO. He identifies five components of problem solving and

decision-making: (a) defining the problem itself, (b) identifying the issues involved, (c)

involving stakeholders in the discussion, (d) investigating options for action, and (e)

establishing motives and goals.

Rose Findlen (2000) emphasizes the instructional dean's responsibilities in

managing conflict in her very succinct statement: "Conflict *is* the job" (p. 41). She also

notes that the manner in which academic deans view conflict affects the way in which

they respond to and manage complex and difficult situations.

Karen Walker (2000) returns to a more traditional discussion of the challenges

and constraints facing chief academic officers at the beginning of a new millennium:

> Community colleges are faced with the task of providing quality
> education and programs for students. In most cases this needs to be done
> with considerable constraints on resources. The dean is responsible for
> many aspects of the budget, such as budget development, management,
> brokering resources, reviewing the budget, and perhaps even fund
> raising. With all of these necessary responsibilities, how are deans able
> to effectively carry out the management of academic resources? . . . In
> addition to financial resources, the dean is responsible for managing the
> data and the resulting information about the institution and its
> constituents. (p. 2)

John Erwin (2000) supports Walker's (2000) perspective by asserting that

contemporary CAOs must have a firm grasp of processes, particularly those that support

change. He posits that they additionally play a pivotal role in implementing changes

consistent with supporting the ideals of learning communities. Most significantly,

Erwin (2000) emphasizes that community service is an integral part of the community

college mission and that the CAO is ultimately responsible for "the breadth and quality

of what the college offers to the community" (p. 13). This implies that the CAO is the

linchpin in achieving college goals and advancing its mission.

This first section of Chapter II discussed the work of scholars over the past 40

years to describe the duties and responsibilities of chief academic officers in community

colleges. Their work found that CAO duties included (a) implementing the full range of

personnel administration functions, (b) working with faculty to design and improve

curriculum, (c) establishing policies and procedures to guide instructional operations,

and (d) serving as a role model for scholarship and college values. Most importantly,

these studies established that the chief academic officer is responsible for "everything

that pertains to instruction," and that he or she is responsible and accountable for the

quality of instruction offered by the college as well as the academic integrity of the institution. The most recent studies about CAO duties and responsibilities focus on activities such as dealing with confrontation and managing conflict, which require strong interpersonal, "people" skills. Skills and abilities required to do the job are discussed in Section 2.

Section 2: Profiles, Skills, and Abilities of Persons in CAO Positions

This section outlines the work of scholars over the past 30 years who have studied the profiles and attributes of men and women who serve in the CAO position. It also includes the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to serve in the position. Since this scholarly work began only 30 years ago, it is truly in its infancy.

In his doctoral dissertation, William Anderson (1973) explored the characteristics, professional backgrounds, and career paths of persons in CAO positions, as well as their attitudes toward instructional administration. His quantitative study was based on data collected from a nationwide survey of 766 public junior/community colleges. Anderson identified 51 different titles that were used by participants to designate the chief academic officer position. The most common title was that of "dean of instruction," as reported by 48% of the respondents. The mean age of instructional deans in his study was 45 years. Most were Caucasian (94%), male (97.7%), and married (94%). More than two thirds (68%) had served in the military. The average length of service in the CAO position was 4.4 years. Included in his study were

experienced teachers and administrators who had an average of 5 years of prior teaching experience and 7 years of prior administrative experience. Forty-five percent had taught in 2-year colleges and 56% had previous 2-year college administrative experience. Almost half of his study participants had served as department chairs and almost two thirds (64%) reported previous administrative experience, which they noted was the most important factor in preparing them for their CAO responsibilities. They regarded a master's degree as the minimum degree requirement for chief academic officers, and most had specialized in social science, secondary education, or science in completing both their bachelor's and master's programs. More than half (57%) held doctoral degrees, of which 61% were concentrated in higher education. Over 75% felt they had received adequate preparation in learning theory, which proved important in dealing with curriculum design and program evaluation. Yet, many felt they had not been adequately prepared in the following management areas: collective bargaining and negotiations (65%), strategies for selecting classroom furniture and equipment (60%), programmed budgeting (58%), and programmed instruction (44%). Most respondents emphasized the importance of teaching experience and the need for understanding human relations. Generally speaking, respondents spent more time in completing routine administrative duties (24% of their time) than in any other function of the job. More than half (53%) of the respondents in the Anderson study were planning to move on to a presidency.

More than 10 years after the Anderson study, Paul Parker and Patrick Parker (1985) used a 42-item survey to collect data about the personal characteristics and

backgrounds of all 17 chief academic officers in the Kansas community college district.

Parker and Parker reported the following findings: 84% of respondents used the title

Dean of Instruction; only one of the 17 CAOs was female; and 83% were over the age

of 41, with a median sample age of 47 years. All of their respondents were married and

99% had children. The majority of CAOs included in the study were born in states

other than Kansas, but most were residents of Kansas at the time of their initial

employment within the Kansas community college system. Mobility was generally low

and only two of the respondents reported teaching at more than one college. Less than

25% claimed administrative experience in more than one community college. One

fourth of the sample reported having taught or filled an administrative position in other

educational institutions such as 4-year colleges and universities. Positions held

immediately prior to accepting the CAO position included assistant/associate dean of

instruction, director of academic affairs, director of admissions, director of student

development, assistant director of placement, dean of students, dean of student services,

director of educational services, dean of occupational education, associate dean of

instruction, director of counseling and advising, and department chair.

Regarding the educational backgrounds of the CAOs in the Kansas study, Parker

and Parker (1985) noted the following: 99% of the respondents were products of public

education systems, but only 25% had attended a community college as part of their

educational background. Most held an earned doctorate, usually a Ph.D. Eighty percent

held their highest degree in educational administration, and 95% had teaching

experience in secondary schools. All were members of academic leadership

associations, and most (90%) were also members of other types of professional associations. All respondents participated in the state's community college deans' group, and several listed membership in the National Council of Instructional Administrators. All were involved in at least two community or civic organizations. They reported, on average, 10-hour work days and 50-hour work weeks.

The 17 chief academic officers in the Kansas study were asked to identify the five graduate courses that were most helpful in their preparation for academic leadership. Course subject areas included the history and development of the community college, research methods, personnel management, (instructional) program development and evaluation, and organizational planning. Additional courses named as important to their preparation and ultimate success in the job were courses in educational leadership, college teaching, learning styles, and public relations. Participation in professional development activities was a priority, and 85% of the respondents reported engaging in workshops, seminars, and formal classes within the past 3 years.

Just one year after Parker and Parker completed their study of CAOs in Kansas, Harold Arman explored the career preparation of college presidents and chief academic officers in Midwestern colleges. Arman (1986) found that key attributes included the ability to mediate conflicts between professionals and the ability to build trust and gain the confidence of the faculty (p. 23). He also concluded that administrators favored more management preparation and training as a way of helping them to develop the strong management skills required of academic administrators. Many respondents noted

a void in this area because they had been promoted to their first college administrative position from a faculty position. Respondents also reported the need for more knowledge about human resource development, and a better understanding of relationships with key groups outside the college—groups such as legislators, board members, alumni, donors, and the community. Most of Arman's (1986) study participants cited the desire for "more information about assessing community needs for new curriculum, planning and developing new programs, and evaluating the quality of instruction" (pp. 98-99).

In the following year, 1987, Richard Miller and Gary Moden conducted a nationwide survey of 451 chief academic officers to research their satisfaction and dissatisfaction in the CAO job, as well as difficulties they experienced in decision-making. Among the CAOs' greatest satisfactions were initiating and facilitating change, helping others achieve their goals, solving complex problems, making decisions of consequence, and dealing with diverse activities. Their greatest dissatisfactions included never having enough time, having to say "no" to good ideas, making and carrying out difficult personnel decisions, and experiencing difficulty in grasping certain issues and solving particularly complex problems. Areas that required making "tough decisions" included: personnel, particularly staff dismissals and merit/tenure approvals; budgeting and allocating resources; and managing department/division "squabbles" (Marchese, 1989, pp. 5-6).

While the Miller and Moden study was more comprehensive than the Parker study, George Vaughan's (1988) work late in the decade eclipsed all previous research

that focused on the chief academic officer in the community college. Vaughan's (1990) book *Pathway to the Presidency: The Dean of Instruction* is considered by scholars to be the most extensive work completed in this area to date. This text summarizes and explores Vaughan's (1988) nationwide survey of 619 deans of instruction in 1,169 community colleges, which provided the most comprehensive data gathered about the CAO position at that time. Study findings included the following observations: 21% of the respondents were women, 3% were black, 2% were Hispanic, and 2% represented other racial groups. A majority (70%) held doctoral degrees and almost half (49%) held CAO positions in the states where they grew up. Eighty percent belonged to professional organizations, with the American Association of Higher Education being the most frequently cited association. Regarding scholarship issues, 49% had conducted research within the past 5 years; 38% had published work within the same time period. More than half (55%) reported having the goal of securing a presidency in the future. More specifically, 61% of the women reported presidential aspirations, compared to only 53% of their male counterparts. On average, these deans worked 51 hours per week and rarely used vacation time. Vaughan (1990) also noted, "The overwhelming set of skills required by the successful dean of instruction is what a number of deans refer to as 'people skills.' Every dean interviewed alluded to these skills in one way or another" (p. 15).

In an article written for the AACJC about the Vaughan (1988) study, Puyear et al. (1990) noted that the data gathered in the 1988 study signaled a change in the male/female and minority ratios among persons filling CAO positions:

> The higher percentage of females in the position of dean of instruction
> and the greater proportion of female deans who aspire to be community
> college presidents promise a more diverse group of presidents in the
> future. However, the small percentage of deans of instruction from racial
> or ethnic minority populations is less encouraging if diversity in the
> presidency is a goal of community colleges. (p. 36)

Patricia Esmond's (1989) doctoral study of chief academic officers in Michigan

community colleges added more information to Vaughan's findings and further explored

the gender dimension of service as a CAO. Esmond concluded that the following skills

and attributes were required of persons in CAO positions: good communication skills,

leadership skills, maturity, a positive attitude, the ability to work well with others, and a

belief in the community college philosophy. She also found that the following types of

prior work experiences were helpful to those who served in the role: community college

administrative experience, community college teaching experience, experience as a

college dean, and experience as a college division or department chair.

Adding to the body of knowledge about CAOs in 1994, Elizabeth Hawthorne

conducted a survey of chief academic officers in 1,243 public and private community,

junior, and technical colleges in the United States. The average age of respondents was

51. Seventy-four percent were men; 26% were women. Regarding the highest degree

held, 30% held master's degrees, 34% had earned a Ph.D., and 33% held an Ed.D. Chief

academic officers tended to come from traditional transfer disciplines: humanities

(21%), social sciences (20%), and physical/natural sciences/math (23%). However,

their most recent degrees, mostly doctorates, were in education. The average tenure in

the CAO role was 6 years. The majority of CAOs in the Hawthorne study reported

more teaching experience in community colleges than in 4-year colleges and universities. Regarding the issue of scholarship, more than two thirds (68%) reported having made at least one presentation or having published research within the past 5 years. Women CAOs published papers or gave presentations at scholarly meetings more frequently and in greater proportion than did their male counterparts (74% to 66%, respectively). The majority of these scholarly activities (64%) were directly related to community college administration.

Hawthorne also explored the gender dimension of the CAO role and concluded that the proportion of men in CAO positions was declining, but not quickly or in significant enough margins to "level the playing field" between men and women. Additionally, she noted that scholarship was growing in importance as academic deans pursued research to improve practice through systematic analysis. Hawthorne (1994), like other scholars who have preceded and followed her, emphasized the need for additional study of the chief academic officer when she noted, "Clearly, seeking understanding of the successes and failures of leadership among CAOs is a ripe area for further investigation" (p. 272).

This second section of Chapter II has presented profiles and attributes of the men and women who have served in the CAO position, as well as the skills and abilities required to do the job—as gleaned from studies conducted over the past 40 years. Key points derived from this work include the following: (a) a majority of CAOs who participated in these studies held doctorates, primarily in education; (b) most possessed teaching experience, usually in higher education; and (c) most had climbed the ranks of

academe. Most were men and the movement toward gender equality had been remarkably slow. These studies also found that interpersonal skills, including strong communication skills and the ability to manage conflict, were critical to the role, as were management skills, which were required to effectively handle operations. The most recent research has focused on the "people skills" required to do the job. Section 3, which follows, discusses pathways CAOs followed in their quests for the position.

Section 3: Pathways to the CAO Position

Where do chief academic officers generally start their careers, and how do they move to the top instructional leadership job within the community college? This third section of Chapter II explores the research conducted over the past 20 years to determine the career paths followed by men and women who sought the CAO position. Additionally, it includes a discussion of CAOs' backgrounds and their preparation for the CAO role.

Just 20 years ago, Katherine Moore (1983) asserted that faculty experience was critical to pursuing an academic dean position. Her work revealed that the overwhelming majority of men and women who achieved high-level leadership positions in higher education began their early careers as faculty members. In 1989, Ted Marchese interviewed Richard Miller about his work with Gary Moden—work which explored the CAO position. Miller noted that the academic hoops one is required to jump through on the way to a presidency are fairly well understood. The pathway

generally starts with a faculty position lasting 4 or 5 years and then progresses with a

move to a chair position for another 3 to 7 years, and finally culminates with service in a

deanship for an average of 5 to 6 years. He concluded that most CAOs look for a

presidency after about 3 years of service.

> You can't really go into a presidency very easily unless you've had at
> least three years at CAO, and five years is better. But after five years,
> more experience doesn't help you. And it is a demanding position . . . a
> lot of responsibility, the same faces, the same issues" (p. 4).

Patricia Esmond's (1989) dissertation, *Selection Processes and Career Paths of*

Chief Academic Officers in Michigan Community Colleges (referenced in Section 2 of

this chapter) summarizes her study of career paths of CAOs in Michigan public

community colleges. She also discussed the selection processes used to hire CAOs.

Her survey of 92 academic officers and 82 presidents in 29 Michigan community

colleges used mailed questionnaires. Esmond found that almost half (48%) of the

CAOs hired after 1974 followed the career path of full-time faculty member, then

department or division chair, and finally, chief academic officer. She added, "very little

information is available concerning the community college chief academic officer"

(p. 1).

Arguably the most comprehensive research about the CAO position completed

to date is the work of George Vaughan, which has already been referenced in the two

preceding sections. In addition to exploring the role, profiles, and attributes of

academic deans, Vaughan (1990) has also examined their pathways to the deanship:

> The most important single source of deans of instruction is the division
> chair's position, with over 29% occupying the chair's position

immediately prior to assuming their first dean of instruction position. Another 11% of the respondents were either associate or assistant deans of instruction prior to becoming a dean, thus clearly establishing the traditional academic pipeline as the most important avenue to the deanship. (p. 42)

Another 9% were deans of student services immediately prior to assuming the CAO position, 9% were directors of community services and continuing education, and 6% came from positions at 4-year institutions immediately prior to assuming the deanship. Most reported that their educational and professional backgrounds had adequately prepared them for their new role, but some noted that they were less than prepared in management functions and operations.

This third section of Chapter II has examined the pathways men and women followed en route to becoming a chief academic officer. The traditional path, which still dominates today's market, is defined as the journey from faculty member to department chair, from department chair to instructional division dean or chair, and from this dean's position to chief academic officer of the college. Most of the CAOs studied over of the past 40 years had sustained faculty and administrative experience, at the college level, prior to entering their positions. Most felt that their educational backgrounds and subsequent training had adequately prepared them for their new roles as academic leaders.

<u>Section 4: Major Themes Gleaned</u>
<u>From This Literature Review</u>

The reader, no doubt, has observed common threads or themes that intertwine

among the studies highlighted in the first three sections of this literature review. This

final section of Chapter II highlights the most significant themes or key points gleaned

from this secondary research.

The first theme is that the scholarly work devoted to studying the community

college chief academic officer is only in its infancy and that the position needs to be

explored in greater depth, particularly in view of the role's impact on the quality of

instruction offered by a college.

The second theme focuses on the significance of the CAO's work to the quality

of instruction offered by the college and, ultimately, to the success of students in

achieving their academic goals. As instructional leader, the CAO is responsible not

only for the quality of instruction but also for the quality of the faculty who facilitate

learning. This second theme, which focuses on the CAO's overriding responsibility for

everything related to instruction, includes his or her role in curriculum-development and

program evaluation—both of which are integral to preserving the academic integrity of

instructional programs.

A third theme underscores that teaching experience is crucial in preparing for the

role in that it helps the CAO relate to faculty and to their experiences in the classroom.

A fourth theme observes that good management skills and administrative experience are

required to execute the daily functions of the CAO job. Of growing importance to the

job are strong interpersonal and communication skills as well as the ability to manage conflict. These skills, along with good relationship-building skills, constitute a fifth major theme gleaned from the data generated by past studies of the CAO role.

And finally, previous research indicates that CAOs constitute the best and most likely pool of qualified candidates for the community college presidency. The CAO position, then, serves as both a training field and testing ground for future presidents.

Summary of Chapter II

Chapter II has provided a review of the research conducted over the past 40 years about the role of the CAO in the American community college. It noted duties and responsibilities inherent in the position, as well as the skills and abilities required to do the job. This chapter also presented the profiles of CAO samples used in past research, and discussed the pathways CAOs most commonly followed to transition to the chief academic officer position.

The literature search summarized in this chapter also helped to focus my research questions and to determine the methodology best suited to finding answers to these questions. Chapter III, which follows, discusses the qualitative methodology used to collect, process, and analyze the data required for this doctoral study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

Methodology defines and describes the research processes and procedures used to study phenomena in a specific environment. It refers to the "general logic and theoretical perspective for a research project" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 31). This study of chief academic officers used qualitative methodology, a naturalistic-inquiry perspective, and a constructivist, interpretive paradigm to pursue answers to the questions posed about the successful performance of persons in the CAO role, as outlined in Chapter I. Brief descriptions of qualitative research, naturalistic inquiry, and the constructivist form of the interpretive paradigm follow.

Qualitative Research

Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1990) define qualitative research as "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. . . . It can refer to research about persons' lives, stories, behavior . . ." (p. 17). Qualitative research is distinctly different from quantitative research, which, until recently, has dominated the field of educational research. Borg et al. (1993) note,

> The purpose of qualitative research is to develop an understanding of
> individuals and events in their natural state, taking into account the
> relevant context. It is almost entirely about values, and the researcher
> seeks to provide a rich description of the people and events (phenomena)
> studied. By contrast, the purpose of quantitative research is to make

objective descriptions of a limited set of phenomena and also to determine whether the phenomena can be controlled through certain interventions. (p. 194)

Since the purpose of this study is to examine and describe, in-depth, the experiences of men and women who serve in the CAO role, it is logical that the research uses a qualitative approach.

Naturalistic Inquiry

While there is no single definition of naturalistic inquiry, scholars generally agree that naturalistic inquiry implies studying phenomena in a natural setting. Lincoln and Guba (1985) further explain, "Naturalistic inquiry is always carried out, logically enough, in a natural setting, since context is so heavily implicated in meaning" (p. 187). They remind us that the phenomena under study take their meaning as much from their contexts as from themselves (p. 8). Since the focus of this research is the performance of community college chief academic officers, the phenomenon under study is CAO performance. The natural setting, or context, within which the phenomenon of CAO performance was studied is the community college as described in Chapter II.

The Constructivist, Interpretive Paradigm

Denzin and Lincoln (1998a) posit that all research is interpretive, "guided by a set of beliefs and feelings about the world and how it should be understood and studied" (p. 26). The constructivist paradigm is one of the four major interpretive paradigms that provide structure for qualitative research. Each of these paradigms "makes particular

demands on the researcher, including the questions that are asked and the interpretations that are brought to them" (p. 26). The constructivist paradigm, used in this study, assumes the following: "a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities); a subjectivist epistemology (knower and subject create understandings); and a naturalistic (in the natural world) set of methodological procedures" (p. 27). In this study of community college chief academic officers, respondent answers were undoubtedly influenced by each participant's subjective perceptions of "reality" as it pertained to his or her own experiences in the job. Data that I collected as the primary researcher in this study may have been influenced by my own subjectivity in hearing and interpreting respondent perceptions and summarizing data.

Rationale for Using Qualitative Research: A Naturalistic Inquiry Approach and an Interpretive Paradigm

Since the objective of this study was to better understand performance in the CAO role, it followed that the perceptions and experiences of men and women serving as chief academic officers were paramount to my work. In-depth interviews seemed the obvious mode for data collection, and, as the only interviewer in this doctoral study, I became the necessary human instrument in my own research plan.

As stated in Chapters I and II, studies conducted by other researchers prior to this project almost exclusively used quantitative methodologies to share quantifiable data such as rankings of duties performed by CAOs and percentage of time spent in different job functions. Even though this baseline information was interesting, I found it

to be incomplete. I wanted to know what it was really like to serve a community college and its students in such a pivotal leadership role. I wanted to explore the personal perceptions, feelings, opinions, and experiences—both positive and negative—of the men and women who served in the position. Additionally, I conjectured that the data might provide an opportunity to generate a new model for successful leadership in the CAO role.

Quantitative methodology was deemed not to be the best choice for this study, since it would provide more of the same kind of data that has been generated to date—information that is numerically based. Instead, I chose the path followed by *qualitative* researchers who seek to describe phenomena in their natural setting (or context) in order to develop a better understanding of the study's focus (see Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, pp. 1-48). I used an interpretive approach and qualitative research methods to increase my understanding of the CAO experience. My initial intention was to develop and then share with other scholars a thick, rich description of the community college CAO experience. As the study evolved and data patterns emerged, I recognized the potential to develop a contemporary leadership model, as noted earlier—a model that would describe the areas of competency required for successful performance within the role of the community college chief academic officer.

About the Researcher

A qualitative research plan requires a "human instrument," as previously noted in this dissertation. Because the researcher conducts interviews, interprets information,

analyzes data, produces findings, generates theory, and makes recommendations for future study, it is important to understand the background and experience that the researcher brings to the study. It also is important to understand the researcher's theoretical perspectives and to acknowledge any potential biases (relevant to the study) that he or she may possess.

The Researcher's Background and Experience

I am one of seven children who were raised in a stable home that valued education, hard work, discipline, integrity, and ethics. Most of my education, prior to college, was completed in Cincinnati, Ohio, which was known for its exceptionally strong and innovative K-12 system. I completed a rigorous college-prep curriculum in preparation for postsecondary education.

A family move to Eugene, Oregon, provided the opportunity to attend the University of Oregon, where I majored in Math and Chemistry as preparation for entering medical school. But instead, I completed a bachelor's degree in Nursing at the Oregon Health Sciences University in Portland, Oregon. My heavy science curriculum enabled me to develop strong analytical and problem-solving abilities, which were grounded in the scientific method. Upon graduation, I worked in intensive-care pediatrics and public health, where all of my assignments included management and supervisory duties. My nursing career undoubtedly helped me to develop and hone my interpersonal, intuitive, and decision-making skills. With marriage and the birth of my two children, I took a hiatus from nursing.

Relocating with my family to Missoula, Montana, gave me the opportunity to attend the University of Montana, where I completed a master's degree in Business Administration. Upon graduation, I taught courses in Marketing and Management in the School of Business Administration, and simultaneously established two companies that specialized in market research and data analysis. My master's preparation, faculty assignments, and consulting work provided me with a strong background in personnel and asset management, finance, statistics, information management, data analysis, questionnaire design, survey research, and quantitative methods.

In 1989, the university president asked me to research the feasibility of a new university center of excellence targeted at fostering small-business growth within the state by leveraging public-sector resources and expertise. When I had accomplished this task, he authorized me to draft the center's start-up and strategic plans, which were submitted to the Montana Legislature for state-funding approval. I subsequently raised additional private funds for operations, and served as the center's founder and executive director. These activities helped to hone my entrepreneurial and leadership skills as well as the ability to work with multiple universities within the state system. I also developed fund-raising skills as well as skill in working with a diverse faculty, six college presidents, members of Congress and the Montana legislature, and the governor and his staff.

My first real exposure to the community college system came in 1993, when I accepted a position as the division chair for business and computer programs at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. I soon became passionate about my work and

dedicated to the students we served. But it was not until I entered the Community College Leadership doctoral program at Oregon State University that I truly began to appreciate the magnificence of the comprehensive community college, which honored the ideal of "open-access" for all citizens who wanted to pursue tertiary education.

During my tenure at Lane, I had the great fortune of working for two very competent and highly accomplished vice presidents for instruction. Working for these two men gave me a unique perspective for addressing this study of chief academic officers. As a division chair, I was familiar with the majority of challenges my CAOs faced daily. I understood the issues and could appreciate the depth and scope of their responsibilities. On more than one occasion, I served as acting vice president for instruction in their absence. As a supervisee, I appreciated the leadership skills, delegation abilities, communication styles, and respect for others that these two men brought to the job.

The Researcher's Theoretical Perspectives

Since qualitative analysis involves interaction between the researcher and study participants, it is also important to acknowledge the researcher's theoretical perspectives and predispositions regarding research. Robert Bogdan and Sari Biklen (1998) remind us that "Qualitative researchers are concerned with the effect that their own subjectivity may have on the data and papers they produce" (p. 33). A brief description of my research experience and perspectives follows.

As noted in Chapter I, my epistemological perspective prior to entering my doctoral program could have been characterized as postpositivistic. My research experience over the previous two decades had been grounded in scientific, quantitative methods, which focused on finding "truth," replicating research results, and generalizing study findings to larger populations.

Exposure in my doctoral program to qualitative research methods underscored, for me, the relevance of a constructivist perspective. I chose to pursue a constructivist approach within an interpretive paradigm in this study of chief academic officers in Oregon community colleges.

Research Framework and Study Design

In qualitative research, study design encompasses a flexible set of guidelines and parameters that describe the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the strategies deemed most effective for collecting the data required to answer these questions. Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman (1995) note that qualitative researchers face formidable challenges, which include developing a conceptual framework for the study that is thorough and concise, and designing a plan that is systematic and manageable yet flexible (pp. 5-6). Additionally, a qualitative research framework can include the intent to draft grounded theory and/or new models for interpreting the data and applying findings to practice. New theories and models that are developed as a direct result of the research or generated from study findings are considered "grounded" in the data.

I determined that the best way to collect the data required for data analysis and model construction was to design a research framework anchored in on-site, in-depth interviews of men and women who had served in the CAO position for at least 3 years and who represented institutions of sufficient size to dedicate a full-time position to CAO functions. This would require using purposeful sampling techniques.

Sampling Strategy and Study Participants

Researchers Bogdan and Biklen (1998) note that "The method of sampling in analytic induction is *purposeful sampling*. You choose particular subjects to include [in the sample] because they are believed to facilitate the expansion of the developing theory" (p. 65). The eight CAOs chosen to be included in this sample met the requirements noted above. The institutions represented in this purposeful sample included a community college that was structured as a multicampus district "system" located within a large metropolitan area. Each of the remaining colleges was structured around a main campus with multiple satellite units.

The Interview Guide

I anticipated that each interview would be unique—shaped both by the personality of the chief academic officer and his or her relationship with me as the interviewer. Richardson, Dohrenwend, and Klein (1964) note, "The style of the interviewer-respondent relationship will vary widely from one interview to another" (p. 33). Because uniqueness and variation was expected, I felt it was critical to maintain

as much consistency as possible over the breadth of interviews. Toward that end, I developed and used an interview guide. This guide provided a structured yet "flexible" format for conducting interviews and helped me to ensure that all respondents addressed the same issues.

My previous research experience guided me to use "open-ended" questions as much as possible during each interview. This provided respondents with the best opportunity to offer the quality, relevant information required for this study. Open-ended questions also allowed respondents to offer opinions and perceptions that I might not have anticipated.

Additionally, my experience in survey research and questionnaire design had taught me that there are no single key questions but, rather, key *question areas*, each of which needed to be addressed through the development of a series of specific, probing questions. I had also learned from experience to limit the number of question areas I pursued in order to preserve the quality and integrity of the data. I therefore designed an interview guide that focused on the following five question areas.

Question Area 1

The first set of interview questions focused on background data and job preparation as respondents were asked how they acquired their positions. Each was asked to elaborate on the career path they had followed to prepare for the role. Each was questioned about specific factors that had affected their decisions to apply for the CAO position. Additional questions explored the participants' duration of service as

CAOs, as well as the parameters of their duties and responsibilities as designated in their job descriptions and as assigned by the college president.

Question Area 2

A second set of questions asked respondents to define successful performance in the CAO role. Follow-up questions asked study participants if their perspectives of successful performance had changed since they first accepted this leadership role.

Question Area 3

The next set of questions explored areas in which respondents felt well-prepared, comfortable, and confident as they stepped into the CAO role. Conversely, areas in which candidates did not feel confident or well-prepared were also examined. Study participants were asked how they identified those voids and how they devised a plan to acquire the skills and knowledge they needed to carry out their new responsibilities.

Question Area 4

A fourth set of questions asked about rewards and factors that made the job easier and worthwhile. These questions explored the relationships and support systems candidates established and relied upon as they entered their CAO positions. They also were asked about the challenges and barriers they encountered and how they met those challenges and removed or navigated those barriers.

Question Area 5

A final set of questions focused on the advice these chief academic officers would offer to other professionals considering a career move to the CAO position.

The initial draft of the interview guide was pretested with the cooperation of a chief academic officer who was not designated to be included in the purposeful sample. The guide was revised and pretested again. The interview guide proved to be an invaluable tool not only in data collection but also in data analysis where the guide provided an analytical framework for coding the data, identifying patterns within the data and noting relationships and connections among categories of data. A copy of the interview guide is found in Appendix A.

Scheduling On-Site Interviews

Once the interview guide was developed, I began communicating with each of the eight selected potential candidates for the study. I made initial contact through an introductory letter, which was drafted on OSU letterhead stationery. This letter described the purpose of the study and asked recipients for their cooperation. A copy of the introduction letter is provided in Appendix B. I subsequently made follow-up telephone calls to each potential candidate to again explain the nature of the study, to emphasize the confidential nature of the research, and to ask about the candidate's interest in participating in this doctoral project. All eight candidates expressed eagerness to take part in research that focused on performance in this pivotal leadership role. I scheduled interviews at the respondents' convenience, and sent follow-up

correspondence to confirm appointment dates and times. Again, I stated the purpose

and importance of the study, and stressed the confidential nature of the research,

assuring them that measures would be employed to protect their anonymity.

Data Collection and the Interview Process

The next step in my research process was to collect the data required to address

my study questions. I conducted 90-minute interviews of each respondent in their

campus office, and additionally made and documented site observations of the

surrounding environment. I also collected job descriptions, organizational charts, and

college catalogs. Supporting this approach is Patton's (1990) delineation of research

methods in naturalistic inquiry: "Qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data

collection: (a) in-depth, open-ended interviews; (b) direct observation; and (c) written

documents" (p. 10).

During the months of August and September, 2001, I travel to the eight targeted

campuses to conduct the on-site interviews. Seven of the eight face-to-face interviews

were conducted at each CAO's college office. Since the eighth CAO was transitioning

to retirement, the participant suggested an interview on the OSU campus. Each

interview lasted approximately 90 minutes; several lasted almost 2 hours at the request

of the participant. The interview guide developed for this study worked well in guiding

the discussion and facilitating data collection.

With the written permission of each participant (the Informed Consent

Document found in Appendix C was signed by participants prior to each interview), I

audiotaped each session, using two tape recorders (see Rubin & Rubin, 1995, for interviewing protocol). One of these recorders served as a backup, which proved to be an invaluable strategy. In one case, the first of the two recorders malfunctioned, and in another, a new recording tape proved to be defective. Additionally, it was often difficult to hear the respondent's voice during the transcription process, so having a backup tape recording of each respondent's interview was helpful. Field notes also were compiled at the time of each interview, documenting any environmental aspects that might prove helpful in data analysis.

One of the most critical and yet enjoyable parts of the research process was listening to the stories of eight very talented people—both during the actual interview and again during data transcription. Even though my background in market research included extensive surveying, the 90-minute interviews that I conducted for my doctoral research afforded me the opportunity to hone my listening skills. James Dugger (1992) notes, "Listening is the emotional and intellectual act of hearing what is communicated and responding to both the verbal and nonverbal message being sent" (p. 1). Additionally, Herbert Rubin and Irene Rubin (1995) emphasize that qualitative interviewing requires listening intently to people as they "describe how they understand the worlds in which they live and work" (p. 3) if the researcher is to understand the "true" meaning of the data provided (pp. 17-31). To preserve the quality and integrity of the data, I personally transcribed each taped interview, verbatim, immediately following each session, either on the day of the interview when possible or on the following day when necessary. To ensure the privacy of study participants, I number-coded all

audiotapes, interview notes, transcribed interviews, and field notes, which allowed me to remove the names of colleges and participants. All tapes and supporting documentation were then stored in a locked safe located in a locked office.

To supplement information obtained through interviews and observations, I collected data from each campus regarding college structure, mission, values, and goals. Additionally, respondents provided job descriptions and lists of additional duties and expectations where available. I also utilized background data about each college and the Oregon community college system, which were collected from the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development and the Oregon Community College Association. This information helped to provide a framework or context within which study findings were interpreted.

I also created field notes and contact summary sheets for each interview (see Miles & Huberman, 1984, pp. 50-51, for a discussion of contact summaries). Following each interview, I made adjustments to the Interview Guide and the Contact Summary Sheet as appropriate. Copies of these documents are found in Appendices A and D. I also designed and used a Document Summary Form to log materials received during and after on-site visits. These materials included formal job descriptions, organizational charts, strategic priority lists, and college brochures and catalogs. A copy of the Document Summary is found in Appendix E.

Processing and Analyzing the Data

Once I had completed and transcribed the on-site interviews, I began processing

and analyzing the data. The inductive-analysis framework that I used in data processing

was grounded in the work of Patton (1990), Marshall and Rossman (1995), Strauss and

Corbin (1990, 1998), and Lincoln and Guba (1985). Brief descriptions of their unique

perspectives are presented in the discussion that follows.

Michael Patton (1990) underscores the purpose of qualitative analysis as the

effort to produce findings. He notes that the challenge lies in making sense of massive

amounts of data, reducing volumes of information to identifiable and significant

patterns, and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data

reveal (pp. 371-382). He explains that there is no one right way of organizing,

analyzing, and interpreting qualitative data because each researcher brings his or her

own vision and creativity to the adventure. In summarizing the process, he notes that it

demands intellectual discipline, analytical rigor, and "a great deal of hard work" (p.

381).

Marshall and Rossman (1995) support Patton's (1990) perspective when they

observe that qualitative data analysis is the search for general statements about

relationships among categories of data:

> It [qualitative analysis] builds grounded theory. . . . It is the process of
> bringing order, structure, and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is
> a messy, ambiguous, time-consuming, creative, and fascinating process.
> It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat. (Marshall &
> Rossman, 1995, p. 111)

Strauss and Corbin (1998) highlight the creative talents of the researcher when they describe qualitative data analysis as both a science and an art, emphasizing the nature of interplay between the researcher and the data. "It is a science in the sense of maintaining a certain degree of rigor and by grounding analysis in data. . . . It is a balance between science and creativity [of the researcher] that we strive for in doing research" (p. 13).

Lincoln and Guba (1985) define inductive data analysis as simply the process of "making sense" of field data. Since inductive analysis uses qualitative methods, analysis is the "inverse of the usual mode of deductive data analysis used in conventional investigations" (p. 202).

The writings of Patton (1990), Marshall and Rossman (1995), Strauss and Corbin (1990, 1998), and Lincoln and Guba (1985) helped me to design and implement my own framework for inductive analysis, and to process the data that were unique to this study. The approach outlined in the following section highlights the research tools I developed as well as the procedures I implemented and followed to preserve the integrity of the data.

Organizing the Data and Developing a Strategy for Analysis

To begin inductive data analysis, I reviewed my transcribed interviews, margin notations, field diaries, and Contact Summary Sheets. I also used documents collected from study participants such as college organizational charts and job descriptions, as well as information collected from state resources such as community college annual

budgets and FTE generation per institution. State data were obtained through the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development and the Oregon Community College Association.

Initially, I had planned to explore the data directly from the interview transcripts for potential themes, but found it more fruitful to first develop a format that helped me to synthesize information embedded in the transcripts. To aid in the analysis process, I created a multipage Interview Summary Form and a multipage Key Issues Form. These two tools helped me to organize volumes of data while maintaining focus on the two key research questions. Using the Interview Summary Form, I was able to identify and record the perspectives of each participant regarding such job factors as challenges and rewards they experienced in their work. The Key Issues Form helped me to isolate key issues interpreted from each interview transcript. Copies of these two forms are found in Appendices F and G, respectively.

Even though these two analytical tools helped enormously in organizing the data, I was still faced with processing volumes of information. I needed a way in which to identify patterns among the data or common themes among participant responses. To help in this pattern-identification process, I devised and used a series of color-coded grids, assigning a different color to each of the eight study participants. Using the grids as a platform, I developed nine matrices with interchangeable dimensions or axes. The matrices were also color-coded by respondent. Since I predominantly rely upon visual "intellect" in problem-solving and interpretative processes, these visual tools allowed me to connect with the data in a way that best suited my learning style (see Howard

Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, 1993, for a discussion

of multiple intelligences). Consequently, I was able to transfer volumes of data to the

grids and then visually explore them for relationships, patterns, themes, and issues

embedded within those themes. I subsequently transferred portions of the grids to

rudimentary electronic databases for further data analysis. Throughout grid construction

and computer-database processes, I used qualitative coding operations to help identify

relevant themes and "story lines" within the data as discussed in the following section.

<div align="center">Data-Coding Procedures</div>

To help identify relevant themes, I used open, axial, and selective coding

operations to "break down," reorganize, and recombine the data in relationship

combinations in order to identify discernable patterns and themes. These coding

operations were repeated until no further patterns or trends were observed. The steps in

this process are described below.

I first used open coding to identify common strands of thought, feelings, or

behavior contained in the transcribed CAO interviews. Open coding involves labeling

(conceptualizing) discrete events and categorizing phenomena identified through

examination of the data contained in field notes and interviews. "Open coding . . .

fractures the data and allows one to identify some categories, their properties, and

dimensional locations" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 97). "In open coding, the analyst is

concerned with generating categories and their properties and then seeks to determine

how categories vary dimensionally" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 143).

Subsequent to completing open coding (and sometimes in tandem with it), I used axial coding methods to reassemble the data into discernable patterns. Strauss and Corbin (1990) note that "Axial coding puts the data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories" (p. 97). "In axial coding, categories are systematically developed and linked with subcategories" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 143). Strauss and Corbin further emphasize that "it is not until the major categories are finally integrated to form a larger theoretical scheme that the research findings take the form of theory" (p. 143).

As a third and final step in the coding process, I used selective coding techniques to integrate and refine discernable categories and patterns within the data. Data themes that emerged from these coding processes were identified within the context (natural settings) of the Oregon community colleges specified in the study sample. A discussion of the study context was provided in Chapter II. I repeated the pattern-identification process until no additional trends were noted.

<center>"Trustworthiness" of the Data</center>

All serious research must address the issue of verification or "validation" of the data that have been collected and analyzed in order to ensure the credibility and dependability of the conclusions drawn from the study. *Quantitative* methodologies rely upon statistical analysis measures to demonstrate the *validity* of findings. In *qualitative* research, however, quantifiable factors and numbers are replaced with words and rich description of phenomena in their natural setting or context. *Qualitative*, interpretive

methodologies, therefore, subscribe to the concept of *"trustworthiness"* to imply validity

of the data and findings generated through analysis and interpretation. Researchers who

use *quantitative* methodologies have traditionally relied upon "scientific" terms such as

internal validity, external validity, reliability, and *objectivity* to describe their

quantifiable data. In contrast, researchers who use interpretive paradigms and

qualitative methodologies to process their data use terms such as *credibility,*

transferability, dependability, and *confirmability* to describe the "trustworthiness" of

their data.

Miles and Huberman (1984) note, "Data have to be *tested* for their plausibility,

their sturdiness, their 'confirmability'—that is, their *validity*. Otherwise, we are left with

interesting stories about what happened, of unknown truth and utility" (p. 22). They

further posit that validation in a qualitative study may be accomplished through a

"review among colleagues to develop 'inter-subjective consensus,' or to replicate a

finding in another data set" (p. 22). To test the data generated in this study for their

"plausibility" or believability, I used triangulation procedures to lend credibility to my

data-collection and data-analysis processes. While *triangulation* is commonly used in

qualitative research, the concept is borrowed from civil engineering and land surveying.

Triangulation is predicated on the concept that knowing two landmarks allows one to

take bearings in two directions and locate oneself at their intersection. The principle of

triangulation also has been used by the military in guiding the trajectory of ordinance,

and is used today in GPS systems that can pinpoint a vehicle's location on the ground,

using satellites and global positioning technology.

In qualitative research, triangulation implies using two or more "data points"—generating information from multiple sources or using multiple methods/measures to arrive at the same conclusion. Patton (1990) notes that multiple sources can include other researchers and their perspectives of the study data (p. 187). In this doctoral study, one of the triangulation procedures that I used involved asking colleagues to review transcribed CAO interviews and to identify major themes noted in those transcriptions. Reviewers were chosen for this task based on their familiarity with community colleges, their knowledge of the issues addressed in this research, and their perceptiveness of human dynamics. Each colleague conducted their work independent of the other and independent of me. Once these scholars had completed their work, I compared their lists to my own list of themes. All three lists matched on every dimension. I also used the concept of triangulation to compare the duties and responsibilities the study CAOs discussed in their interviews with the duties and responsibilities designated in their job descriptions. A synopsis of these job-description duties is provided in Appendix H.

In quantitative research, the concept of *reliability* reflects the degree to which consistency is noted in the findings of studies conducted by other researchers or the same researcher over time. Qualitative researchers do not necessarily expect replication of findings but tend to view reliability as "a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations" (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998, p. 36). Throughout this study of chief academic officers, I compared the data collected through interviews to actual behaviors,

events, and observations made during on-site visits. I also compared my findings to those of scholars discussed in Chapter II.

Ensuring the Soundness of Data, Data Analysis, and Data Interpretation

In addition to using triangulation *validation* procedures and *reliability* protocol, I formulated eight research strategies that I used throughout this study to help me ensure the soundness of the data as it was collected, summarized, analyzed, and interpreted.

The first strategy involved applying quantitative research principles that I had learned in my previous research experience. These principles included measures such as systematically and methodically collecting and protecting the data. The second strategy involved relying upon my experience as an instructional/academic division chair (dean) to provide a profile of the natural environment (or context) within which the CAOs worked—the instructional services component of the community college.

The third strategy that I employed to ensure the soundness of the data involved conducting a careful and methodical review of the existing literature in order to gain knowledge about the field and to provide a solid foundation for structuring my research questions and the study's design. Furthermore, I returned to reviewing the literature and the work of other scholars several times throughout this study to compare my findings to those of other researchers.

The fourth strategy focused on applying logical criteria and reasonable judgment when selecting the colleges and chief academic officers to include in the purposeful

sample. A fifth strategy focused on using systematic processes to collect the data. As noted earlier, I used an interview guide to ensure that similar information was collected from each participant. I also used an observation "check list" to help me note key factors about the environment in which each participant worked. I maintained detailed field notes and then summarized those notes in contact summary sheets following the transcription of each interview, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1984, pp. 50-51).

A sixth strategy involved using systematic procedures throughout the data analysis and coding processes as described earlier in this chapter. The seventh strategy used in this research project involved remaining open to discovery and allowing hypotheses to "unfold" as a result of the interpretive process (see Cobb & Hagemaster, 1987, pp. 138-143). The eighth strategy entailed refraining from applying research findings beyond the selected colleges included in the study sample. In other words, I remained clear that conclusions generated by this study are not "generalizable" to a larger population.

Ethical Considerations: Strategies to Protect Human Subjects

To help respondents feel more comfortable during their interviews, I allocated time prior to and following each one-on-one session to build rapport and to develop trust with each respondent. I respected any hesitancy on the part of candidates to answer questions, and was careful not to ask questions that would have required respondents to violate confidentiality beyond the scope of my research.

In order to protect the identity and privacy of study participants, I took every precaution to camouflage the unique features of the people and places summarized in the study findings. Privacy and confidentiality were respected and ensured at all times, and information that could not be adequately disguised was presented only in the aggregate. I excluded any sensitive information provided by respondents that might have jeopardized their employment status, their careers, or their relationships with supervisors or college boards. And finally, as an Oregon State University scholar, I adhered to all stipulations outlined in the OSU *Human Subjects Handbook*.

Summary of Chapter III

Chapter III has provided an overview of the methodology employed in this study. It presented a rationale for using interview procedures to collect the data from men and women serving in the CAO role. It outlined the qualitative methodologies and coding processes used to analyze and interpret the data. This chapter also discussed the potential for generating a model that describes the areas of competency required to be successful in the CAO position, laying the foundation for further discussion in Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV: STUDY FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of research is to produce findings and to draw conclusions from those findings in order to increase our knowledge and understanding of study phenomena. *Quantitative* research uses statistical evidence to demonstrate and predict cause-and-effect relationships. In dramatic contrast, *qualitative* research provides a thick, rich description of phenomena within their natural context or setting. Description includes observations about the relationships and linkages observed in the patterns generated by the data.

This chapter presents study findings gleaned from this doctoral research using the methodology, data processing measures, and data-analysis techniques described in Chapter III. The findings presented in this chapter are provided in five sections. Section 1 provides a collective profile of the purposeful sample used in this study. Section 2 discusses the role of the CAO, including duties and responsibilities, support systems, challenges inherent in the job, and the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform its functions. Section 3 explores the intervening factors that can impact CAO performance and also examines actions study CAOs say they would take if negative factors (barriers) were removed. Section 4 relays definitions of successful performance offered by the men and women who participated in this research. Additionally, it discusses the rewards and personal satisfactions they experience in the

job. Section 5 provides advice respondents would give to others who aspire to the CAO position.

Section 1: A Collective Profile of the Purposeful CAO Sample

As described in Chapter III, a purposeful sample of eight chief academic officers was used in this study. As a quick review, I interviewed eight CAOs in selected Oregon community colleges to obtain the raw data required for analysis. I then transcribed tape-recorded interviews, verbatim, and processed the data through a series of coding procedures. I segmented the data into categories, and examined the categories for patterns and relationships. Since the study findings presented in this dissertation are grounded in the data furnished by the eight CAOs who participated in this research, I am providing the reader with a collective profile of the sample. Information is presented in the aggregate to protect the identity of the eight CAOs and their respective colleges.

The purposeful sample used in this study included four men and four women. It was not intentionally structured to represent an equal number of men and women; the gender-equal distribution was simply a result of "the luck of the draw." All eight sample participants had served as a CAO for at least 3 full academic years prior to their interviews. A minimum of 3 years' experience in the role was a prerequisite for being invited to participate in the study sample.

All eight respondents had completed doctoral degrees. Interestingly, this number is much higher than the number of doctorates found in a 2001 study of 184 CAOs conducted by Arthur Walters, Jr. Walters found that only 73% of his randomly

selected nationwide sample had attained doctoral degrees (p. 94). In my doctoral study

of Oregon community college CAOs, all four women respondents had completed

doctorates in Education, while only one of the male CAOs had completed his doctorate

in Education specifically. The remaining three men held Ph.D.s in other disciplines.

The men and women CAOs included in this sample were evenly dispersed across

campuses of different sizes. In other words, neither men nor women appeared to be

dominant in the larger colleges, as opposed to the smaller institutions. (Note that

college size was defined by annual FTE.)

Five of the eight study participants had followed a "traditional path" to the CAO

position. The traditional path is generally considered to be a progressive transition from

full-time faculty member to department chair, from department chair to division chair or

instructional division dean, and finally from division dean/chair to the dean of

instruction or chief academic officer. Two of the men and three of the women who

participated in this study reported "traditional" backgrounds; two of the men and one of

the women reported that they had followed nontraditional avenues en route to their

current positions. These alternative routes were varied but did include educational

experience. More specific data about these three paths are not presented in this sample

profile in order to preserve the anonymity of these study participants. All eight

respondents *did* enter their CAO positions with community college administrative

experience, but not all had acquired teaching experience in higher education.

All eight respondents had worked for more than 20 years in education at the K-

12 level, the community college level, and/or the university level. The four women,

who appeared somewhat younger (a subjective observation on my part as the interviewer), reported 21, 22, 27, and 31 years logged in education at the time of their interviews. The four men had completed 24, 27, 27, and 32 years in education. Regarding time spent in the CAO role, the four women had served in the position for 3+, 6.5, 10, and 12 years; the men had served for 4+, 5, 17, and 17 years. It is notable that two of the women had served as CAOs for 10 years or more, while two of the men had each served for 17 years. These data again contrast to the Walters (2001) study, which found that 86% of the nationwide sample of CAOs had served 10 years or less in the job (p. 95). The average (arithmetic mean) time spent in the job by participants in my study was 9.3 years. This contrasts to findings generated by George Vaughan in a 1990 study of CAOs in which the average length of service was 5.4 years (Vaughan, 1990, p. 28).

Respondents in this doctoral study were also asked about their aspirations to serve in a presidency. Only one expressed a desire to do so. Of the remaining seven, one had already served as a community college president; two indicated they might consider a presidency in the future if the timing were right when presented with the opportunity. When responding to this question about presidential aspirations, the second study participant to be interviewed raised the issue of mentoring as important to prepare oneself for a presidency. Data about mentoring was recorded from this respondent, and a mentoring question was added to a revised copy of the Interview Guide. Of the seven respondents who ultimately answered the mentoring question, three had experienced professional growth and career advances that they attributed, at

least in part, to one or more mentors. In most cases, mentors were supervisors, and men seemed to act as mentors more frequently than women. Most respondents noted that mentoring was essential to striving for and attaining a higher position within the community college system. Interestingly, one of the respondents indicated that a presidency was most likely not in their future, citing a lack of mentoring as a key reason.

All eight of the CAOs reported that they were directly accountable to their college presidents, or to their campus presidents in the case of multicampus districts. While the CAOs were ultimately responsible for all managers, faculty, and support staff within their area of instruction, most had a much smaller number of direct reports on a daily basis. These direct reports were usually midlevel managers who administered instructional division functions.

Each college that was represented in the purposeful sample was uniquely structured. In some cases its CAO shared responsibility for specific areas of instruction (such as outreach programs) with another dean at the same level in the organization's hierarchy. In other cases, the Dean for Student Services (also referred to as the Vice President for Student Affairs) shared or had primary responsibility for instructional services provided through college counselors and academic advisors. Many of these services were offered as courses and seminars, which focused on study strategies, communication skills, teamwork, and achieving educational goals. Two of the colleges were attempting to integrate instruction and support services at the time of the CAO interviews, which they predicted would result in shared responsibilities for a variety of instructional programs.

This first section of Chapter IV has provided a profile of the purposeful sample of Oregon CAOs who participated in this study. The following section provides a comprehensive description of the role the CAO plays as instructional leader for the college.

Section 2: The Role of the CAO

This second section of Chapter IV discusses the CAO role in depth. It describes (a) duties and responsibilities inherent in the position; (b) the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to do the job well, (c) challenges faced by CAOs, and (d) the support systems they depend upon to help them meet these challenges.

Duties and Responsibilities

This first segment of Section 2 focuses on CAO duties and responsibilities. When study participants were asked about job responsibilities, they focused first on the breadth and scope of the job. One exclaimed, "The job is huge!" Another commented, "The job is God—on a good day!" Speaking in general terms first, the study CAOs collectively cited their "responsibility for everything pertaining to instruction" as a first response. The term "instruction" in this context encompasses all of the components of the teaching and learning experience. It includes developing new programs and curricula, evaluating and improving existing courses, and providing a variety of learning venues to meet student needs. These venues might include credit and noncredit courses, individualized/customized formats, open-entry/open-exit options, on-campus and on-

line classes, and interactive-television learning. In the community college, instruction includes 2-year associate degree programs, 1-year certificate programs, general education classes, and courses that transfer, credit-for-credit, to 4-year institutions that offer baccalaureate programs. Instruction may also include customized training for business and industry, adult education leading to GED completion, and continuing education courses for community citizens' personal enrichment.

More specifically, all of the CAOs discussed their responsibility for providing quality instruction to students. All noted their responsibility for hiring and retaining highly qualified, talented faculty to deliver instruction and facilitate learning. Several discussed their responsibility for providing leadership to ensure academic integrity.

Within the framework of instruction, the study CAOs reported responsibility for credit courses and professional programs; most were also responsible for noncredit courses. Most monitored instruction offered through various outreach centers and via distance education venues. Some supervised career development and library operations. All provided instructional leadership in (a) planning, developing, and implementing new programs; and (b) developing assessment measures to evaluate program performance and student success. All eight noted accountability for college enrollment (FTE generation); strategic and long-term planning; budget development; administration of off-site programs; management of student complaints related to instruction; articulation with local-area high schools and state universities; and liaison work with state agencies, the community, and a broad spectrum of accrediting bodies. Additionally, the CAOs expressed an unwritten responsibility to "cover" for other deans or vice presidents (at

their level) and for the campus president when other duties took these key people off campus. All expressed another unwritten responsibility, as well as a desire, to collaborate with colleagues to ensure coordinated leadership across the college.

All eight respondents reported responsibilities for orchestrating and facilitating college and program accreditation processes; most served as the college liaison to the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges. Several cited responsibilities for monitoring Tech Prep agreements and faculty work with local-area high schools. They also reported monitoring Two-Plus-Two (2+2) agreements and college collaboration with universities. All expressed obligations to network within the community and to build partnerships with business and industry leaders. Most, however, felt that the internal demands of the job (demands focused on internal requirements of the college) severely limited the time they could dedicate to this community-liaison role. One respondent commented that the job is so internally focused that the CAO can actually feel insulated from business and industry at times.

Inherent in their jobs as CAOs was the full spectrum of supervisory functions for all instructional personnel. These functions and responsibilities included recruiting, screening, hiring, nurturing, evaluating, promoting, and terminating instructional employees. Most of the CAOs discussed "growing" their faculty as an important and highly enjoyable aspect of their work. They emphasized that a talented faculty base is critical to student success and that diversity among faculty significantly enriches the learning experience for everyone. In those colleges where faculty and support personnel were represented by bargaining units or unions, some of the CAOs were obligated to

serve on collective bargaining committees; others were excused from this assignment, since their college presidents felt that such service might place the CAO in an adversarial relationship with faculty and/or instructional support staff.

General management functions such as planning, organizing, leading, and "controlling" (monitoring operations and making adjustments as necessary) were noted by study CAOs as important to the job. Management functions specific to their work as CAOs in community colleges included developing strategic plans and goals in alignment with the college mission; sustaining/increasing enrollment as directed by the college president and governing board; developing budgets, allocating resources, and managing assets; ensuring prudent use of public funds; and verifying the accuracy of financial and FTE reports that are forwarded to state offices. They also noted the following management functions as important in their daily work: managing technology and securing resources for technology applications in instruction; providing leadership to coordinate and publish the annual and quarterly schedules of classes; securing adequate funds for supplies, and procuring equipment to support student learning; and responding to student complaints about a faculty member or the learning experience.

And finally, it is worth noting that one of the CAOs emphasized her responsibility to "make sure we are posing the right questions . . . that we are working on the right issues." It is also important to note that several of the CAOs discussed their obligation to "keep the campus moving forward . . . consistent with college goals and strategies." One additional observation is appropriate here. Those CAOs who

administered instruction within a multicampus system underscored their heavy

coordinating responsibilities with other units within the system.

To augment the data provided by study participants in their interviews, I

obtained official job descriptions from each campus. Appendix H summarizes these

documents. The reader will note that the duties and responsibilities listed on these job

descriptions fully align with the duties and responsibilities reported by the study CAOs.

The next section explores the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) that the CAOs

reported as crucial in executing their duties and addressing the myriad of issues that

arise in their jobs.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Required

This section discusses the knowledge, skills, and abilities that study CAOs noted

as pivotal to performing both the daily and long-term duties of the job. It is interesting

to note that I used the words "qualities, traits, and attributes" when posing the interview

questions that generated these data. Respondents, however, composed their answers in

terms of the "knowledge, skills, and abilities" required to do the job.

The most significant finding was that the CAOs were unanimous in citing

advanced interpersonal skills as paramount to job success. They agreed that advanced

interpersonal skills include outstanding communication skills, advanced team-building

skills, and strong collaborative skills. They also concurred that it is critical to

demonstrate an ability to work well with others—noting that "others" implies a very

broad spectrum of individuals and groups. Several commented that strong personal

motivation is required to keep oneself energized and committed to the job. Most emphasized, as critical, the ability to constantly juggle multiple priorities and to continually reprioritize obligations as issues and situations evolve and change.

As noted earlier, most of the respondents in this study spoke about the enormous scope and breadth of the job, and noted that the CAO must know how to build, work with, and use high-performance teams in order to accomplish tasks and meet goals. They also emphasized an ability for hiring and nurturing talented people, and letting others help them (the CAOs) to "do the work" through delegation. Study participants noted that this strategy was particularly important as a way of complementing their own strengths and "shoring up" their own weaknesses, particularly in situations where they lacked the necessary expertise and experience to proceed.

Additionally, all of the respondents discussed the ability to lead and supervise people and facilitate group work as important elements of their jobs. They again stressed the value of teamwork and the importance of knowing how to lead high-performance teams toward successful completion of projects. One of the CAOs emphasized the value of knowing how and when to be a good follower and team player. She noted that the CAO must be willing and able to assume the role of participant or follower, and, in that context, work well with others as a member of a team not under his or her direct leadership.

Interestingly, almost half of the respondents stressed the ability to tolerate high levels of ambiguity in the job. Ambiguity, in this case, tended to result from declining state revenues and uncertainty about the level of future funding for community colleges.

Additionally, most of the CAOs discussed the ability to accept change—change in the institution's structure, leadership, staffing, programs, and objectives—as critical to job performance. They also underscored their duty to help others within the institution to transition through change. Most discussed the ability to work in contentious situations, and the ability to help others manage conflict and work through options toward successful resolution. These comments imply that well-honed mediation and counseling skills are an advantage for administrators in this position. One study participant concluded her remarks about the challenge of managing conflict by saying, "You cannot be conflict adverse and do this job."

As a distant second to the interpersonal talents discussed thus far, the eight study CAOs outlined the management knowledge, skills, and abilities required, on a daily basis, to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position. Proficiency in the traditional management functions of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling (monitoring) operations was noted as critical. In the academic environment of the CAO, management proficiency also includes accessing, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data; preparing and administering complex institutional budgets; monitoring expenditures and making adjustments as necessary; and using information provided in college financial statements to adjust operations. Management in academe additionally requires the ability to develop strategic plans that focus on achieving instructional and college goals; the ability to develop assessment measures, monitor processes, and evaluate forward progress; and skill in sustaining continuous quality improvement in order to ensure program quality and college success.

Transitioning from specific management tasks that require knowledge, skills and abilities, study respondents emphasized the ability to "keep the big picture in focus" while executing details. A majority stated or implied an imperative for understanding systems thinking and for using a "systems approach" in decision-making. They noted that this required knowing how each element of the overall system and its associated subsystems are related to other system elements, and how changing one component has a ripple effect upon the entire organizational system. Additionally, several study participants described their system-wide efforts to help faculty and staff to "see the big picture, the total picture" and to understand how their roles in the classroom and support services help the college to achieve its mission.

In addition to the interpersonal and management knowledge, skills, and abilities discussed thus far, study participants noted that CAOs must understand the history of the comprehensive community college, and demonstrate commitment to its mission, principles, and values. They must continually read and conduct research in order to stay informed about issues that can impact community colleges both locally and nationally. They must understand and be comfortable working with rapidly changing technologies, including making decisions about who monitors technology applications. They must demonstrate the ability to connect with the community and build partnerships with business and industry. They must be approachable to students, faculty and staff, and they must have personal motivation and display enthusiasm for their work in order to lead others. They must model college values and demonstrate their commitment to lifelong learning as one of those values. They must be a visionary, politically astute,

and possess strong negotiation skills. They should understand student services such as counseling, academic advising, enrollment services, library support services, financial aid, and any other services that support student learning.

Thus far the findings presented in Chapter IV have focused on defining the role of the CAO in terms of his or her duties and responsibilities and exploring the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to do the job well. In the discussion that follows, this portrait of the CAO role is expanded to include the challenges CAOs face daily and the support systems they routinely use to sustain themselves in this demanding job.

Challenges

The most salient finding about the challenges facing chief academic officers is that interpersonal interactions, communications, and relationships were noted as challenges more frequently than any other challenges. Interestingly, these interpersonal challenges are directly related to the set of skills that the study CAOs noted as most critical to job performance: advanced interpersonal and communication skills. Respondents further commented about the challenge of continually developing and improving relationships, both within and beyond the college; communicating clearly and keeping people well-informed throughout the organization; providing well-defined avenues or paths for staff involvement, at all levels of the organization; dealing with ingrained college culture as well as with the unique cultures of different departments; and responding to questions and providing answers (many via E-mail) in a "timely"

fashion. It is important to note that what may seem "timely" to the CAO may not always seem timely to the person requesting feedback—a perception which, in itself, may present another challenge.

The second most frequently mentioned challenge was the expansive scope of the job itself and the corresponding demands it places on the CAO's time and energy. This challenge entails continually juggling multiple priorities, continuously prioritizing and reprioritizing issues that require immediate attention, and maintaining balance among the various demands of the job. The study CAOs also talked about the challenge of trying to maintain flexibility within a demanding schedule in order to allow enough "open time" to assist faculty and students with problems and issues as they arise. Respondents additionally discussed the difficulty of trying to stay current in their areas of expertise and well-informed about local, regional, and national issues that have the potential to impact education—particularly in the community college. One of the CAOs expressed the frustration that the rigorous demands of her job often prevented her from doing the "value-added things like connecting more with the community, building programs, and developing our faculty and staff as well as ourselves." This respondent's perspective is particularly important because it brings into focus that important aspects of the job might not be addressed as they should be due to the weighty demands of the job.

Several of the CAOs noted that working within an ingrained college culture can be a challenge. One commented about the challenge of working with instructional divisions and departments that had developed their own unique cultures. Each of the

CAOs who discussed this issue commented about the frustrations that surround efforts to change an ingrained culture and long-standing values. They discussed the challenge of trying to help others within the organization, particularly those who have a deep history with the college, to accept change and transition to new structures, new principles, and new values.

Additionally, most of the CAOs discussed their efforts to maintain a personal focus on the college mission and institutional values, and to continually convey this mission and these values to others—both within and beyond the college. They noted that this sustained focus helped to ensure that all members of the college community move forward together, unified and focused on a single direction and vision for the future. It is this kind of coordination, where everyone is "on the same page," that supports the institution's success. Emphasizing this point, one CAO noted, "It is a fast-changing landscape and if you don't stay clearly focused on the mission, you will experience 'mission creep,' where you change without intending to change."

Another challenge for CAOs involved keeping up with rapidly changing technologies, and then budgeting for technology changes and innovations so that they could be incorporated into instructional offerings. A significant concern surrounding this issue was determining which new technologies should be implemented (often a decision based on a cost-benefit analysis) and how technology should be administered once it is installed on the campus. Rhetorical questions offered by the CAOs illustrate the technology dilemmas they address:

1. "Does the college centralize technology functions?"

2. "Should there be a 'technology czar' who administers and controls new technologies, including their implementation and maintenance?"

3. "Should these weighty responsibilities fall to an existing position?"

4. "Who should have power over technology? Should it be designated to one person? One office? One division?"

A challenge tangential to the technology issue is the issue of balancing the demands made by different academic divisions and departments for limited resources. Demands for equipment triggered CAO comments about trying to keep professional technical programs on the "cutting edge" in order to meet industry standards, and fulfilling the needs of expanding programs that require additional staff, equipment, and facilities. These discussions included comments about the high cost of professional technical (PT) programs as opposed to the relatively low cost of transfer and general education courses. Discussions about PT programs and transfer courses initiated conversations about the mission of the comprehensive community college and how each individual college must define its mission within this scope, and determine how it will balance its mix of PT and transfer education in order to best serve its students and the local community.

In addition to the key challenges discussed thus far, study CAOs additionally noted the following as challenges that they routinely face in the job:

- Involving the right people in a team to bring the best talent to a project.
- Motivating people to do their best work.

- Dealing with the financial challenges of budget reductions due to state deficits.
- Adjusting to changes in administration and college leadership.
- Leveraging tuition and grant revenues wisely.
- Syncing the finding of talent with position vacancies as they arise in core areas.
- Dealing with information overload.
- Finding time to be analytical and reflective.
- Strategizing about how to build on the institution's success.
- Dealing with complex federal laws surrounding personnel issues, particularly those pertaining to hiring and terminating employees.
- The inability to speak Spanish, given the changing demographics of the community.
- Being female.
- The "love/hate" relationships that exist between management and unions on campus.
- Insufficient data:
    - "Data systems aren't keeping up with our changing needs for information."
    - "There are plenty of statistics but they don't necessarily address the right issues."
    - "It is difficult to pull together the data required to get the best information and answers."

And finally, one study participant commented that one of the greatest challenges of the job is that "it is often a lonely one on a day-to-day basis." She explained that the CAO cannot fraternize with or maintain relationships with subordinates other than on a professional basis, which means that the circle of "friends" the chief academic officer can call upon in the workplace is limited to colleagues at the same level in the organization. Most of the respondents discussed the importance of forming relationships with other CAOs across the state. Several discussed the challenge of keeping their own personal motivation and enthusiasm for the job at the highest possible levels. They noted how important it is to "stay grounded" and physically and emotionally healthy, while serving in a highly demanding position. Most mentioned the

challenge of balancing a personal life and professional growth with the demands of the job.

Support Systems

Support systems are defined in this context as the relationships, networks, and measures that provide support to CAOs as they serve their colleges. Key support systems include one-on-one colleague relationships, colleague councils and networks, state and national organizations, mentors, office support staff, and professional-development opportunities.

The most salient finding about support systems is that CAOs tend to provide mentoring and support for each other through statewide informal networks. They also find support through formal organizations such as the Council of Instructional Administrators (CIA), at the state level, and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), at the national level. They noted how the Council of Instruction Administrators (CIA), which is composed of instructional administrators from Oregon's 17 community colleges, was the most valuable resource beyond their own campuses in supporting their development and performance. They further explained that CIA was not only instrumental in their initiation into the CAO role, but that it continued to be important as they were "learning on the job." They also discussed the camaraderie and "peer mentoring" that had evolved among members of this group. Additionally, they commented about the ease with which they could connect quickly with other CIA

members, via phone and E-mail, and the comfort with which they could discuss sensitive issues, knowing that their conversations would be held in strictest confidence.

Organizations at the regional and national levels also provide learning and professional growth opportunities and support for chief academic officers. The two most frequently mentioned by study participants include the Commission on Colleges of the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges (CCNASC) and the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC). As observed earlier in this chapter, all of the CAOs noted liaison responsibilities to CCNASC for accreditation purposes.

The CAO's relationship with his or her campus or college president was considered by study participants to be an important support factor because the chief academic officer reports directly to the president, who may also provide some degree of mentoring. Most of the respondents described their relationships with their campus presidents as either good or relatively good. Several reported that a current or past president had served as an important mentor. Repeating an earlier point, mentors were important to all study respondents, and most reported having one or more mentors throughout their careers.

Several respondents commented about receiving support from colleagues and staff. Six of the eight CAOs discussed their relationships with other executive team members and noted that they could rely upon them for support and assistance on a daily basis as well as for coverage of critical duties in their absence. Several commented about the capabilities of their office support personnel who assist the CAO daily.

More than half (five of the eight) cited their institutions' "values orientation" as allowing them flexibility within their roles, thereby providing a significant measure of support. In a values-oriented environment, they noted, shared values and guidelines for conducting college business replace strict and otherwise confining policies. One of the CAOs commented that a relatively flat organizational structure fostered an environment of "trust, open communication, sharing, and covering for each other."

And finally, most of the study participants described professional-development opportunities at their respective campuses as supportive. On the positive side of the opportunities spectrum, two respondents described customized growth plans for all college employees and emphasized that their institutions placed a high value on personal growth and development. One CAO noted that staff growth was even stated in the institution's values document. On the opposite end of the spectrum, two of the CAOs noted that professional-development efforts at their colleges needed significant improvement, particularly with respect to the opportunities offered to managers and administrators.

Summary of Section 2

Section 2 has described the role of the CAO, delineating the duties and responsibilities inherent in the position. It highlighted the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to serve in the role, and explored the challenges that CAOs face daily. It also provided information about the support systems CAOs use to sustain themselves in their jobs. Section 3, which follows, discusses intervening factors or barriers that

have the potential to thwart CAO efforts targeted toward accomplishing instructional objectives. Since these objectives directly support the mission and goals of the college, intervening factors that impede CAO performance also jeopardize the success of the college in fulfilling its mission.

Section 3: Barriers and Actions CAOs Would Take If Barriers Were Removed

Section 3 explores negative intervening factors or barriers that the study CAOs viewed as having the potential to impede their successful performance. The most frequently cited barriers include inadequate state funding and budget uncertainty, the state funding formula for community colleges, and less-than-adequate data systems. Other potential barriers include organizational structure and institutional culture, college policies and guidelines, state and federal regulations, data-reporting requirements for state offices and federal agencies, changes in technology, high employee-turnover rates, and the weighty demands of the job itself. Barriers that were unique to CAOs who worked in multicampus district systems are presented in a section that follows this general discussion of barriers.

Barriers That Impact CAO Efforts

Funding and Budget Issues

Most of the study CAOs (six of the eight) discussed issues surrounding state funding and their institution's budget as the most significant barriers they encounter in their jobs. They discussed recent shortfalls in state revenues and subsequent cuts to public education, including community college budgets. They noted that the state's financial condition had resulted in deep budget cuts, which, at some institutions, had not only caused a reduction in staffing and services, but the elimination of entire instructional programs. Particularly hard hit were the professional technical programs, which are more expensive to offer than transfer courses. Furthermore, the CAOs underscored the difficulty of trying to develop a budget for instruction when the state's revenue and budget pictures were in continual flux. One noted that trying to develop a budget under such conditions was much like trying to hit a moving target.

In addition to state funding reductions, students who attend universities and colleges, including community colleges, are having greater difficulty accessing shrinking federal loan funds for higher education students. Private foundations also have experienced shrinking funds, which ripples into less funding for colleges and their students.

A final point about budgeting revolves around one of the CAO's frustration with the allocation of funds once these funds are received by the college. This CAO noted that community colleges tend not to internally allocate sufficient funds (if any) for the

institution's own research and development (R&D): "We do not spend enough time and money on planning how colleges can best evolve to meet changing public demands."

The State Funding Formula

Additionally, study CAOs cited the state's funding formula for community colleges as a potential barrier to successful performance. They expressed concern and frustration that this formula promotes the expansion of programs and services in order to "grow FTE." One of the CAOs discussed this issue at length, commenting that the formula forces colleges to grow at a proportionately steeper rate than other colleges within the same system in order to gain a larger proportion of state funds allocated each biennium to each of the state's 17 community colleges. This cross-competition within the system results in the upward spiraling of costs across all of the colleges and subsequently greater revenue needs for the entire system. This is a particularly dangerous scenario in a state that has faced major revenue deficits over the past decade. One of the CAOs suggested that capping enrollment at some manageable number of students would allow colleges to maintain the high quality of instructional services they currently extend to their students and surrounding communities.

Data Systems

Five of the eight respondents discussed insufficient data systems as a potential barrier to their performance. Several discussed the frustration of trying to access data quickly when information is required to expedite important management decisions.

Others discussed cumbersome financial systems within their colleges and a corresponding lack of accountability for improving these awkward and inefficient systems.

Organizational Structure and Institutional Culture

The formal structure or reporting hierarchy of the college and its established culture were also noted by study CAOs as potential barriers to successful performance. Organizational culture is defined here as the collective values, beliefs, and ideals of the institution. In short, it is the ambiance employees perceive and feel within the work environment.

Several of the CAOs who participated in this study discussed college culture as a negative influence, noting that, in some cases, ingrained behavior of some employees encouraged an adversarial relationship between management and faculty—particularly in polarized, union environments. In other cases, culture and long-standing practices often made it difficult for the CAOs to implement necessary changes in programs and staffing. Those CAOs who enjoyed longer histories with their institutions commented about the "growing pains" they had observed when the relatively "flat" organizational structure of their college (a form common to start-up ventures) gave way to a taller reporting hierarchy. They noted that organizational growth and the resulting changes to the college's reporting structure had a tendency to jeopardize and even erode the feeling of trust that had developed among employees over many years of working together.

Interestingly, only one of the study participants described their college culture as notably supportive when discussing their duties as the college CAO.

Tangent to the issue of organizational culture and change is the issue of faculty and staff resistance to change. One CAO cited an all too common faculty/staff mantra: "But we've always done it this way and it has worked well in the past. Why do we need to change?" One possible interpretation of this statement might be that "seasoned" employees may view change as an indictment of previous methods they have used, believing that change reflects negatively upon them as less than competent or out of date in their areas of expertise.

<u>College Policies and Procedures</u>

With respect to college policies and procedures, study CAOs indicated that inflexible policies, particularly those relating to personnel practices, sometimes "get in the way" of something they are trying to accomplish. They noted, however, that, for the most part, college policies and procedures are not unwieldy. Most of the study participants reported that effective systems are in place at their institutions to modify policies that no longer facilitate procedures intended to garner student success. It is interesting to note that one of these CAOs wisely observed that well-constructed policies should provide freedom within limits.

Those who served as CAOs in multicampus district systems expressed both positive and negative perspectives regarding policies. From a positive perspective, they felt that policies were clearly stated, for the most part, which helped to avoid confusion

and misinterpretation while establishing a measure of consistency across multiple campuses. From a negative perspective, they noted that policies sometimes had a tendency to lengthen or "bog down" what should be relatively simple processes.

State and Federal Laws, Regulations, and Guidelines

State regulations, statutes, and guidelines were frequently noted as potential "barriers" to the work of the CAO. The most frequently cited state barrier was the Oregon funding formula for community colleges, which was discussed earlier in this section. Additionally, one of the CAOs discussed, at length, the state method for calculating FTE clock hours. He noted how clock hours can create an imbalance in college offerings between professional technical programs and college transfer courses. Other CAOs discussed how the more expensive professional technical courses and programs are, unfortunately, the "easiest" components of instruction to reduce or eliminate because they are far more expensive to offer than general education and transfer courses, which do not require costly technology and equipment upgrades in order to stay current with industry standards and expectations.

Reporting Statistics to State and Federal Sources

Regarding data collection and reporting, some of the CAOs discussed the difficulty of trying to compile the data required by state and federal agencies and accrediting bodies—data that is intended to monitor program performance. While the data may be available, they do not always reflect program status and performance

accurately. Information required for U.S. Government Perkins Grant reports, for example, includes the number of "completers" finishing specific technical programs. "Completers" in this context are defined as students who complete 1- and 2-year technical programs. In reality, many of the students who attend community colleges do not intend to complete a program of study when they enter the college, but, instead, they plan to complete specific classes (within those programs) to acquire the skills they need to seek different employment. Other students use the same strategy to "ramp up" their technical skills prior to returning to the workplace after a sustained absence. When these two types of students feel they have acquired the skills they need to be competitive in the workplace, they leave the college without completing a formal program of study. These students are, therefore, not counted as "completers" in program statistics. The data are interpreted to mean that the program is not successful in retaining students through the entire program to the point of graduation or program completion. This, of course, is misleading because these students *have* accomplished their personal goals, even though they did not complete a program. Unfortunately, "completers" comprise an important statistic that is reported to a number of sources as a measure of a program's success in serving students. In short, these statistics may reflect negatively on programs that are excellent courses of study, and, ultimately, affect the long-term funding colleges receive for these programs.

Changes in Technology

Study CAOs also cited rapidly changing technology as an enormous issue and paradox. Staying current with evolving technologies—both in the classroom and in college operations—is critical to success and yet technology can also be a potential barrier to positive performance. One respondent emphasized, "A healthy IT [Information Technology] base is critical to success, and if your base is not healthy, things do not move forward." Several CAOs were concerned about the cost to the college of keeping up with technology, including securing the funding required to continually upgrade computer labs and software. Interestingly, one of the study participants commented, "IT is slowing us down [due to the expense of continuous implementation]; it is not keeping us from getting there—but it is slowing us down."

High Employee-Turnover Rates

And finally, two of the CAOs mentioned high turnover rates due to the retirements of administrators, faculty, and staff as a potential barrier to accomplishing college goals. Due to significant changes in the state employees' retirement system (PERS), many faculty, staff, and administrators retired earlier than they had originally planned in order to collect better retirement benefits. Linked to the issue of retirements and the number of new employees required to fill vacant positions is the issue of documented policies and guidelines. Most of the colleges included in this sample had well-documented policy handbooks, although most "hard copy" versions have been replaced with electronic database renditions. In those colleges where policies have not

been voluminous or specific (and, in at least one case, not well documented in writing),

CAOs noted that new employees seemed lost and wanted some type of "road map" to

help them learn how things should be done.

The Nature of the Job Itself

One respondent noted that the job itself is so multidimensional that it is often

difficult to execute all of the important duties of the position. Job functions that tended

to suffer the most include "outside work" to develop community partnerships;

foundation and agency work to cultivate alternative sources of funding, such as

government and private grants; and development work to help staff and programs grow

and prosper. One CAO summarized that the multidimensional nature of the job itself is

a barrier to doing the "ideal aspects of the job."

The intervening factors or barriers discussed thus far are applicable to the full

sample of colleges selected for representation in this doctoral study. Since several of

the CAOs who participated in the study were employed by multicampus district

systems, their responses were examined as a subsample. Their comments on the

barriers unique to district systems follow.

Intervening Factors Specific to District Systems

Several of the CAOs who participated in this study were employed by district

systems in which there were multiple campuses and one of these campuses served as a

coordinating location. In addition to these full campuses, the college system sustained a

number of outreach centers strategically located throughout its service area or district. The study CAOs who worked in district systems cited dealing with large bureaucracies and ensuring that activities are carried out in compliance with district-wide policies as potential barriers to their own performance on their respective campuses. They discussed how the complexity of a district system often leads to a lack of autonomy and flexibility, primarily due to college policies, which are not always "a good fit" on their respective campuses. They noted that this factor limited them in making changes on their respective campuses until they had secured district approval. Additionally, they discussed the negative impact of "losing a marketing window" when they were not able to respond quickly enough (without district approval) to accommodate a new market or community need.

CAOs who were employed in district systems also expressed concern about the daily demands on their staff to ensure coordination across multiple campuses. This issue involves the amount of time and effort required of instructional staff—managers, faculty, and support staff—to coordinate and develop curriculum across multiple campuses. For example, if a Business Department at one campus wanted to modify, add, or delete segments of a program, the proposed changes required the discussion and agreement of all business departments within the system. Additional steps would require that these departments collaborate in shepherding changes through the system's curriculum-approval process.

Another potential performance barrier for district-system CAOs is the issue of supervising people employed by centralized departments but deployed to campuses

within the system. In the case of security personnel, for example, "security" was structured as a centralized function, and questions frequently arose around the CAO's authority to give directives to these employees when they were working on his or her campus.

It is interesting to note that one of the study participants commented that barriers did not exist for him on his campus. He further elaborated that his college provided an ideal environment for him. Following this discussion of barriers, Section 3 summarizes the actions the study CAOs said they would take if barriers were removed.

Actions CAOs Would Take If Barriers Were Removed

Most of the CAOs who participated in this doctoral study offered relatively short answers to the following question: "What would you do differently if these barriers were removed?" Their responses are presented below—in their own words and in no particular order of priority:

> I would spend more time talking with people about new ideas, new directions and then following up on those ideas.

> Things might be easier, but it really wouldn't change the bottom line of what I do.

> I would carve out more discretionary time to interface more with my district and do more development work

> If funding at state level was stabilized and the incentive to grow were removed, we would devote more funds to retaining students and doing a better job of advising and teaching.

> We should not be required to grow if we don't have the money to grow right! We don't want to grow on the margins.

I would try to facilitate more . . . help faculty facilitate more in an environment devoted to the growth and development of their profession and the curriculum.

I would let faculty customize their roles and help them to do what they are best at doing. Faculty should be masters of their areas. They need to tell us what they should be doing instead of the reverse. We should be facilitating faculty creativity; whatever that may be.

If I had more time, money, and help, it would make the job somewhat easier.

These statements are important because, collectively, the CAOs are revealing that important job functions—such as interfacing with the community, working with business and industry to develop new programs, and working with faculty to develop teaching innovations—are not getting done due to the barriers they cited earlier. Overall, study participants were clear that these activities are important to their success as well as to the success of the college and, therefore, they require their attention.

One study participant noted that this was the most difficult question of the entire interview to answer because she had never "dared to think about an ideal environment." She continued her discussion to reveal that she had "come to accept the fact that 'ideal' was not possible" and that she simply "had to work with what she had."

Summary of Section 3

Section 3 has provided information about the barriers that can impede work, impact CAO performance, and jeopardize the success of the college in achieving its goals. This section concluded with the voices of study CAOs reporting what they would do differently if these barriers were removed. Section 4, which follows, examines how

the study CAOs define "successful performance." Additionally, it explores the personal

rewards and satisfactions CAOs experience when their work efforts bear fruit.

<u>Section 4: Successful Performance and Personal Rewards</u>

The most pivotal interview question in this study focused directly on job

performance, and it was posed early in each interview session. As soon as respondents

seemed comfortable with the interview process, they were asked to define "successful

performance" in their role as chief academic officer. They also were asked to describe

the personal rewards and satisfactions they derived from their work. The first half of

this section compiles their definitions of successful performance; the second half

explores the personal rewards and satisfactions these CAOs experienced in their service

to students and their institutions.

Successful Performance As Defined by CAOs

The CAOs who participated in this study were asked to define successful

performance in their role as the chief academic officer for their campus. They were

subsequently asked if this perspective had evolved since first entering the job. While a

few reported no significant difference, most noted that their perspective had expanded

significantly after working in the job for just a few months. They noted that initially

their perspectives had been more narrow, focusing primarily on concrete issues and

tasks to be accomplished. As they were exposed to a broad spectrum of issues, their

focus expanded to "the bigger picture," which included college vision, state and national issues, and the institution's "place within the statewide system."

Most of the CAOs in this study had little difficulty defining and discussing "successful performance" in the CAO role. Perhaps this is because my introductory letter emphasized my dissertation focus on successful performance, and this gave study participants time to consider the issue and fashion potential answers prior to their interviews. Their ease in defining successful performance also might be due to the fact that they continually keep "ideal performance" in mind while executing their duties and meeting their responsibilities.

Following are "top-of-the-mind" or first responses provided by study CAOs when asked to describe successful performance as the chief academic officer. Once again, their answers are provided verbatim to allow the reader to make his or her own interpretation:

> Successful performance means that the college is meeting its goals [of enrollment and retention], and students are successful in meeting their educational objectives—they are learning and graduating. My role in this is facilitating processes so that what's happening in the classroom is getting to those kinds of outcomes. Success in this job is dependent on interpersonal skills: relationship building, communication, and so on; and the CAO must apply these skills across and up and down the organization.

> I am successful in my job as a CAO if I am supporting the institution's goals of delivering high-quality instruction, maintaining/growing enrollment, ensuring academic integrity and academic freedom, and sustaining morale—all at the highest possible levels. . . . If I am successful in the CAO role, the college is achieving its goals. At this college, success means that we are providing good, successful academic programs and we are meeting our growth goals in enrollment and retention. [At the statewide level] success in our roles as CAOs means

the success or failure of the institution under the current state funding formula where it is grow or die.

My success is measured on the quality of services given to students and ultimately to the community. [Successful performance] means being an active force for change and the improvement of the experience for our students. . . . The Dean of Instruction has to be a force for the quality of products or services for students . . . so the question is: How do I improve them if I don't have front-line contact with students? I must work through others [division deans and chairs]. . . . I must motivate them to inspire their faculty who do work directly with students. This requires great interpersonal skills.

Successful performance is knowing that I am offering high-quality programs—programs that are meeting the needs of students. That we are on top of program development trends. That we are on top of workforce trends, which allows us to be responsive to new trends. That we are doing a good job of program evaluation and program assessment. That we are doing a good job of hiring good people and monitoring faculty through evaluations to ensure a high-quality faculty. Knowing that we are continually assessing ourselves. Knowing that our programs are accessible—a cornerstone of the community college mission.

Successful performance has two components . . . and there is a lot of shared governance throughout both of them: one, you are successful if you have a good system in place to ensure the quality of faculty; and two, you are successful if you are using funds wisely to pursue the goals the college has set. . . . You are successful if you are holding up the college vision (its direction—where it wants to go; what it wants to be) at all times as the highest priority, and you are accomplishing college goals with the funds available.

My successful performance is having successful people. Being able to facilitate successful problem-solving; facilitating team building; and facilitating collaboration. I am successful when the team is successful.

I am successful if the teaching and learning enterprise moves forward . . . if it experiences growth, remains dynamic, and meets the needs of student learners . . . and it does so with vitality and energy. I am successful if the climate and culture are positive . . . if people are happy . . . if the college is growing and doing things and we are comfortable learning together . . . experimenting together. I must also pay attention to the bottom line and grow FTE and balance the budget. [The job is about]

making the internal workings of an organization work and moving it forward.

My successful performance is based on obtaining the goals that have been established jointly between myself and my supervisor. It means having excellent relationships with all employees and making people feel included. It means successfully wearing two hats—a district hat and a campus hat. It means providing an environment which fosters creativity and innovation . . . new ideas and new ways of doing things. It means a commitment to student learning. And then ultimately students are successful. It means embracing diversity and different points of view. . . . So much of what I do is process oriented but the ultimate is that employees are happy and want to be where they are and working for the students' success.

It is interesting to note that one of the respondents reported that questions about successful performance were difficult to answer because the work of the CAO impacts almost every area of the college—from instruction to student services, from building and equipment maintenance to campus security. In other words, the job is so expansive that almost any answer, regardless of how well phrased, would seem inadequate in reflecting the full scope of the job.

The respondent comments presented above provide a rich description of performance within the CAO role—a description than has been unavailable until this study. To enhance the depth and richness of the data represented thus far, the following "pearls of wisdom" or "conditions and prerequisites for success" were gleaned from the eight Oregon CAOs during their 90-minute interviews. The topics include cultivating relations, measuring performance, focusing more on learning rather than on teaching, addressing quality issues and faculty evaluations, pursuing one's own professional growth, hiring the right people, putting the job into perspective, and having a deep

commitment to student learning and faculty/staff development. Again, their comments

are presented verbatim for the reader's own interpretation:

> A flatter organizational structure, versus a tall hierarchy, encourages
> more communication, a better flow of communication, and faculty
> involvement in issues. If an adversarial situation or climate evolves,
> people aren't motivated to do their best work at all levels of the
> organization. [Therefore,] the organization must cultivate an open and
> efficient flow of information, mutual respect, and trust. It must focus on
> relationships rather than structure. In other words, the culture of the
> college must be based on support and trust, and people must feel
> included.

> The CAO must set measurements and evaluate programs, set direction,
> and keep instruction moving forward, making improvements where
> appropriate. You can't really compare measures of success from one
> institution to another, because it [success] depends on the institution's
> goals, the environment [in which it finds itself], the culture of the
> institution, and how it [the college] defines success.

> As CAO in our organization, I am not directly responsible for Student
> Services, but I must make sure that academic services mix well with
> student development. So, I consider this an indirect responsibility and
> measure of success.

> This job is very broad and very diverse. It requires that you know a little
> about everything. A key issue is that we traditionally focus on programs
> and instruction, but we should focus more on the quality of learning [that
> happens at our institutions]. Our measures of output should be: Are
> students learning? Are we meeting community needs? We must
> understand how students are affected by our programs. We must know
> that learning is taking place.

> My perspective was far more narrow when I took the position. I focused
> on quality issues and faculty evaluations. With time in the job, my
> perspective has broadened to focus on the board's mission and shared
> governance issues.

> Other elements of successful performance include being able to do
> creative things like watching faculty experiment with new teaching
> methods and techniques. Part of being a successful CAO is helping
> people to grow professionally—supporting them in getting additional

education or advanced degrees. The successful CAO defines the right
questions more so than the right answers. It is important to know that the
team is working on an answer for the right question. The successful
CAO must walk a fine line between being a corporate education
facilitator and a liberal arts educator . . . and they must do it in just 2
years [2 years is the length of an associate degree program].

To be successful I must hire good people to work with me and yet
maintain connections and use mentors and people in whom I can confide.
I always try to remember that this job is not about "life and death" like
other jobs such as those in medicine and health care that require
decisions that can mean "life or death."

The chief academic officer must have a deep commitment to student
learning. He must have a vision [for instruction] and embrace faculty
and staff development. An important part of the job is continually
reading and staying informed of issues and trends—the latest programs
and approaches.

Personal Rewards and Satisfactions

Following questions about successful performance, study participants were

asked about the rewards and satisfactions they derive from their work as a CAO. Their

answers tended to be very concise and focused, usually only a few sentences in length.

The rewards cited closely aligned with the very reasons they took the job

initially—these dedicated men and women wanted to make a difference in the lives of

students and the quality of instruction offered by their institutions.

General observations about rewards and satisfactions they experienced in the job

include the following. All eight respondents agreed that student success was a key

reward; four of the eight stated that "student success" was, by far, their greatest reward.

All eight listed having a positive impact on faculty, staff, and the college as a personal

satisfaction. All noted that the professional growth of colleagues (faculty, staff, and administrators) was another personal satisfaction associated with the job. Seven of the eight participants focused primarily on "people" aspects when discussing rewards and job satisfactions. Only one framed her answers initially at the macro level—focusing first on the success of the institution. She noted that the greatest reward or satisfaction in being a CAO is "seeing the institution move forward, accomplish its goals, establish successful new projects, and provide good instruction."

Additional rewards of the job, as noted by the CAOs who participated in this study include collaborating with others to achieve a successful end (working with teams to accomplishing goals), and "continually learning something new." They also enjoyed "seeing people growing together and recognizing that they are part of a learning community"; "watching special projects take root and then grow and flourish"; and "providing new programs, particularly through distance delivery systems." And finally, one of the CAOs phrased her answer very succinctly: "My greatest reward lies in knowing that good instruction is happening and that the college is moving forward."

Summary of Section 4

Section 4 has discussed the pivotal issue in this study—successful performance in the CAO position. It began with the study participants defining success in this leadership role and then describing what it takes to be successful at their respective colleges. This section then highlighted the rewards and personal satisfactions these CAOs experienced as they witnessed their work positively impacting the lives of others

and the welfare of their colleges. Section 5, which follows, presents the advice these eight CAOs would give to those who aspire to the CAO role, including recommendations they would offer to prepare for the job.

Section 5: CAO Advice to Others Who Aspire to the Position

This final section of Chapter IV explores the advice the study CAOs would give to others who aspire to the role. When asked about advice they might offer to others, they provided concise answers with relative ease. Additionally, they seemed to enjoy this question area—perhaps because it placed them in the position of expert and mentor. The first question in this area asked the CAOs how they would advise others to prepare for the position; the second asked them about recommendations they would offer for succeeding once in the role. They answered both questions with enthusiasm, devoting equal amounts of time to each. Their responses to these questions are provided in the following discussions.

How to Prepare for the Role

When asked how they would advise others to prepare for the position, all eight study participants first noted that the interpersonal skills discussed earlier in this chapter are paramount to all other skills in preparing for the job. Once again, they emphasized honing interpersonal skills such as communicating, listening, building relationships, and managing conflict. They also stressed the importance of developing strong collaborative and team skills, including the ability to build high-performance teams

comprised of members who bring additional talent to a project. Team skills, they noted, included the ability to engender a feeling of trust, cohesiveness, and solidarity among staff. One CAO stressed the wisdom of "learning how to lead together through collaboration."

Secondly, study participants stressed the importance of management abilities such as managing budgets and physical resources, accessing and analyzing data, developing strategic plans and goals, evaluating people and projects, and taking corrective action when necessary. All noted the importance of developing multitasking skills, including the ability to prioritize issues and revamp a work schedule in order to address time-sensitive problems as they arise. Additionally, they emphasized the ability to attend to details while remaining focused on the "big picture" as critical to preparing for the CAO role. One of the study participants echoed the sentiment of her colleagues when she stated, "CAO candidates must hone the ability to juggle multiple priorities as well as the enormous demands of the job on their time."

An equal number of respondents stressed the importance of acquiring administrative experience (and teaching experience, if possible) at the college level. They advised that garnering community college experience will help them to understand the mission and objectives of the community college and how it differs from those of 4-year colleges and universities. Since CAO advice might be considered by those who aspire to the job as golden words of wisdom, the following CAO recommendations for job preparation are presented verbatim:

Get teaching experience, and learn everything you can about teaching and learning.

Get as much experience working with faculty and different programs as possible.

You must understand instruction and the faculty experience.

Know Systems Theory and take a systems perspective in all decisions and actions. Volunteer to lead projects with college-wide visibility. Demonstrate that you can successfully influence people beyond your division and do the work of a dean.

Understand your personal leadership style and your own ethical boundaries.

Have a clear, deep understanding of who you are and what you believe.

Know where you won't compromise and what issues you are willing to take to the mat and even lose your job over.

Know your ethical boundaries.

Research the college, its history, its values, and its culture; be certain that your leadership style is a good fit with the college before pursuing the position.

Get a broad background in management and education.

Get as much experience as possible working with others to cultivate team skills.

Get a solid foundation in technology; understand its changing nature and how changes impact institutions.

Acquire an understanding of the community, business and industry, and how a changing world impacts the community college.

Understand the web world and distance delivery systems for instruction.

Complete a doctorate in community college leadership.

Spend time with people who serve in the CAO role, perhaps through an internship.

Develop a network of colleagues who will provide assistance, advice, and support.

Learn how to work under extreme pressure, because the job is about handling multiple pressures every day.

Learn how to argue calmly and politically.

Get two kinds of mentors: one you admire and who can serve as a role model: another who will be candid and provide constructive criticism when you need it.

All of the study participants acknowledged, in some manner, the importance of having a mentor in moving to a higher position within the college structure. Most recommended finding and working with a mentor or multiple mentors to prepare for the role. They noted that mentors not only "know the ropes" and can provide valuable insight into this leadership role, but they can also alert hopeful CAOs to potential opportunities since they are usually well-connected to a variety of professional networks. Mentors also can assist CAO candidates in preparing job applications, anticipating interview questions, and rehearsing for extensive on-site interviews and meetings—meetings that usually include time with a search committee, the college president, key administrators and managers, faculty and staff, and members of the surrounding community.

The CAOs in this study additionally recommended developing and sustaining strong relationships with colleagues and building networks among colleagues beyond their own colleges. In other words, they advise potential CAO candidates to become

active in statewide, regional, and even national committee work, which can help them to develop important relationships and linkages that might prove fruitful in identifying job prospects. These same relationships and associations can prove helpful once in the job in terms of providing support and information about the best ways to address situations and accomplish goals.

This first half of Section 5 has provided advice for potential CAO candidates, as offered by the CAOs who participated in this study, about how to best prepare for the chief academic officer position. The second half of Section 5 will present their counsel about being successful once in the role.

How to Succeed Once in the Job

When asked to provide advice to potential CAO candidates for succeeding once in the job, the overwhelming majority of study respondents again emphasized the importance of honing the interpersonal skills discussed several times throughout this dissertation. Again, these skills include communicating and listening; engendering trust; developing relationships and building teams; mediating issues, and managing and resolving conflicts; and motivating others to do their best work.

More than half of the respondents (five of the eight) emphasized the importance of understanding their institution—its culture, philosophy, values, and systems. One noted, "The job is so multidimensional that you must learn the systems and issues quickly." Another commented about the wisdom of "learning [about] the college from everyone's point of view." More than half of the CAOs (five of the eight) asserted that

every instructional leader should understand his or her own leadership style, and continually re-evaluate his or her own personal "fit" within the organization. One respondent underscored the importance of "knowing where you want to be creative [in the organization] and assessing if this can happen at your current institution." Knowing oneself, they noted, includes the ability to honestly and accurately assess your own strengths and weaknesses.

Study CAOs additionally emphasized the importance of "building teams of talented people to augment your own abilities." When discussing the skills required to work effectively with teams, one CAO advised, "Build trust and cohesiveness within and among your teams; develop solidarity, and lead together." Another succinctly offered these words of wisdom: "Use teams effectively, because the job is far too complex to do it all yourself."

Incumbent in the issue of using teams to accomplish goals is the issue of "getting others involved and empowering staff to help you do the work." One of the study participants noted, "You must empower others in order to get things done. It is a very big job." Another added, "Get others involved to spread out the work and responsibility, and then support those you have empowered. Know your networks and get the right people involved. You can't make all the decisions because you don't have all the expertise required for the best decision making." And finally, one CAO tied teamwork to leadership: "A good leader knows when to take the role of leader, coach, or follower . . . and then perform admirably in that role."

When considering advice to offer a new CAO, one of the study participants cautioned, "First do no harm. Don't make big changes when you first walk into the job; look for ways to add value to systems, projects, and endeavors." Additionally, there was this caution from another CAO: "Understand that it is often wiser to reflect on an issue (write it down and see if it still bothers you at a later date) rather than take quick action and later regret that action. If it's not broken, don't fix it."

Another area of advice offered by study participants focused on personal visibility: getting out of the office, making connections, and building relationships across and beyond the campus. One CAO advised, "Get yourself out there. Connect with people in key positions. Be visible to the college community. Get to know the people." Another recommended, "Communicate often—one-on-one, through E-mails or memos . . . whatever it takes."

Several of the study CAOs also focused on the higher ideals of the office when asked about recommendations they would offer for successful performance. One advised: "Try to facilitate real change rather than just focusing on generating FTE." Another added: "Be a change agent and look for ways to add value to existing structures." All study CAOs again emphasized the importance of possessing a strong commitment to teaching and learning.

The issue of time demands associated with the CAO job has been discussed many times throughout this dissertation. Several of the CAOs returned to this issue when offering advice, noting, "People who are new to the position (as well as those who are currently in the job) must learn and continually remind themselves to balance the

demands on their time." This means allocating time for leadership responsibilities, taking time to have a personal life, and making time for one's own profession development.

One of the participants returned to the discussion of system complexity and the importance of good communications by noting that the CAO must be able to help faculty understand college governance and operating systems in order to be truly successful. This same CAO asserted an imperative to understand state processes, such as curriculum approval procedures, in order to help faculty shepherd new programs through the state-approval process.

And finally, several of the respondents advised that a CAO must be a good, if not outstanding, listener and that he or she must hone the ability to really "take in" what is being said—to look beyond mere words for the real meaning of the communication. Additionally, study participants noted that the CAO must be courteous, respectful, and professional at all times, and fair and consistent in all transactions and interactions with groups and individuals.

Summary of Section 5

This last section of Chapter IV has presented advice the eight study CAOs would give to potential chief academic officers about how to prepare for the role and how to perform successfully once in the job. Much of Section 5 has been presented in the respondents' own words so that the reader can hear directly (in their own voices) from the talented people who currently serve in this pivotal leadership role. Verbatim

responses allow the reader to make his or her own interpretation of the direct comments (or data) without translation by the researcher.

The reader may ask why this last section of Chapter IV is so important to the overall study of CAO performance. The answer is not complex. CAO responses to queries about the advice they would provide to future instructional leaders not only provide information that can help others to prepare for and ultimately succeed in the job, but these responses also provide an opportunity to revisit the tools that current CAOs know are critical to successful performance.

Summary of Chapter IV

Section 1 of Chapter IV has provided a profile of the purposeful sample used in this study. Sections 2 through 5 presented a compilation of the research findings distilled from the data obtained through 90-minute, on-site interviews with the eight CAOs who participated in this study. Advanced interpersonal skills and abilities were cited by respondents as most critical to successful performance in the CAO position. Knowledge and well-honed skills and abilities were also required in the following areas: performing management functions; managing instruction and instructional issues; maintaining facilities and technologies; and providing exemplary leadership using a participative, collaborative style.

Chapter V, which follows, takes an additional step in data analysis as it views study findings through the lens of leadership. It explores the potential for developing a

new CAO leadership model grounded in the study data, and subsequently examines how

the new model would function within a performance paradigm.

CHAPTER V: A MODEL FOR CAO LEADERSHIP

Introduction

This chapter examines study findings through the lens of leadership. It is

divided into three sections, which describe (a) how five key areas of competency were

identified, (b) how these areas were assembled into a structure to create a new

leadership model, and (c) how the new model can be incorporated into a performance

paradigm to illustrate the linkage between CAO performance and the success of the

college and its students.

Section 1: The Five Areas of Competency Required
for Successful CAO Performance

This study generated data about the knowledge, skills, and abilities required for

successful performance within the CAO role, as discussed in Chapter IV. As I reflected

upon the data and the patterns and relationships that had emerged, I noted that the

knowledge, skills, and abilities described by study participants fell into five primary

clusters. These clusters focused on interpersonal, managerial, instructional,

developmental, and leadership talents. Using the concept of "competency" to convey "a

collection or package of the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform a task or

job," I created areas of competency around (a) interpersonal dynamics, (b) managerial

functions, (c) instructional issues, (d) capacity development, and (e) leadership through

collaboration. Each of these areas of competency is defined in the discussion that follows.

Competency in Interpersonal Dynamics

Competency in interpersonal dynamics is the first and most significant area of competency. It includes:

1. Communicating effectively with individuals and groups.

2. Listening and maintaining sensitivity and respect.

3. Developing relationships; building partnerships.

4. Managing conflict; mediating disagreements.

More specifically, competency in interpersonal dynamics demands that CAOs demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively with a wide variety of individuals and groups, as well as an ability to develop positive working relationships that build productive partnerships. It requires skill in listening intensely in order to identify the real issues being raised. This competency requires finesse in addressing sensitive issues with the utmost discretion and confidentiality. It requires an ability to face confrontation and contentious situations calmly and without hesitation, as well as an ability to manage conflict while respecting the values and opinions of all parties involved. It requires skill in helping others to solve complex problems and disputes, which, in turn, requires skill in mediating contentious situations to successful resolution—resolution that is considered to be fair and equitable by all parties involved.

Additionally, competency in interpersonal dynamics requires using sound judgment and demonstrating professionalism at all times. It mandates that CAOs model honesty, integrity, and ethics, and that they treat others fairly, equally, and with dignity and respect. It includes displaying a genuine commitment to diversity, where diversity is defined as acceptance of persons different in age, race, cultural background, or gender orientation.

Competency in Managing Operations

Competency in managing operations encompasses the ability to perform, with a high degree of proficiency, a broad spectrum of management functions. It includes:

1. Understanding budgets, funding, and resource allocation.

2. Administering data systems and managing projects.

3. Meeting state statutes and federal guidelines.

Additionally, management competency requires skill in organizing, planning, and monitoring operations to ensure that quality services are offered by the institution to the public. It requires an ability to think critically and analytically, and to solve complex problems in a timely manner. Additionally, it requires an understanding of Systems Theory and an ability to apply "systems thinking" principles to decision processes.

Managerial competency requires CAOs to demonstrate skill in administering complex data systems and protecting public assets such as equipment and facilities. Management competency also requires skill in developing and monitoring complex

budgets and assessing the instructional division's financial status and stability. It requires skill in forecasting demand for services and helping the college to secure state, federal, and private funding.

Managing the instructional functions of an institution requires CAOs to possess and apply a comprehensive knowledge of college and program accreditation standards. It requires a thorough understanding of state statutes and national guidelines that impact higher education.

Most important, management competency in higher education requires CAOs to possess and apply a working knowledge of labor laws and personnel practices, particularly those that pertain to affirmative action, employee discipline, and employee termination. It demands that CAOs possess a thorough understanding of bargaining unit agreements and an ability to appropriately apply contract terms to daily practice. If unions exist on campus, the CAO must demonstrate an ability to work well with bargaining-unit (union) officials in addressing issues that surface around hours, wages, and working conditions for employees.

Competency in Addressing Instructional Issues

This third competency area focuses on addressing issues associated with instruction. It includes:

1. Understanding teaching, learning, and curriculum development.

2. Understanding technology and distance delivery systems.

3. Understanding and supporting faculty and students.

4. Meeting accreditation standards.

More specifically, competency in instructional issues requires an extensive knowledge of instructional methods as well as an ability to address issues that arise around the quality of teaching and learning that takes place on campus, at satellite locations, in classes offered over the Internet, and in job-site apprenticeships. Study CAOs underscored that teaching experience at the college level is critical to honing the knowledge and skills required of a strong instructional leader. It follows that instructional competency requires skill in designing and updating curricula, and implementing new courses and programs. Competency in instruction also requires skill in designing assessment measures and then using those measurements to evaluate the quality of instruction being offered by the institution.

The most significant requirement of competency in this area is an ability to work well with faculty in developing curricula and implementing programs. This means that CAOs must possess a thorough understanding of college and state curriculum-approval processes and procedures, and demonstrate skill in helping faculty shepherd new programs through these processes. In many cases, new offerings or changes to existing curricula must meet state and national standards for accreditation. This requires that CAOs "know the ropes" when it comes to unique certification processes.

Technological improvements in computer software and distance learning have enabled educational institutions to experiment with new ways of structuring and delivering instruction. In order to help faculty incorporate these new technologies into the curriculum, CAOs must possess the creative skills necessary to help faculty innovate

and implement new ideas. Most important, CAOs must stand ready to encourage and support faculty members when they take risks and try new ideas, particularly when first efforts do not yield the desired results.

And finally, instructional competency requires an ability to understand and appreciate both the faculty and student experience. It demands a commitment to teaching and learning as well as the ability to support everyone in these processes. Supporting students periodically means addressing and resolving student complaints about faculty performance and/or the quality of instruction students receive. Resolving complaints in a way that preserves and strengthens student-faculty relationships requires the advanced interpersonal skills discussed in the first area of competency: competency in interpersonal dynamics.

Competency in Building and Using Capacity

Competency in building and using capacity is necessary in helping the college achieve its objectives and carry out its mission. This competency includes:

1. Hiring, retaining, and "growing" competent faculty and staff.

2. Developing/sustaining programs to meet industry needs.

3. Maintaining facilities, equipment, and technology.

Competency in capacity development focuses on three basic components: people, programs, and facilities. The most important of these is people—the institution's most valuable asset. This competency requires CAOs to be skilled in hiring, nurturing, and retaining qualified faculty and staff. Nurturing employees

requires an ability to design and implement professional development programs—programs that keep faculty and staff vital in their areas of expertise and dedicated to their profession and their students.

The second component of building capacity focuses on developing programs, particularly professional-technical programs that prepare graduates for employment. Adding new programs to college offerings requires CAOs to work well with business and industry leaders in order to assess changing industry needs—needs that dictate the design, standards, and goals of new programs. CAOs must also demonstrate an ability to build long-term partnerships that help to sustain the technical programs which supply well-educated, highly skilled workers to the local business community.

The most obvious of the three capacity-development components is building and maintaining facilities. This component requires CAOs to demonstrate skill and talent in helping their institutions design facilities that are conducive to teaching, learning, and experimentation. Facilities must be furnished with cutting-edge equipment, which, in turn, requires CAOs to be knowledgeable about the latest technologies that facilitate learning and support distance delivery systems. Additionally, CAOs must be able to apply this knowledge to daily operations in order to help the college provide innovative new services to new and expanded markets.

Competency in Leading Through Collaboration

This final competency area focuses on leading instructional personnel—administrators, managers, faculty, and support staff. It includes:

1. Using a values-oriented, participatory leadership style.

2. Building and using high-performance work teams.

3. Understanding college culture and governance.

4. Sharing vision, values, and common goals.

At a micro level this competency requires skill in supervising employees. Supervisory skills include recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance as well as addressing substandard performance and working with staff to make the required improvements. At a macro level this competency requires an ability to work well with a broad spectrum of individuals and groups, and skill in fostering collaboration among diverse groups.

The essence of this fifth competency area is leading through collaboration. This requires that CAOs possess an understanding of the institution's culture and governance systems, and demonstrate an ability to lead others within these established structures. Study CAOs noted that it is wise initially (when new to the job) to implement changes only when and where necessary. Making changes and implementing new ideas requires an ability to prepare the "collective mind-set" for impending change and then facilitate change by helping others to accept new ways of "thinking and doing."

Competency in leading through collaboration also includes an ability to help staff focus on a shared vision for the college and common goals for instruction. It includes inviting all personnel to participate in shared decision-making, with the understanding that all members of the instructional team will support (or at least not sabotage) collective decisions of the team.

CAOs in this doctoral study reported that a values-oriented, participative leadership style tends to work best if the college culture values staff input and new ideas. Participative leadership requires skill in building, nurturing, and guiding high-performance work teams. It means respecting the team's work and implementing its recommendations. Participative leadership is grounded in an ability to delegate tasks and responsibility and to intervene only as required to ensure that projects are completed well and on schedule. In the best situations, this leadership style reflects the principles of true stewardship where employee input is highly valued and decisions are designated to those closest to the point of contact with the recipient of service—in this case, students and the community.

Summary of Section 1

This first section of Chapter V revisited information that study CAOs provided about the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform their duties. The data were then clustered into five primary areas and termed "areas of competency." These five areas included competency in interpersonal dynamics, operations management, instruction, capacity development, and leadership. Section 2 incorporates these five areas of competency into a new CAO leadership model that delineates "what it takes" to be successful as a CAO.

Section 2: Developing a CAO Leadership Model
Based on the Five Areas of Competency

By arranging the five competency areas discussed in Section 1 in descending

order of priority, I developed a new model for CAO leadership. The model uses an

inverted pyramid scheme to delineate the five areas of competency required for

successful performance in the CAO role. The most critical competency, competency in

interpersonal dynamics, is situated at the apex of the structure. The remaining four

competencies are presented in order of the frequency with which they were discussed

and emphasized by the CAOs who participated in this doctoral study. An abbreviated

version of the model is presented here (see Figure 1); an expanded version follows (see

Figure 2).

| Competency in Interpersonal Dynamics |
| Competency in Managing Operations |
| Competency in Addressing Instructional Issues |
| Competency in Building & Using Capacity |
| Competency in Leading through Collaboration |

FIGURE 1. A Model for CAO Leadership: The Five Competencies
Required for Successful Performance (Abbreviated Version)

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                  Competency in Interpersonal Dynamics          │
│       Communicating Effectively with a Wide Variety of Individuals and Groups │
│        Listening Effectively & Maintaining Sensitivity & Respect for Others │
│          Developing Relationships & Building Collaborative Partnerships │
│                Managing Conflict & Mediating Disputes          │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
    ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
    │             Competency in Managing Operations             │
    │    Using Systems-Thinking Principles in Planning & Decision-Making │
    │     Understanding Budget Processes, Funding, & Resource Allocation │
    │        Administering Data Systems & Managing Physical Assets │
    │         Applying Bargaining Unit Agreements to Daily Practice │
    │             Meeting State Regulations & Federal Guidelines │
    └─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
       ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
       │        Competency in Addressing Instructional Issues  │
       │    Understanding Teaching, Learning, & Curriculum Development │
       │      Implementing New Technologies & New Delivery Systems │
       │        Understanding & Supporting Both Faculty and Students │
       │               Meeting Accreditation Standards         │
       └─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
          ┌────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
          │       Competency in Building & Using Capacity    │
          │   Hiring, Retaining, & "Growing" Competent Faculty & Staff │
          │  Developing & Implementing Professional Technical Programs │
          │    Designing Facilities Conducive to Teaching & Learning │
          │     Securing & Maintaining Equipment & Technologies │
          │        Using Capacity to Achieve Institutional Goals │
          └────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
             ┌─────────────────────────────────────────────┐
             │    Competency in Leading through Collaboration │
             │     Leading with a Values-Oriented, Participatory Style │
             │      Building & Using High-Performance Work Teams │
             │       Understanding College Culture & Governance │
             │           Sharing Vision, Values, & Common Goals │
             └─────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
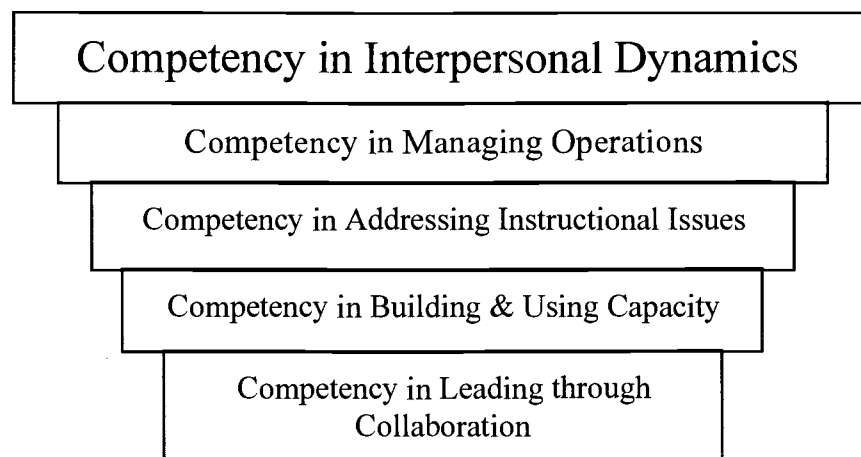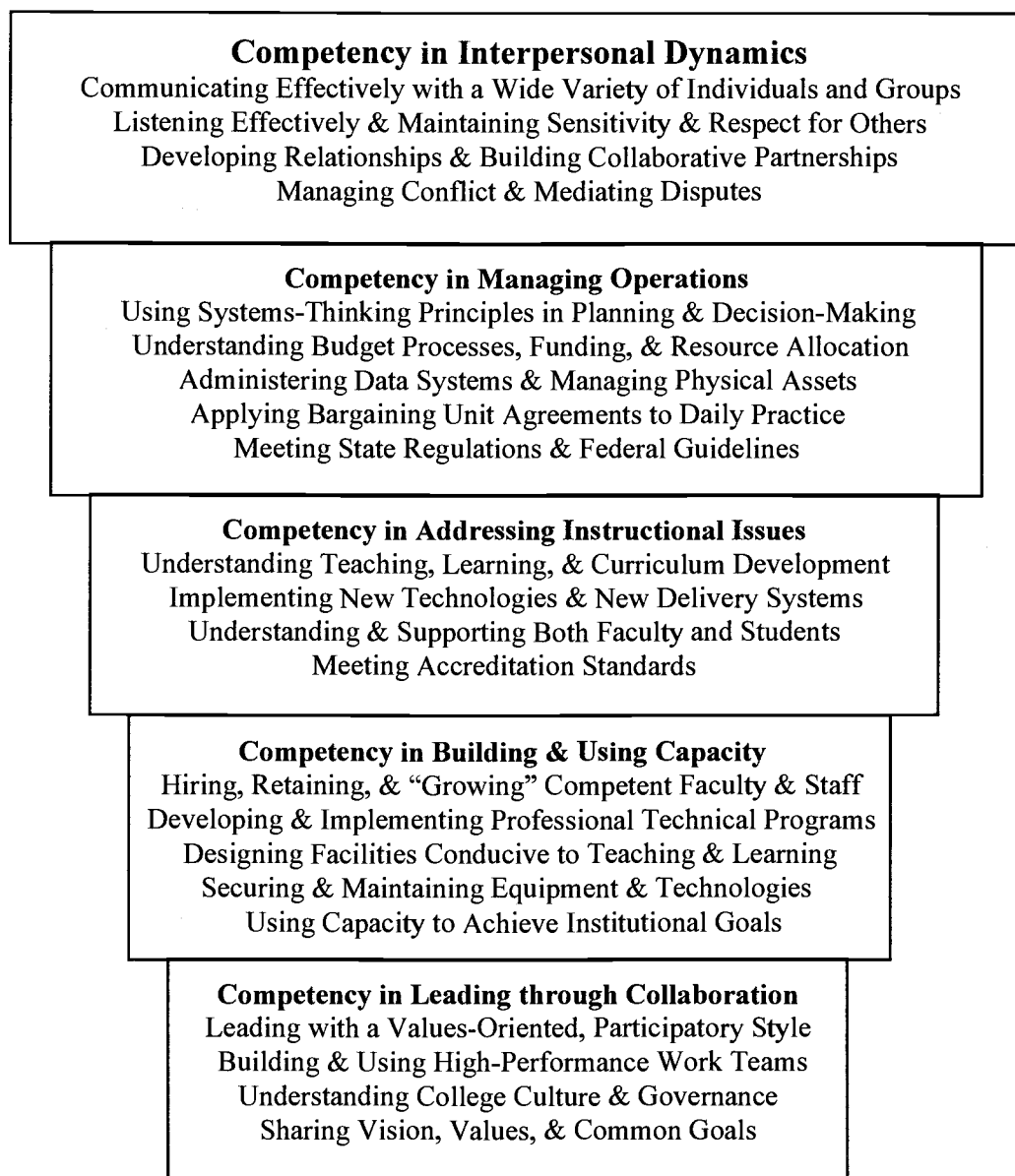
FIGURE 2. A Model for CAO Leadership: The Five Competencies
Required for Successful Performance (Abbreviated Version)

This leadership model is intended to convey that CAOs are successful when they

demonstrate competency in the model's five key areas. In the discussion that follows,

this leadership model is incorporated into a performance paradigm that demonstrates how CAO service impacts the performance and ultimately the success of the college and its students.

<div style="text-align:center">

<u>Section 3: Incorporating the Leadership Model
Into a Performance Paradigm</u>

</div>

This section describes how a modified version of the *Conceptual Framework Paradigm Model,* developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998), can be used to help describe CAO performance. The Strauss and Corbin paradigm model demonstrates linkages and relationships among inputs, intervening variables, phenomena under study, and outcomes (pp. 99-106). A modified version of this paradigm can be used to describe the relationships among four key components of CAO performance: (a) inputs; (b) intervening factors, both positive and negative; (c) CAO performance (the phenomenon under study); and (d) outcomes related to CAO performance.

The first component of this performance paradigm denotes *inputs* that include: (a) the experience and talents entering candidates bring to the CAO position, (b) an official framework (the job description) that defines the CAO's duties and responsibilities, and (c) the expectations of the CAO's president and governing board.

The second component of the paradigm focuses on performance within the CAO role, which is the phenomenon under study. The new leadership competency model is the mainstay of this key component. If the CAO possesses and applies the competencies outlined in the new leadership model, his or her performance will lead to positive

outcomes for students and the college—assuming that positive intervening factors (discussed in the next component of the paradigm) support the CAO's efforts.

The third component focuses on intervening factors and demonstrates the impact these factors have on CAO performance. Positive intervening factors include mentors, supportive colleagues, intercollegian CAO relationships, informal support networks, state groups, and professional organizations. Negative intervening factors include the formidable challenges that can impede CAO performance.

The performance paradigm conveys the following: When CAOs possess and demonstrate competency in the five areas outlined in the leadership model they are able to address, mitigate, and even overcome the imposing barriers they encounter daily in the job. Competency in these five areas enables CAOs to move through these barriers toward the fourth component of this paradigm: outcomes. Positive outcomes are defined in this context as students achieving their educational goals and colleges fulfilling their missions. Negative outcomes mean that CAO performance is suboptimal and that students and institutions are not achieving their objectives.

Connecting all four components of this performance paradigm generates the following conceptual framework. Chief academic officers bring a certain level of talent, experience, and expertise with them as they enter the CAO position. Their new duties and responsibilities are framed by a job description as well as by the expectations of their presidents and governing boards. If CAOs are not proficient in the five competency areas upon entering their new role, they must become proficient in these areas quickly if they are to meet challenges, overcome obstacles, and survive and succeed as the institution's

instructional leader. Additionally, CAOs are buoyed up by support systems and colleagues who help them to meet challenges and overcome barriers. In summary, when CAOs demonstrate proficiency in the five competency areas and additionally utilize good support networks, they will be successful in their work, which will result in the desired outcomes for students and their institutions.

<u>Summary of Chapter V</u>

Chapter V has provided a view of study findings through the lens of leadership. It identified five key areas of competency required for successful performance in the CAO role. This chapter presented a new model for CAO leadership—a model grounded in the five key competency areas, which, in turn, are grounded in the study data presented in Chapter IV. The model was subsequently situated at the center of a performance paradigm that illustrates how successful CAO service engenders success for the college and its students.

Chapter VI summarizes this dissertation work. It also addresses study relevance and implications for the future, and offers suggestions for applying study findings and the new leadership model to daily practice in the community college.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, KEY FINDINGS, RELEVANCE,
APPLICATIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Chapter VI provides a summary of this doctoral research project. It conveys key findings derived from the data that were collected from the eight chief academic officers who took part in this study. Additionally, this chapter offers a discussion of study relevance, which is followed by suggestions for applying findings and a new leadership model to practice. It concludes with a discussion of implications. An epilogue, which follows this last chapter, shares personal reflections and recommendations for future study.

Summary

This research was initiated to explore the successful performance of chief academic officers in community colleges. My first objective was to inform my own practice by gaining a better understanding of the CAO role—a role that requires extensive knowledge, skills, and abilities to do the job well. Additionally, I wanted to learn more about the duties and responsibilities that come with the job as well as the challenges, rewards, and satisfactions experienced by the men and women who don the heavy mantle of instructional leadership. My second objective was to document my research findings in a way that provided a rich description for others interested in the work of the CAO and the quality of instruction offered by community colleges.

To accomplish these first two research objectives, I conducted in-depth, on-site interviews of eight CAOs in selected Oregon community colleges, and subsequently used qualitative, interpretive research methods to process the data obtained. As the study evolved and as I reflected upon the data generated by my research, I recognized that the knowledge, skills, and abilities described by study CAOs as critical to successful performance could be clustered into areas of competency. At this point, I added a third objective to my work: the objective to develop a model for CAO leadership that could be applied to daily practice. The new model was designed around five key areas of competency, where "competency" is defined as a "package" of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform job duties. The new model is intended to convey that if the CAO possesses and relies upon the five competency areas delineated in the model, he or she will ultimately be successful in the CAO role. The model was then incorporated into a modified version of the Strauss and Corbin *Conceptual Framework Paradigm Model* to illustrate how CAO performance impacts students and the institution. The modified performance paradigm demonstrates that if the CAO is successful, students will succeed in accomplishing their educational goals and the college will succeed in meeting its goals and mission.

Key Findings

Study findings were discussed in detail in Chapter IV. Following are 12 key findings gleaned from that data:

1. The successful performance of chief academic officers is determined by the level of competency they possess and display in five key areas: interpersonal dynamics, managerial operations, instruction and instructional design, capacity development, and leadership through collaboration. Of these five competency areas, competency in interpersonal dynamics is by far the most significant. One of the CAOs who participated in this doctoral study stated her definition of success very succinctly: "Success in the job is dependent on interpersonal skills—relationship building, communication . . . and the CAO must apply these skills across and up and down the organization."

2. CAOs tend to define their own success in terms of the successes achieved by others—their faculty, support staff, students, and their institutions. The following quote from one of the study CAOs is typical of the responses provided by those who participated in this project:

> Successful performance [in the role of CAO] means that the college is meeting its goals and students are successful in meeting their educational objectives—they are learning and graduating. My role in this is facilitating processes so that what's happening in the classroom is getting to those kinds of outcomes.

3. Other measures of successful performance include providing high-quality education, inspiring faculty who work directly with students, ensuring academic integrity, providing an environment that fosters creativity and innovation, building a positive culture that encourages creativity and innovation, and supporting the college in fulfilling its mission and meeting its enrollment and student-retention goals.

4. CAOs tend to rely upon each other for support and for learning about the job. The (Oregon) Council of Instructional Administrators was the most valuable support network to CAOs locally; the American Association of Community Colleges was an important resource and support network at the national level. Additionally, CAOs appreciated being mentored and emphasized that having a mentor was important to succeeding in their work and advancing up the academic ladder.

5. One of the greatest rewards for CAOs who participated in this study was witnessing the success of their colleagues, subordinates, students, and their institutions. They were pleased that they were able to facilitate these successes.

6. One of the major challenges of the job is dealing with the job itself. The position of chief academic officer is a demanding one—demanding in terms of time, energy, and talent. It can be totally consuming if the men and women who serve in this role do not continually strive for balance between their personal and professional lives.

7. State funding and the state funding formula for Oregon community colleges were major concerns for all study participants. The state's economy, declining revenues, and subsequent budget deficits over the past decade have resulted in less funding for its community colleges. Several of the study CAOs noted that trying to plan for the future is like trying to hit a constantly moving target.

8. Changing technologies and high employee turnover rates (due in large measure to recent changes in retirement benefits for community college employees) were viewed as major challenges.

9. Those CAOs who worked in multicampus district systems spent considerable time, energy, and travel in activities related to coordinating work efforts across the system.

10. Most of the CAOs who participated in this study originally accepted their CAO assignments because they believed they could "make a difference" in the lives of students and the quality of instruction offered by the college.

11. Most had served in their CAO positions longer than the national average. Additionally, they planned to remain in their roles as college instructional leaders.

12. Most of the study CAOs were not planning to seek a community college presidency. I found this to be quite interesting since chief academic officers are considered to comprise the most likely pool of presidential candidates, according to national studies conducted by others.

Study Relevance

This study has added to the current body of knowledge about the chief academic officer in the community college by providing a rich description of the CAO's work—a description that has been absent from the scholarly literature to date. Additionally, it has substantiated the work of other researchers who have linked the performance of chief academic officers to the quality of instruction provided by the community college.

At a scholarly level, this doctoral study should be viewed as an exploratory study that will hopefully "opened the door" for future research. By serving as the first in-depth, descriptive work to delve into the dynamics of the CAO role and the experiences

of those who serve in it, this study should provide a benchmark for researchers who follow.

At a more immediate application level, the findings generated from this research should prove relevant to those who currently serve in the CAO position. This dissertation should allow them to compare their own perceptions of successful performance with those provided by the CAOs who participated in this study. The findings generated from this study should also be relevant and helpful to men and women who may be considering a career move to the chief academic officer position. This dissertation should provide them with the most in-depth description of the job to date, including the challenges and rewards inherent in the job and the competencies required to do the work well. Additionally, the advice extended to future CAOs by the men and women who participated in this study should help future candidates to prepare for this complex and extremely demanding role.

<div align="center">Potential Applications of Study Findings</div>

The *CAO Leadership Competencies Model* generated by this research should prove helpful to college presidents, governing boards, and CAO search committee members who are charged with selecting the best candidates to fill CAO vacancies—candidates who demonstrate the greatest potential to succeed in this pivotal, instructional leadership role.

Additionally, this research has identified important job functions that CAOs often have little or no time to address due to the demanding nature of the job itself.

These functions include interfacing more with business and community leaders to build partnerships that benefit students, the college, and the community; cultivating alternative funding options with private foundations and federal agencies; staying informed about issues, trends, and legislation that can impact education; and "doing the development work necessary to grow programs and personnel." Any measures that community college presidents and governing boards can implement to reduce demands on the CAO's time would help their CAOs to focus more of their energies in these areas, which, in turn, should help students and colleges to prosper in the long-term.

Several study participants noted that professional-development opportunities for administrators, including themselves, were insufficient or lacking altogether on their campuses. This may be one reason why study CAOs did not dwell on issues such as their own intellectual development. The men and women who participated in this study tended to rely upon their affiliations with colleague groups such as the (Oregon) Council of Instructional Administrators for their professional development. Presidents and governing boards should determine if they are providing adequate options for the development of their CAOs, and make every attempt to provide better options for their CAOs in the future.

Tangent to the issue of professional development is the issue of support networks. The CAOs in this study underscored the importance of networking with colleagues in sustaining and assisting themselves in their roles as instructional leaders. Bearing this fact in mind, community college presidents should initiate any measures possible to ensure that their CAOs are given sufficient time and opportunity to network

and build relationships with colleagues across the state and country since this type of activity clearly supports CAO performance.

Additionally, study participants noted that they genuinely appreciated any mentoring and support they received from their presidents and colleagues. Any measures that colleges can implement to facilitate this support and these mentoring relationships should have a dramatic affect on nurturing their CAOs.

Implications for the Future

The CAO position is an extremely complex and demanding one, as evidenced by the findings produced by this study. And yet, the job is likely to grow even more complex and demanding in the future as new technologies are incorporated into instruction and as community colleges strive to meet the rapidly changing needs of businesses and growing communities. Add to this mix a downward spiral in funding, and the job becomes even more difficult.

Additionally, the future will hold even greater accountability for academic leaders. Educational institutions, including community colleges, will incur even more scrutiny in the future and will be required to demonstrate to legislators and taxpayers that their efforts yield positive, meaningful results. Community colleges will be expected to demonstrate exemplary stewardship of the public funds invested with them. Since the chief academic officer is responsible for all instructional endeavors, greater responsibility will inherently fall upon him or her to ensure the wise and prudent

allocation of these resources to grow programs and services and to ensure the quality of instruction provided by the institution.

Furthermore, college and program accreditation processes will continue to grow more rigorous in the future as accrediting bodies impose higher standards for performance and stricter criteria for certification. Since CAOs will continue their pivotal roles in college accreditation processes, supporting CAOs in accreditation practices and endeavors will be critical to the ongoing welfare of community colleges and their graduates.

Conclusion

This exploratory study used qualitative, interpretive techniques to add another brick to the wall of knowledge that currently exists about the role of the chief academic officer in the American community college. It has provided the first in-depth look at the demands and rewards of the job, while defining successful performance within this demanding leadership assignment. It has demonstrated the relationship that exists between successful performance of CAOs and successful outcomes achieved by their students and institutions. Additionally, it has produced a leadership model that can be applied to daily practice. The epilogue that follows this final chapter shares personal reflections about this research and explores issues and topics that were not raised by study CAOs. It concludes with recommendations for future study.

EPILOGUE: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR FUTURE STUDY

Introduction

This epilogue provides an opportunity for me to share my reflections of this doctoral research experience. The two sections that follow offer personal reflections and recommendations for future study.

Personal Reflections

This dissertation has not yet addressed issues that were not discussed or that were discussed only obliquely by the CAOs who participated in this study. Since qualitative research allows for observation and interpretation of "things unsaid," the most salient of these topics are noted in the following discussion.

One of the more elusive, yet critical, areas of leadership is ethics and integrity. Ethics and integrity infiltrate every aspect of our personal and professional lives. We use ethics in making choices and decisions; and integrity forms the very foundation of our personal credibility. It is interesting to note that these concepts were mentioned only tangently in this study. One of my assumptions regarding the lack of conversation around these issues was that ethics and integrity may be considered as "givens" by the men and women who serve in high-level, academic-leadership positions. Perhaps ethics and integrity are almost too obvious to them to merit discussion. Also, it is important to note that CAO interviews were conducted just prior to the Enron and Arthur Anderson

scandals. If they had been conducted as these scandals were receiving vigorous media coverage, perhaps the CAOs would have addressed the concepts of ethics and integrity with more deliberateness.

Another area of leadership that was discussed only minimally by study CAOs was their own learning and personal intellectual growth. While several commented about personal learning in terms of professional development, they did not discuss their own intellectual development or setting an example for their faculty and staff by demonstrating a commitment to lifelong learning. When I discussed this issue with members of my dissertation committee, the concept of "intellectual leadership" arose. Both personal intellectual development and "intellectual leadership" may be areas ripe for exploration.

Most of the CAOs who participated in this study had served as an instructional division chair or dean prior to moving into the CAO role. Several commented about the difficult nature of the instructional division chair's work; one even noted that the division chair's job is more difficult than that of the CAO because these midlevel managers "work on the front line . . . in the trenches daily" with both faculty and students. Those CAOs who did address this issue commented that division chairs serve as a "first level of potential resolution" for problems that arise around teaching and learning. Given these facts, it was somewhat surprising that the study CAOs did not discuss (except in one case) the importance of supporting their front-line managers. Again, this may be considered a "given" responsibility for chief academic officers. Further exploration is suggested.

While the CAOs discussed at length the concepts of collaboration, teamwork, and participative leadership, only a few commented about the trust required to make these ideals a reality in an academic venue. Additionally, many discussed ingrained college cultures, often describing them in negative terms and casting culture as a challenge to their work. A few alluded to working toward improving their organizations' cultures once they had acquired experience and respect in the job. In all of these cases, the CAOs referred to transforming a negative climate into to a more positive and productive one. College culture and its impact on CAO efforts should command further attention and analysis.

While study CAOs addressed the concepts of fairness and equal treatment for all, only two mentioned diversity ideals. Since there is strong agreement among educators that diversity positively impacts the educational experience for both faculty and students, the area of diversity as a CAO agenda could prosper from future study.

The ability to formulate and convey a clear sense of vision is an important element in any leadership role. It was interesting to me that again only a few of the respondents even touched on the concept of creating a vision for instruction. Perhaps this is because they believe this responsibility belongs to the president of the institution. But in settings where a sense of vision is perceived to be "lacking at the top" of the organization, faculty and staff seem to hunger for a clear sense of vision for instruction, particularly when that vision pertains to pieces of the instructional package that they feel they can "control," at least in some measure, at their own levels.

And finally, it is surprising that most of the CAOs who participated in this research project were not planning to seek a community college presidency. When I entered this study, I harbored an assumption and a strong belief that people who work in this very difficult position do so as a stepping stone to a presidency. In sharp contrast to my assumption, most of the CAOs who participated in this study planned to continue working in their CAO roles for the "love of the work itself." Most derived great satisfaction from their work, even though they found it to be extraordinarily demanding and, at times, consuming. Most felt they were making a significant difference in the quality of instruction being offered by the college and the quality of learning experienced by students. They were unanimous in feeling that they were successful in helping their institutions meet objectives and carry out their stated missions. Most felt they were making strides in "growing" a talented faculty—faculty committed to student success. All seemed dedicated to the ideals of the comprehensive community college.

It is important to remind the reader that I used an interview guide in this study, and, while I allowed each interview to flow down different avenues with the unique data provided by each respondent, I did not intentionally probe for discussion around these issues. They were considered to be beyond the issues delimited by the study's design. This discussion of unexplored issues lays a foundation for the recommendations that follow.

Recommendations for Future Study

Recommendations for future exploration are a hallmark of any dissertation. I offer the following suggestions for scholars who are interested in the role of the chief academic officer and the continued success of the community college. I suggest the following:

1. Exploration of ethics and integrity issues, including how these concepts influence CAO decisions and actions on a daily basis.

2. Examination of the concepts of personal "intellectual growth" and "intellectual leadership," differentiating the concepts from professional development and instructional leadership.

3. Exploration of CAO support for front-line instructional managers—divisions chairs and deans who work "in the trenches" with faculty and students.

4. Exploration of the issues and challenges surrounding participative leadership, including how CAOs engender the trust required for collaboration and delegation.

5. Exploration of the "culture phenomenon" in community colleges and how culture impacts the CAO's job as well as the quality of teaching and learning.

6. Additional study of diversity as an issue for CAOs and the colleges they represent.

And finally, one of the study CAOs commented (as noted earlier in this document), "The more of an idealist you are about community colleges and the job that is done in the classroom, the better the CAO you will be." This statement begs the

question, "How do we nurture this idealism?" This suggests yet another area for future study.

Summary

This epilogue has shared my reflections about the research just completed. It has offered recommendations for future study, based, in large measure, on what was not discussed or revealed by the CAOs who participated in this doctoral study. It is my hope that discussion of both unexplored issues and suggestions for future research will "open the door" for those who follow. If it does, then this effort will have been well worth the time and energy invested.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGE CAO INTERVIEWS

Project/Study: Successful Performance in the Role of the Chief Academic Officer
                      as Perceived by CAOs in Selected Oregon Community Colleges

Researcher: Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer, Doctoral Candidate, Education
                      Community College Leadership Program

Major Professor: Dr. Larry Roper, School of Education

Background data questions: *College code:* _____

a)   To provide background data for this interview, can you tell me about the structure
        of your college and how your position relates and functions within that structure?

        Ask for copy of organizational chart

        Who reports to him/her?   Reports to president? Outreach centers?

b)   Can you describe your primary duties and responsibilities as the chief academic
        officer for *(name)* community college?

        Covers for president   Instruction   Services?   Curriculum approval

        Personnel   Faculty   Programs   JOB DESCRIPTION

c)   How long have you been in your present position as CAO?   _____

d)   What position did you hold immediately prior to this position?

        At this college? Elsewhere? How long there?

e)   Can you tell me about your professional background? Possible probes:

                - Education, special training

                - Previous positions held (titles and length of time in each)

                - Community college/university/K-12 experience

- Other pertinent experience/background data

ADDED 8/26: Did you attend a community college?

<u>*Script /Additional Explanation:*</u> Again, the purpose of this study is to better understand what successful performance looks like in the role of the chief academic officer. I would like to ask you six primary questions that relate to your role as CAO. Please take all the time you need to discuss each one. We have approximately 90 minutes remaining in this session and your thoughts and reflections are extremely important to me.

<u>*Primary questions:*</u>

1)   How would you define successful performance in your role as chief academic officer?

   Are there certain qualities, traits, attributes that are important?

   What things are happening in the college if the CAO is successful?

   Added in A-1: Has your perspective on success changed since you first started this job? How?

2)   Can you tell me about attributes, previous experiences, and educational preparations that have helped you to be successful in this role?

   Teaching experience /   Personal experience /Specific preparation

   Management experience / Administrative experience

3)   What kinds of systems or procedures are in place at your college that help you to succeed in this job?

   Policies / Support teams / Mentors/colleagues / Strong president

   Professional development / Communication patterns / Subordinates

   Added in A-1: Can you describe your relationship your president?

   Added in A-1: Have you had opportunities for professional development since taking this position?

4) What kinds of barriers at your college impede your ability to carry out your duties and responsibilities?

        Unclear policies / Board activity / Communication difficulties

        Inadequate, unreliable data / Bargaining Units (Unions) / College Culture

5) If these barriers were removed and an "ideal" college working environment existed, what would you do differently in carrying out your CAO responsibilities?

6) What are the greatest challenges you face in your job?

        ADDED 8;26: What piece or pieces of the job would you remove if you could?

        ADDED 8/26: What is the most difficult part of the job?

7) What are the greatest rewards or satisfactions?

8) What advice would you give to a new CAO to help them be successful in the job?

        Added in A-1: If you were mentoring someone who wanted to aspire to the CAO role, how would you advise them to prepare?

9) Is there anything else we should discuss in order to help me better understand what it takes to be successful in the chief academic officer position?

ADDED 8/26: Aspirations for a presidency?

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
SENT TO POTENTIAL STUDY PARTICIPANTS

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION
SENT TO POTENTIAL STUDY PARTICIPANTS

(Prepared on OSU Letterhead Stationary)

August 6, 2001
Dr. NAME
TITLE
ADDRESS

Dear Dr. NAME:

I am a doctoral candidate in the Community College Leadership Program at Oregon State University, and I am working under the supervision of Dr. Larry Roper, Vice Provost for Student Affairs at OSU, to complete dissertation research. My research focuses on the successful performance of chief academic officers in Oregon community colleges. I feel that this work has value because it will enrich our understanding of the CAO role -- a role which is critical to the continued success of the community college.

You have been identified as the chief academic officer at NAME Community College and I would like to ask your cooperation in participating in the study as an interviewee. If you are willing to take part, I will travel to your campus, at your convenience, to conduct an on-site interview. The information you share with me will be confidential and will be presented only in the aggregate along with data provided by other Oregon CAOs. Your identity, as well as the identity of your institution, will be not be revealed.

I will call later this week to talk with you about your interest in the study and to schedule an interview if you agree to participate. I hope that you will find this research meaningful and worthy of your time. I look forward to talking with you.

Sincerely,

Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer, Division Chair
Business and Computer Technologies Division
Lane Community College
        and
Doctoral Candidate
Community College Leadership Program
Oregon State University   Contact Information for researcher:

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

School of Education
Oregon State University

Informed Consent Document

Title of the Research Project

Successful Performance in the Role of the Chief Academic Officer
in Selected Oregon Community Colleges

Investigators

Dr. Larry Roper and Doctoral Candidate Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer

Purpose of the Research Project

The purpose of this project is to study successful performance in the role of the chief academic officer (CAO) in Oregon community colleges. The CAO position is critical to the success of the community college since it bears ultimate responsibility for the quality of an institution's faculty and instructional programs. The CAO serves as a liaison between the president and the faculty, and supervises administrators who lead instructional programs and teaching faculty who provide direct service to students. Most importantly, the CAO serves as an internal auditor who is responsible for maintaining the institution's academic integrity. This study will enhance our understanding of successful performance within this important, dynamic leadership role.

Study Procedures

AS A PARTICIPANT IN THIS STUDY, I UNDERSTAND that:

  . . . I have been identified as a chief academic officer (CAO) at one of six community colleges in Oregon to be included in this study.

  . . . Doctoral candidate Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer will conduct an on-site interview with me. She will ask me a variety of questions about my background prior to assuming my current position as well as questions specific to my performance within the CAO role. The interview will be audio taped, will take approximately 90 minutes to complete, and has been scheduled at my convenience. It is possible that I may be contacted for a follow-up interview via telephone or in person. I may request, at any time, that audio taping be stopped and it will be stopped. I

may request, at any time, to end the interview and it will be terminated. I may choose not to answer any question(s) that I wish.

. . . There are no foreseeable risks or direct personal benefits to me.

. . . Any information obtained from me will be kept confidential. Data obtained in this study will be presented in the aggregate and my identity as well as the identity of my institution will be disguised to protect my anonymity. The only persons who will have full access to the audiotapes and transcripts will be the investigators. A paid transcription specialist may have access to coded information with names removed. Audio tapes and transcriptions will be coded and stored in a secured space during the study. Audio tapes will be erased when the study is completed.

. . . My participation in this study is completely voluntary and I may either refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time. If I withdraw from the study before it is completed, all information that I have provided will be destroyed.

I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT:

. . . If I have any questions about the research study or specific procedures, I should direct those questions to researchers Kay Lutz-Ritzheimer (541-687-6540) or Dr. Larry Roper (541-737- 2759). If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact the IRB Coordinator, OSU Research Office, 541-737-3437.

My signature below indicates that I have read and that I understand the procedures described above and give my informed and voluntary consent to participate in this study.

I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Participant's printed or typed name: _____

Participant's address: _____

Participant's phone numbers: _____

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   *Date signed*

APPENDIX D

CONTACT SUMMARY FORM

APPENDIX D

CONTACT SUMMARY FORM

ID code: _____   Site code: _____   Date of interview: _____

Site observations:

Key themes/points:

Concerns/comments:

Documents obtained:

_____   _____

Type of document / Name of document:

Document reference number:

Additional Comments:

APPENDIX E

DOCUMENT SUMMARY FORM

APPENDIX E

DOCUMENT SUMMARY FORM

ID code: _____   Site code: _____   Date of interview: _____

Name or description of document: _____

_____

Significance of document:

Summary of contents:

Key points as relevant to this study:

Date of acquisition (if pertinent):

Adjustments to this form:

Additional comments:

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SUMMARY FORM

ID code: _____   Site code: _____   Date of interview: _____
_____

Years in job:_____   Years at this college: _____   Years in education: _____

Work history:

Education:

Mentor?

Other special prep?

Prof Dev in job?

Site observations: (if pertinent)

Environment/culture:

_____

Key points:

Responsible for:

Duties include:

Defines success as:

Skills, traits, qualities, attributes needed:

Anything else about preparation for job?

Management style:

Systems in place to support CAO in role:

Barriers, obstacles

Problems, challenges:

Rewards, satisfactions

If environment were ideal, what change(s) would you make?

Advice to new CAOs:

How they should prepare:

Document(s) obtained:

Document reference number(s):

Additional comments:

APPENDIX G

NOTATION OF KEY ISSUES FORM

APPENDIX G

NOTATION OF KEY ISSUES FORM

ID Code: _____   Site code: _____   Date of interview: _____

Designation:

Brief statement of issue, duties/responsibilities, and potential coding category:

Issue	Theme	Preliminary Code

Major trends noted:

Adjustments to this form:

Additional comments:

Concerns:

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF CAO JOB DESCRIPTIONS:
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF CAO JOB DESCRIPTIONS: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Provide direction and visionary leadership for all activities related to Instruction.
Help facilitate strategic planning and the college marketing plan for Instruction.
Demonstrate a strong commitment to student and employee success.

Facilitate curriculum and program development; encourage innovation in teaching.
Stay informed of industry and community needs; respond to needs in a timely manner.
Encourage faculty to apply current trends to curriculum and program development.
Support a teaching and learning environment for managers, faculty, staff, and students.

Facilitate all personnel functions for managers, faculty, and staff within Instruction.
Recruit, select, evaluate, promote, take corrective action, and discharge as required.

Ensure the professional development of faculty and staff within Instruction.
Promote and model continuous, life-long learning. Ensure a safe working environment.

Build, support, and use teams to accomplish the goals of Instruction and the college.
Encourage collaboration and leadership development among staff.

Coordinate Instructional activities with other segments/divisions of the college.
Facilitate communication and the flow of information within and beyond Instruction.

Develop and implement a budget for Instruction. Assist academic department
and division chairs in developing budgets. Monitor revenues and expenditures.

Address student complaints regarding faculty and the instructional experience.
Facilitate communication and problem resolution between faculty and students.

Develop partnerships with businesses and community groups.
Facilitate articulation with K-12 schools and post-secondary institutions.

Develop collaborative relationships with legislators, government agencies, other institutions,
and professional groups to help meet college goals and the needs of students.

Apply laws, state regulations, college policies, and bargaining-unit agreements in all transactions.

Promote diversity among faculty, staff, and student bodies; evaluate progress.
Help achieve the diversity benchmarks of the college.

Use technology to facilitate learning and work. Encourage others to use technology.
Provide on-going technology training for faculty and staff.
Plan for technology costs; incorporate projected costs into budgets and strategic plans.

Represent the president and serve as acting president in his/her absence.
Represent the college at state, regional, and national meetings/events.
Advise the college governing board on issues pertinent to instruction.

Coordinate activities with other system units.
Serve as a liaison between Instruction and other divisions.