AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

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Title: Community Colleges Creating Academic Programming for Rural Areas

Abstract approved:

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Darlene F. Russ-Eft

Community colleges serve various populations as part of their missions. Many community colleges serve the people who live in rural communities and are challenged with fewer financial resources. The term *rural* is not easily defined, and many variables need to be considered when creating academic programming for rural populations. There is no standard definition for it.

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine how rural community colleges create successful programming that serves the needs of the local community. The study investigated the following questions:

(a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities?

(b) What is the planning process that the community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?

(c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?

There are 17 community colleges in Oregon. They represent a range of sizes from small to large, in different location, and in the constituents they serve. Cases for this study were chosen using the Carnegie Classification System, both the Basic Classification and the Size and Setting Classifications were used to select the two colleges for the study.

Study participants were identified by either the Chief Academic Officer or the Vice President of Instruction/Student Services Provost from each of the community colleges. The 10 people interviewed were identified as having knowledge or expertise around the college's efforts of creating programming in rural areas. They held positions such as chief academic officer, vice president of instruction/student services provost, division dean, director, and department chair within the college.

The research design for this study involved a comparative case study. Faculty and administrators from two community colleges in Oregon were interviewed to determine motivation to create rural programming, to identify methods and processes used for rural programming, and to ascertain who the stakeholders are that participate in this decision-making. An open-ended question format was used. The responses were organized, explored, and coded. Then categories were built and data was interpreted. Lastly, the findings were summarized.

Several strategies were used to ensure trustworthiness of the data collection and analysis. Data source triangulation involved comparison of the reports from multiple

interviewers, as well as the cross-case analysis. Using investigator triangulation and peer review, other researchers and colleagues reviewed the interviews and themes. Method triangulation involved the use of information from interviews and from archival records, such as advisory board lists, internal surveys, mission statements, and websites. Finally, with member checking, interviewees reviewed and approved the transcripts and themes.

The study found that community colleges are motivated to create academic programming in rural areas when needs are voiced by the community. In addition, community colleges tend to favor programming that supports access elements of the college's missions and values statement. Finally, the ability to sustain the programming in the rural areas was an additional factor that motivates community colleges to create programming in rural areas.

Community college personnel considered many variables in designing programming for rural communities. Among them were reviewing their mission statements and strategic plans. They analyzed data derived from enrollment reports, demographics, and economic reports. Colleges also reviewed data collected on factors such as enrollment and retention rates, employment of students, and graduation rates. The process for creating programming for on campus and for rural areas was the same. However community colleges recognized the different needs of each of the populations. The college often asked for feedback from constituents to determine whether needs were being met in the community. They engaged with their constituents through surveys and focus groups. Reviewing funding was also important when proceeding with rural programming. The funding for the rural programming might be one or a combination of, resource allocation, grants, special fees, general funds or the use of surplus college funds.

Partnerships were also an vital component of the resources used to finance rural programming.

The stakeholders involved in the planning process for rural programming included the constituents residing in the community college districts. In addition the outreach staff and the administrative staff that were employed at the community college were also involved in the process.

Given the lack of research on community college programming in rural areas, the present study contributes to the scholarship on this topic. Future researchers can build upon the present work to determine if the findings hold within other states and other state systems. In addition, regional or national surveys could be undertaken to explore the factors and variables identified in these case studies. Based on the results of the present research, a series of steps have been identified that can be utilized by a community college that is in the process of creating programming for rural areas. They are (a) apply community college documents, (b) utilize data, (c) assemble and review feedback, and (d) identify resources. These steps follow the apparently successful practices that emerged from the research. In addition, the present research has indicated various approaches for institutions that are struggling to find ways to reach out to rural communities in educational need. Thus, the research has the potential to create positive effects on education policy nationwide.

Community Colleges Creating Academic Programming for Rural Areas

by

Jean Garcia-Chitwood

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I understand that my dissertation will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to any reader upon request.

Jean Garcia-Chitwood, Author

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DEDICATION

This is for you, Elisa Maria Treviño, mom.
Thank you for believing in the importance of education and always encouraging me to continue my journey.

CHAPTER 1: FOCUS AND SIGNIFICANCE

> Ironically, rural America has become viewed by a growing number of Americans as having a higher quality of life not because of what it has, but rather because of what it does not have! ~Don A. Dillman

Dr. Dillman of Washington State University spoke of rural America as having a higher quality of life, perhaps because of its simplicity. Often those living in rural communities do not have many things. Rural communities have lower educational attainment rates in comparison to their urban counterparts (U.S. Department of Agriculture, 2010b). Communities do not always have sufficient funding for K-12 schools and often struggle due to teacher shortages.

In Oregon at the turn of the 19th century, the population was split, with 32% of the population as urban and 67% of the population as rural (United States Census Bureau, 1995). In the 2010 census, those numbers were almost reversed, with the urban population at 81% and the rural population reduced to 19% (United States Census Bureau, 2010). In addition the rural citizenry covered 85% of the geography of the United States (Annie Casey Foundation, 2004). When state and local governments determine the level of funding for school districts they begin by deciding how much schools will receive. From there an amount is allocated to each state. There is no consideration of the unique challenges rural areas face such as higher financial outlay that may be incurred in providing a quality K-12 education nor the challenges and needs these areas may have (Malhoit, 2005).

One of the major issues today within the United States is the education level attainment in rural populations. There is a great disparity in educational achievement

when rural and urban populations are compared. In Oregon, 15.5% of rural populations have college degrees in comparison to their urban counterparts at 28.1% (United States Department of Agriculture, 2010a). These percentages are on par with national figures, which indicate that 15.1 % of individuals in rural populations have obtained college degrees while 26.4% of individuals living in urban areas have the same level of education (United States Department of Agriculture, 2010b).

Characteristics of community colleges vary throughout the country. Yet, one feature they all have in common is found in their mission: it is at the heart of every community college. The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) website described this as such, "The mission of the community college is to provide education for individuals, many of whom are adults, in its service region" (para. 1). Some of the components of the community college missions are to "serve all segments of society through an open-access admissions policy that offers equal and fair treatment to all students, provide a comprehensive educational program and to serve its community as a community-based institution of higher education" (AACC, 2010, para. 1).

Community colleges must consider all sectors of society when providing educational services. Yet some populations are more vulnerable than others and require special attention. Burney and Cross (2006) stated, "While the rural numbers of students attending rural schools was a fairly small percentage of all U.S. students, the majority of school districts in the United States were not located near the resources of larger metropolitan areas" (p.16). Thus the resources of metropolitan community colleges are out of reach for many people living in these remote areas. For this reason, there is a need

for the creation of academic programming to reach out to communities who experience lower educational attainment rates.

Rural and urban communities face similar societal issues; they are just different in scale. Rural communities face above average school drop-out rates, a reduced amount of enrollment rates to college, and below average per capita income levels (Provasnik et al., 2007). Urban households earned over 32% more in yearly income than rural households (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Rural community colleges play a role in solving societal problems. Community colleges can provide economic stability and assist in increasing the quality of life for the residents (American Association of Community Colleges, 1992; Pennington, William, & Karvonen, 2006).

People in rural areas often face obstacles that prevent their fiscal or educational success. Rural communities often rely on a single industry for economic stability and if that industry fails or shuts down there is a negative economic effect on the community (MDC, 2002). Another challenge for rural areas can be a lack of reliable internet access. According to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC, 2012), of the 19 million Americans who live where fixed broadband is unavailable, 14.5 million live in rural areas. Lastly, rural communities often receive less funding from federal resources, foundation and corporate grants for schools, infrastructure, and economic development (Fluharty & Scaggs, 2007). All of these problems create many challenges for rural communities.

The Rural Community College Initiative was created by Steve Zwerling and Betsy Campbell from the Ford Family Foundation and George Autry, founder of MDC. Those working under this initiative believe that the best way to assist struggling rural

communities is to focus on the people and the place. This means increasing educational opportunities for people and creating strong foundations for a strong economy (MDC, 2002). Populations in rural areas are faced with various obstacles to obtaining post-secondary education. Community colleges can be the conduit to assist these rural areas to accessing education.

Research Problem

Rural students that look to community colleges to further their education come from diverse communities, whose landscapes differ greatly. Some come from communities bordered by forests, whereas others come from areas surrounded by fields or dessert. Some of these rural students reside where there are varying population patterns, such as increases in Latinos or growth of elderly populations. Industries also vary from community to community and are often dependent on local natural resources. What these rural students have in common is the need to obtain an education after high school. Currently of the rural populations over the age of 25, only 17% have earned a college degree. Employers are expecting higher skilled workers (Whitener & McGranatan, 2003).

Research Purpose

The purpose of this comparative case study was to explore how community colleges can effectively provide academic programming for outlying areas, specifically rural communities. This study provided recommendations for steps that a community college should employ when creating programming for rural areas, and it explored how stakeholders were involved in the development of the programming. The focus of the research was two rural communities in Oregon which were served by local community

colleges. The scope included the two community colleges, one with a designation of large size and rural serving, and the other designated medium sized, serving urban populations, yet also serving rural populations. The designations were derived from the Carnegie Classification System.

Research Questions

This study investigated, the following foundational questions:

(a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities?

Rationale: Community colleges regularly create academic programming. These plans provide a direction for programming and an academic. There is a gap in the literature about academic programming in rural institutions and this study seeks to fill this gap.

(b) What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?

Rationale: Community colleges regularly create academic programming. Such programming takes into account a myriad of factors including class fill rates, workforce needs, and funding streams. There is lack of literature that describes the steps community colleges take in creating academic programming for outlying rural areas.

(c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?

Rationale: Generally the stakeholders involved in decision-making for academic programming in community colleges are Presidents, Deans of Instruction, and Division Deans. This study attempted to identify the stakeholders involved in rural academic planning and attempted to determine if this varied from non-rural comprehensive community colleges.

Terms and Concepts

Academic Plan - a plan within a college outlining specific degree paths

Programming - the process of preparing an instructional program (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2015)

Rural :Defining the term rural can be complicated. For the purpose of this study rural is based on the following definition:

> …consisting of all territory, population, and housing units that are located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters. Urbanized areas are those that: (a) have a population density of at least 1000 people per square mile; (b) have an overall density of at least 500 people per square mile in surrounding census blocks; and (c) contain 50,000 or more people. An urban cluster has at least 2,500 people, but generally less than 50,000. (United States Census Bureau, 2005, para. 6)

Rural Community - consisting of all territory, population, and housing units that are located outside of urbanized areas and urban clusters (United States Census, 2005, para. 6).

Research Significance

It is important for community colleges to have the tools to assist in creating academic plans for rural communities. First, education is a right for everyone; the geographic location in which a person resides should not hinder their ability to improve themselves educationally (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). Second, in general rural populations have lower educational attainment than urban populations and therefore need additional avenues for educational opportunities (Provasnik et al., 2007). "When today's young adults are compared with previous generations, the disparity in economic outcomes between college graduates and those with a high school diploma or less formal schooling has never been greater in the modern era".(Pew Research Center, 2014, p. 1).

Third, education can be viewed as important for individuals, since economic success is based on a person's educational attainment. Research indicates that educational attainment is correlated to income level (Day & Newburger, 2002; Pew Research Center, 2014). Fourth, more educated individuals can benefit rural communities. Economic success is also correlated to the workforce education in rural communities (Gibbs, 2005: Kusmin, 2014). Fifth, it is the mission of the community college to serve all of their constituents (Vaughan, 2006). Lastly, this research is significant because there is little research on the topic of community colleges creating academic programming for rural areas.

Education as a right. The General Assembly of the United Nations accepted and declared the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948. Following this monumental act, the Assembly asked educational institutions to adopt this document in an effort to raise awareness and to help promote its contents (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). Article 26 of this historical document stated:

> 1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all.
> 2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. (United Nations General Assembly, 1948, para. 1 & 2)

People have come together around the world to ensure that everyone has the human right to an education. The above document for human rights attested to this.

In the 1600's, the New England colonies created a simplistic form of public education to instruct children. Up until the mid-1800s, education was only accessible to

the very wealthy. Horace Mann and Henry Barnard set out to reform the way education was delivered. They believed many benefits such as creating better informed citizens, crime prevention, and poverty abatement could be gained from educating all children. Mann and Barnard persisted, and mandatory public education for the elementary level became a reality, and by 1852, Massachusetts became the first state to require that all children attend school (Thattai, n.d.).

The Morrill Land Grant Acts of 1862 and 1890 provided federal monetary support to state universities. Many land-grant colleges and state universities were established through gifts of federal land to the states for the support of post-secondary education. These newly established colleges provided a lower tuition rate alternative than the private colleges. They also were "pioneering the ideas of service to the broader community" (Cohen & Brawer, 2008, p. 2). This legislation was a milestone in establishing affordable post-secondary education with diverse curriculum for all citizens.

The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 for example, helped form vocational programs in high schools. The GI Bill of 1944 helped military veterans by providing financial aid for college attendance (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). The mid-twentieth century Civil Rights laws opened all schools to all people and have required states to provide educational equality to all people (Thattai, n.d.). Education is a right, and this right is valued as shown through the statement in the Human Rights document created by the United Nations and through the countless legislation passed in the United States**.**

Lower educational attainment in rural areas. Throughout the history of the U.S., many legislative efforts have conveyed the value held for education and the

commitment to provide educational access to all. President John F. Kennedy (1961) put education in this context during American Education Week in July of that year:

> Let us not think of education only in terms of its costs, but rather in terms of the infinite potential of the human mind that can be realized through education. Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength for one nation. (para. 7)

The roots of the United States are embedded in the value of education and that all students should have the opportunity to learn. Yet, people in rural communities lag in educational attainment. According to Provasnik et al. (2007) study comparing suburbs and cities to rural areas, rural populations had lower college enrollment rates of those in ages ranging from 18 to 29 than did their urban counterparts. In this same study, data indicated that there were fewer rural than urban adults, who participated in part-time post-secondary credential programs (3% versus 6% respectively). Also, the percentage of adults with a bachelor degree as the highest level of educational attainment in 2004 was lower in rural areas, at 13%, as compared with the national average of 17% (Provasnik et al., 2007).

Importance of education. Education is important for individuals, the community, and society in general. The more education people have the higher their potential income per a study by the Pew Research Center (2014). For example, as seen in Table 1.1, the average earnings for a high school drop-out in 2013 were $28,000 in comparison to a college graduate, who earned an average of $45,500. This is almost twice the income that can be earned for those with additional education.

Table 1.1

Importance of Education (Pew Research Center, 2014)

Educational Level	Average Yearly Income 1979	Average Yearly Income 2013
High school drop-out	$32,299	$28,000
College graduate	$41,989	$45,500

Education benefits rural communities. The education of a workforce of a community affects economic growth. A more educated workforce can provide new ideas on ways to deliver services or growing food for local businesses. Also, companies looking to open new locations may be attracted to areas with a well-educated labor force. Lastly, "Finally, higher educational levels are almost always tied to geographic clusters of certain key industries, which in some cases have generated major economic growth in rural areas" (Gibbs, 2005, p. 2).

Another reason for having an educated workforce relates to future economic stability. If a population is more educated it proves to have a quicker recovery from recession. This relates to both rural and urban areas (Kusmin, 2014).

Community college missions. Community colleges focus on serving all members of their communities (Hobbs, 1973). It is the mission of the community college to provide equal access to all students in their service area. There are fewer students representing the rural populations at community colleges. The present study can provide community colleges that serve rural communities with information that may improve and

assist in developing academic programming for these rural communities that are under-served and geographically isolated.

Lack of research. To date there is very little academic literature on the topic of how community colleges create programming for their rural constituents. The information from this study will create a framework for community colleges to follow when embarking on new educational ventures that will serve people in rural communities. The new research serves as a foundation for institutions that are struggling to find ways to reach out to rural communities in educational need. In addition the research has the potential to create positive effects on education policy nationwide.

Chapter Summary

Rural populations are often not as educated from those in urban areas. These populations are often far from post-secondary educational institutions. It becomes necessary for nearby community colleges to provide services to these areas. The purpose of this research study was to explore how community colleges can effectively provide academic programming for outlying areas, specifically rural communities. The research questions were: (a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities? (b) What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? and (c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?

Community colleges need to be equipped with the tools to serve those living in rural communities. This research is significant because education is a fundamental right for each person that resides in this world (United Nations General Assembly, 1948). In addition, people residing in rural areas have less opportunity for education and

consequently have lower attainment rates of bachelor's degrees than those living in urban areas (Provasnik et al., 2007). The Pew Research Center (2014) has correlated educational attainment to income level and thus creating increased economic success. Lastly, this research is vital as very little research has been conducted on the process that a community college takes to create programming for rural areas.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Throughout their history community colleges have been providing educational services to their communities. More recently, these communities have become more diverse with specific needs, including the rural areas. Community College personnel have little resources to help guide them to create programming for this changing population.

The purpose of this literature review was to collect and review research pertinent to what motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas and to determine the processes they initiate to implement the programming. The review was significant because it provided the researcher with familiarity of the topic; disclosed research conducted on the topic, and collected the research done to a certain point. (Neuman, 2011). This literature review was also significant, because it revealed the need for additional research as there is very little that discusses the topic of community colleges and academic programming for rural areas.

This section described the steps taken organizing and retrieving the literature. It discussed the key themes that arose during the research. It discussed the literature and its relationship to the topic of this study.

Approach to the Literature Review

The author used EBSCO host to find scholarly articles supporting the process used by the researcher for the literature review. Other searches were conducted on databases such as Google Scholar, U.S. Department of Education, and ERIC. Search terms and phrases included: *rural, access, mission, education, educational delivery,*

employment, economic, at-risk, academic planning, academic needs, small, models, process, history, strategic planning, and *post-secondary.*

The researcher also used the Scholar Link on the Oregon State University (OSU) Library website to search for dissertations. As with the literature review, it was difficult to locate dissertations related to the topic. The researcher used the personnel from the OSU library services to help identify applicable sources, which yielded additional titles. Much of the literature was collected from professional journals, government reports, and websites of professional organizations. Most materials retrieved through the search process were not directly related to the topic but provided additional perspective and understanding of the topic for the researcher and tangentially the relationships were examined.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria. It was difficult to locate articles specifically relating to the specific topic. Thus, the author did not limit the search to a timeframe. Most related literature was reviewed for potential relevancy to the study. The primary focus of the search was for literature about how institutions of higher education served rural populations. Articles about community colleges were most highly valued.

Many studies on rural populations were located on health related topics such as providers, health education issues, and clinics. All of these were eliminated as not being relevant to the topic being researched. Literature about specific populations such as second language learners, athletes, and populations with disabilities were not included in the literature review. Lastly, with the exception of Australia and Canada, literature published relating to countries outside of the United States was dismissed.

Although much of the literature did not relate to the topic being investigated, a few themes emerged from the readings. They included (a) individual/family/community educational issues in rural areas; (b) community college issues in rural areas; (c) academic planning: history and procedures; and (d) models for academic planning in rural communities. Neuman (2011) stated that "Doing a literature review builds on the idea that knowledge accumulates and that we can learn from and build on what others have done" (p. 124). Information on these key themes was synthesized, and conclusions were provided as they related to the research topic presented.

Individual/Family/Community Educational Issues in Rural Areas

Rural community college students faced an excess of barriers in their pursuit of higher education including lack of understanding of college processes specifically of financial aid (Bell, Rowan-Kenyon, & Perna, 2009). In a quantitative study of 170 students from two community colleges in Missouri and Arkansas, Carter (2014) sought to determine what attendance barriers did rural community college students identify as being difficult for them to overcome. Her results concluded that students believed that their cumulative GPA (grade point average) had a great deal of influence on their decision to enroll at rural community college. Students also believed that their financial aid eligibility and if their parents had attended a postsecondary institution played a major role in whether they enrolled to post-secondary education. The number of miles students drove to school each day contributed to reenrollment into college. Lastly, students also indicated that they felt that since they owned a computer or laptop it impacted their ability to enroll in college.

Hinka, Mobelini, and Giltner (2015) conducted a case study of a two year community and technical college in the Appalachian Mountains in Kentucky. They sought to determine what served as barriers and as sources of encouragement when students made decisions regarding critical transition steps in their academic pathways from high school through community college and to the point of transferring to a 4 year university. There were three themes that surfaced from the study. The first was the student's need to be pampered to increase retention versus the need to cut ties to build self-reliance. Community colleges could help by creating social networks such as peer mentoring, and encouraging relationships with faculty. In addition colleges needed to direct students through the processes of higher level thinking and provide avenues for students to integrate into the university, utilizing college fairs and visits. Second the students felt the push of encouragement versus the pull of family responsibilities. Community colleges needed to understand the role families play in providing emotional and financial support. Colleges needed to help students understand the realities of earning an education and provide strategies for making these decisions, including teaching coping skills and how to set priorities to be successful. Lastly, students struggled with the decision to stay in the area versus the decision to leave the area. Community colleges and high schools needed to be involved in career counseling for students so that they could understand early on what their options are regarding their career choices.

Similar research regarding student success was a study conducted by Pitcher (2014) to determine why some students succeed while others fail in their pursuit of post-secondary education. He conducted focus groups with students and surveys with faculty

and the college president. In his study he determined that the types of barriers students faced were financial, personal, technological, and institutional. The students that were successful in overcoming these barriers were able to take action on their knowledge. The author suggested that community colleges establish systems to assist those students that may not be able to take action whether from fear or lack of discipline or for whatever reason. These systems could be in place when students failed to act such as Early Alerts or Peer Mentoring.

Schonert, Elliot, and Bills (1991) conducted a study to determine persistence and attrition in post-secondary institutions by rural youth. The authors suggested that one of the reasons rural youth had been successful was due to the perception they had about personal experiences. The study found that, if rural students had positive feelings about their roots including the places they went to school and the environments that surrounded them, they were more apt to be successful in their future experiences. This attitude translated to their feelings about education in general, including their perception of the potential to continue with college studies. The authors determined that students graduating from rural Iowa high schools went to postsecondary education at a higher rate than the national average and that the majority of the students who entered postsecondary institutions persisted until degree completion. The vast majority of the 26% who withdrew from college later enrolled elsewhere and in the majority of those cases the students then persisted to graduation. A limitation of this study was its scope. It was conducted in one state and did not include information on the diversity of the 215 rural Iowa students that were interviewed.

Legutko (2008) administered a quantitative study to determine family influence on high school senior's decisions to enter postsecondary education. He compared data from a study 10 years prior. He concluded that students planning to attend college after graduation with parents that did not have a post-secondary degree increased from 38% to 66%. In addition, students who were undecided or not planning to attend college, that had parents without a higher education degree decreased from 35% to 12%.

The author also noted that students that planned to enter into post-secondary education that perceived that they were from lower-middle class families increased by 21%. The study indicated that parents without college degree and with lower financial means valued higher education for their children. It is important to note that this study was limited to one state and there were only 254 participants. Thus, it was difficult to generalize the findings to other geographic locations.

Carr and Kefalas (2009) described how rural communities influence college-going practices of local youth. Their research included survey data, in-depth interviews, and rigorous community level fieldwork. They discovered that in rural America there was a pattern as to why some students attended college and others did not. Their research showed that rural communities contributed to the decisions high school students made about whether or not to attend college. The study indicated that there were several categories of high school students in rural communities. Three of these categories were achievers, stayers, and seekers.

The achievers were described as high-achieving and therefore were the most likely to succeed. These students were pushed by adults in the community to attend universities and colleges because of their perceived potential for success. The stayers

were students who enjoyed living in their community and preferred not to leave. They valued the opportunity to work, and they often married at a young age. These students relied on local businesses for employment. The seekers were average students who did not receive encouragement from teachers to continue their education, but they had the desire to move away and see the world. These students became targets for military recruiters provided opportunities for adventures away from home (Carr & Kefalas, 2009).

This study was important because it opened the door to the discussion of "brain drain" which was defined by Diden (n.d.), a K-12 Administrator in Tennessee:

> …the term often applied to the transfer of education and skills as people move from one locale to another in search of greater economic opportunity. As people are forced to relocate to improve their personal and family financial circumstances, the impact can be devastating to the economic and social well-being of the communities they leave behind. (p. 1)

The brain drain phenomenon partly contributed to the problems identified with the loss of rural populations. It was suggested that community colleges and economic development organizations could be the conduit for solving many of the problems facing struggling rural communities. This topic will be discussed in the following section.

Summary. In creating academic programming for rural areas it is important to take into account those factors which students identify as attendance barriers. Community colleges must work closely with state and federal agencies to promote increased financial aid funding for students. Lastly, when determining programming in rural areas community college administrators must examine opportunities to maximize use of technology. College personnel must examine technology for students both on and off campus (Carter, 2014).

Individuals must consider many factors when making decisions about remaining in college. Students face many barriers during their educational path. Both Hinka et al. (2015) and Pitcher (2014) discussed student retention issues related directly to student services programming and not specifically to instructional programming. However, often student services and instructional departments work together to provide a holistic experience for students. These two articles provided a wealth of information for community colleges to plan support services for students to aid in success once they have embarked on their academic college careers. Some of these strategies were for community colleges to guide students through the college processes and to help students to understand the conflicting situations that they will find themselves in when balancing school, and family (Hinka et al., 2015). Other ways in which community colleges can assist students were to put into place Early Alert systems and Peer Mentoring program (Pitcher, (2014).

Rural families believe and are committed to the investment of post- secondary education for their children. This includes parents with no college education and with lower economic means. According to some studies, more rural students are attending college than ever before (Legutko, 2008).

Rural communities also shape the decisions rural youth make around college-going practices (Carr & Kefalas, 2009). These communities contribute in categorizing students into achievers (high-achievers in school and likely to succeed), stayers (average students who valued work), and seekers (average students with desires to move away). Rural communities "push" sometimes unconsciously the students into their perspective paths either to go away to college (achievers), stay in the community and forgo a post-

secondary education (stayers), or join the military before obtaining higher education (seekers).

Thus, this present study of how community colleges create academic programming for rural areas will offer information to other community colleges on how to provide these opportunities and how to support these rural families which have the desire for their children to receive post-secondary education. Furthermore, it may provide information relevant to other regions in the country.

Community College Issues in Rural Areas

Community colleges face various issues in programming in rural areas. They contend with issues related to faculty. In a survey of chief academic officers working in rural community colleges, Rankin (2009) found that 48% believed that it was difficult to recruit qualified full-time faculty, particularly in rural areas. In a study of 10 community college leaders it was determined that finding qualified employees including faculty was a significant challenge for rural community colleges (Pennington et al., 2006). This was important information for educational leaders serving rural communities, but neither of these studies indicated why these difficulties existed.

Katsinas and Miller (1998) discussed additional issues and problems with finding and retaining faculty. They argued that rural populations are geographically isolated; and this isolation created increased costs to train qualified staff. In rural areas professional development could be expensive due to transportation issues.

Katsinas and Miller (1998) also noted that the cost to bring new programs to rural areas was significant and could prove prohibitive. There were few qualified part-time staff pools to teach courses, and often sites for vocational internships were non-existent.

Due to these barriers, rural community colleges must expend additional resources in order to ensure success of programs. The authors suggested that community colleges were not able do this alone. They noted the insufficient funding in some state formulas. Perhaps implementing some qualitative methods of research, such as case study analysis of rural colleges or focus group interviews in the community, would assist in determining additional ways that community colleges could aid these underserved rural populations.

Treadway (1984) questioned whether community colleges were committed to allocating resources for rural areas to fulfill their missions. He suggested that community colleges provide the same level of service to students in the rural areas as they do to students on the campus. The author suggested that community colleges must offer programming that the communities need, not the programming that will provide a profit.

It becomes more complicated for community colleges faculty since the college invites diverse populations with different ability levels, due to their open door policy which is encompassed in most college missions (Twombly, 2005). Community colleges have flexible hours, convenient locations, and lower tuition costs attracting the returning adult learners. The educational rigor at post-secondary institutions could pose a problem for those students which are not prepared academically (Schuetz, 2002). Schuetz (2002) stated that "Almost half of all students entering community colleges enroll in at least one remedial course" (p. 2). She indicated that serving diverse populations is one of the many issues with which community colleges need to contend in the future.

Pennington et al. (2006) stated that many of the challenges were the same as they were 30 years ago. One challenge was the difficulty of meeting diverse student population needs. Since there continued to be differences in rural and urban populations,

colleges needed to modify services so that they reflected their populations (Copeland, Tietjen Smith, Waller, & Waller, 2008). Masoner and Miller (1995) conducted survey research of over 1800 people to include community leaders, public school personnel, community college faculty, and the general public. Their findings suggested that in the service area that were surveyed, people believed that (a) educational offerings were inadequate; (b) additional curriculum should be all-encompassing to include traditionally offered classes by two-year colleges in other service areas; and (c) there was a great need for further college opportunities in their service area. The authors also stated that community colleges were the most appropriate entity to recognize, direct, and provide services needed to solve the issues of rural communities, such as high unemployment rates and educational issues.

An additional area of concern for community colleges was the lower rates of enrollment of rural students into postsecondary. In 2013 34% urban adults aged between 25 and 34 had obtained a college degree compared to only 19% of rural adults (United States Department of Agriculture, 2015). Yet, of the community colleges in the country 59% were located in rural areas (Hardy & Katsinas, 2007). In addition, 51% of Latina/o students reported enrollment in a community college before receiving their bachelors or master's degrees in science and engineering (Tsapogas, 2004).

Starobin and Bivens (2014) conducted a case study in the Midwest to determine the role that secondary schools and community colleges collaborations should take to increase Latinas in engineering in a rural community. They concluded that educators must first understand the Latino culture of the students and their families that they are serving. It was the lack of understanding of the collective culture of this group which

often pulled these Latina students away from pursuing postsecondary education. The support from family and trusted community members was critical to the decision of a Latina youth as to whether to continue her education. Having a leader with a similar cultural background of the students created trust within the families, and helped advance these students through the educational pathway. Administrators needed to understand the role that the physical space between educational insinuations played. The space between a high school and a community college was seen as intimidating and could become perceived as a challenge to take the next step to further educational attainment. There was a need for collaboration within the educational institutions to create a smooth transition from one entity to the other. Finally the authors suggested that administrators and practitioners develop goals and strategies to expand under-represented student enrollment in STEM fields. They suggested that institutions be open to new ways of creating K-20 partnerships. Although this study did not discuss academic programming in a general sense across a community college, it did provide insight on the importance of partnerships as programming was developed for specific areas and for specific populations.

Wilson (2009) surveyed 63 non-randomly chosen businesses with a 45-question online survey. She discovered that there was a gap between the training offered by the community college for business/industry and the current and future needs of those companies. She pointed out that the community colleges need to use more of a customer service approach when working with business. Among the limitations to the study included participants' willingness to answer questions truthfully and the study's small sample size. The broadening of this study to include other community colleges and

businesses in different states might result in other discoveries, and/or provide improved generalizability about the conclusion.

Literature existed regarding the role of a community college and the economic development of a community. MDC Inc. (once known as Manpower Development Corporation) is a private non-profit that has worked with the Rural Community College Initiative (RCCI). They believed that the missions of rural communities could best address economic and educational issues by adopting several philosophies. One was to "Work to improve education while also building the economy" (MDC, 2002, p. 4). The authors suggested that community colleges could help rural communities address educational and economic development challenges, because they were flexible, had inclusive missions, had permanent funding bases, and they understood their communities. Community colleges were often engaged in economic development work. Many strategies were utilized such as cultivating entrepreneurship, increasing small business development, and providing workforce training to meet employee needs. MDC (2002) provided suggestions to increase access to education for rural communities by working closely with K-12 public education to improve public education and to help prepare students for higher education. The authors recommended working to develop distance education systems that included appropriate technology for rural communities. Another suggestion was that community colleges improve developmental studies and academic support. Sometimes rurally educated students were not academically prepared and providing support services increased student success. Although the suggestions were not specifically related to academic programming, they did provide a basis for thought as

community college administrators could include student services when planning programming.

Thomas (2013) conducted a case study of 11 community leaders located in a small community in rural Oregon. She sought to understand the community college as part of the community. She discovered that there existed a strong connection between the community college and community. The process by which the college and community engaged began with the creation of social capital. She described the importance that both the community college and the community members placed on reciprocal relationships, collaboration, communication, and fostering trust.

Thomas (2013) determined that the results of community college and community engagement were a stronger economy and a skilled-up workforce. Community leaders believed that the community college was directly related to the improved economy. They credited the college for listening to the community and responding to workforce needs by developing necessary programming.

The outmigration of the rural population has been cited in the literature for over a century. Stetson (1906) stated, "The rural community trains and sends to the city much of its best brains, power of imitative, and capacity for service "(p. 1). Carr and Kefalas (2009) suggested many strategies for rural communities to begin the reversal process of "brain drain" in their areas. Among those efforts were those that enlisted the support of community colleges. One suggestion was creating new partnerships between K-12 and community colleges, in which support could be provided for all students of all ability levels. This partnership would allow a path for the high achievers to a university education, but it would also allow those that wanted to stay at home to obtain an

Associate's Degree which would help prepare them with current labor market needs. Another way in which community colleges could be involved in assisting rural communities would be by becoming involved in regional development initiatives. They asked that the community colleges expand offerings to provide training for needed jobs in the area.

Other gaps in rural programming included administrative policies and procedures that were in place in community colleges and which affected expansion into rural communities. Such policies and procedures could provide additional barriers to serving rural areas. An example for California was that when there was a desire to expand rural programming there had to be documentation that a certain number of enrollments could be realized (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2006).

National policies also provided and continue to provide challenges for rural community colleges. One of these policies was the 2012 revision to the Pell Grant program. Hicks, West, Anes, and Maheskwari, (2014) argued that the Pell revision which reduced funding from 18 semesters to 12 semesters for each student had negatively impacted rural populations and the community colleges serving them. In a quantitative study Hicks et al. (2014) took data from 14 rural Virginia community colleges on graduation rates and enrollment levels from 1996 to 2003. The study sought to determine if the reduction from 18 semesters to 12 semesters of Pell eligibility would impact the overall college enrolment in Virginia rural community colleges and if this new change would have an effect on graduation rates in these same community colleges. Their findings indicated that these new Pell policies did substantially impact Virginia rural community colleges by a possible reduction of a 7% loss of enrollment or about a 4%

decrease in tuition collected. In addition, this policy change correlated to a 13% reduction in graduation rates. National policies had substantial impact on community colleges and the students they serve in rural areas. Although this was not specifically related to this research it suggested that community colleges needed to remain active in national policy decisions as they could directly affect the rural populations they served.

Summary. Community colleges face a myriad of issues when conducting business in rural areas. Pennington et al. (2006) stated that finding qualified faculty was a significant challenge for rural areas. Katsinas and Miller (1998) added that training could be expensive due to the costs of transportation because rural community colleges were often geographically remote. They also noted that implementing new programs was sometimes prohibitive due to the limited pools of qualified instructors. The authors suggested the need for support from government and private entities to assist community colleges.

Often it was the mission of the community college to provide services to outlying rural areas, but factors such as finances created barriers to fulfilling that mission (Treadway, 1984). Another part of the college mission that caused issues for faculty was the community college open door policy which invited a large range of diverse populations to pursue education (Twombly, 2005).

In an attempt to determine how to serve a specific population, Latinas, Starobin and Bivens (2014) focused on recruitment of Latinas living in rural areas to engineering fields. Their research is very specific to a population-Latinas and to a subject-engineering. Suggestions for educators were to begin by understanding the Latina culture of the students and families. The authors also believed that having a leader that was of

similar cultural background created trust with students and families. Physical space was noted as a potential barrier for further educational attainment. Lastly the authors urged administrators to develop goals and strategies to expand under-represented populations into STEM careers and post-secondary education.

Although narrow in focus this research did provide some direction for practice on how community colleges create programming in rural areas. Community colleges must understand their rural populations and create trust within the community. In addition, collaborating and creating partnerships with institutions throughout the entire educational pathway was important.

Research indicated that there were gaps in educational outreach for rural populations. Many rural communities were not satisfied with programming offered to them by post-secondary institutions (Masoner & Miller, 1995). Community colleges had difficulty meeting needs of these populations due to the diversity of these areas, limited budgets and service delivery challenges. Community colleges faced a variety of issues in serving rural populations (Katsinas & Miller, 1998). Understanding the needs of business was important to creating strong partnerships (Wilson, 2009).

Some believed that the role of a community college in regards to a rural community was twofold: (a) to provide economic development support and (b) to provide educational opportunities (MDC. 2002). Although economic development support is important and warrants further study, the topic of this research is educational opportunity, specifically academic planning that creates the academic programming needed for rural areas.

Often administrative policies of large community college bureaucracies were complex and created difficulties for developing programming for rural populations. Funding issues complicated the delivery of that program from year to year (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2006). Changes to national policies such as financial aid regulations negatively affected student enrollment and graduation rates (Hicks, et al., 2014).

Academic Planning: History and Procedures

The birth of academic planning was traced back to the expansion of colleges and universities established at the end of the Middle Ages in Europe. For example, the University of Paris was directed and designed by faculty peers. Bologna had student/faculty groups that planned the programs and the instruction (Jones, 1979).

In the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries it was evident that European universities had programs that changed according to societal needs. This was apparent because the University of Salerno provided specialized medical training and the University of Bologna became a hub for the study of law (Jones, 1979). These early universities were focusing on constituents' needs.

Another important factor in the development of academic planning was the establishment of the University of Berlin in 1809. This was the first modern university to separate departments, create graduate level-instruction, and offer research programs. With these new characteristics, planning had become institutionalized (Jones, 1979).

In the United States during the Colonial and Revolutionary periods, universities such as Virginia, Harvard, Yale, and Brown operated under the Oxford model. Faculty were the primary academic planners, yet programming was heavily influenced by the

institutional founders. At the turn of the century and in several decades to follow, university planning was thought of as goal setting and was primarily accomplished by presidents and chancellors (Jones, 1979).

The passing of the Morrill Land Grant Act "created the atmosphere in which Americans began to seek higher learning as a means of social and economic mobility" (Jones, 1979, p. 22). It also played a significant role in the history of academic planning. The creation of this act changed the face of American universities. The introduction of this law expanded not only the number of universities in the country but also mandated an expansion of curriculum to include agriculture, mechanical arts (engineering, home economics), and military training (National Association of State University and Land Grant Colleges, 1995). This expansion of curriculum created a greater need for academic planning within these new land grant universities.

Another important factor pushing academic planning to the forefront were the ranking of American universities and the explosion of student enrollment. The ranking of institutions in regards to their range of curriculum, the quality of their graduate programs, and various other factors caused university administrators to begin purposeful planning in the attempt to increase prestigious rankings (Jones, 1979).

After World War I, colleges moved to a more decentralized model of academic planning. Presidents set the overarching values, major policies, and their desired program priorities. From there faculty divided into groups and created curricular and disciplinary concentrations (Jones, 1979). In recent times, planning has been less structured and performed mostly in terms of concerns for how much the college would

grow. Most academic planning was done by management within an institution (Kieft, 1978).

There was a limited amount of literature describing the process of how academic planning occurred in post-secondary education. Kieft (1978) conducted several case studies to assist the National Center for Higher Education Management (NCHEMS) identify approaches and commonalities for academic planning. He undertook a study with four post-secondary institutions across the country. The four institutions included a community college, an independent liberal arts college, a major research university, and a publicly supported institution. One of the objectives of the research was to find common elements that could serve as guidelines for practice and process when academic planning is undertaken.

Kieft (1978) gained several insights from his general observations of the colleges in regards to academic planning. The following are a few guidelines that he revealed. They could be helpful as a community college begins the process of academic planning and programming and may be applicable to a plan geared toward a rural community.

1. Academic planning is associated with future funding.
2. Academic planning is an open-ended process so that as unexpected situations occur the plan can be modified.
3. Academic planning must go beyond the everyday profits and expenditures. Colleges must look beyond the quantifiable data.
4. Administration needs to be committed to ensuring that academic planning is governed by rules that are followed by all and that no one can make changes outside those rules.

5. Academic planning must have timelines with firm schedules that are accessible to all in the process.
6. Academic planning must have precise and timely internal and external information. Internal information could include enrollment figures and projections of incoming revenue. External information might include community needs assessments, review of employer needs and population demographics.
7. The commitment by upper management to the academic planning process and the visibility of that commitment must be observable for the process to be successful.
8. Academic planning takes a great deal of time and commitment. Support for those that are taken away from their regular duties to work on these special committees must be furnished.
9. Academic planning needs to be all-encompassing and to include student services, financial services, and enrollment services.
10. Academic planning should be both short-term and long-term. Planning should consider funding, that is available, but not restricted by that when looking at future goals and expansion (pp. 149-152).

Summary. Academic planning had its roots in the Middle Ages. It has evolved in post-secondary education to become an important component to providing direction to colleges. The literature discussed some of the people involved in the academic planning process on a general level, but it did not provide much detail. The literature failed to discuss which people were involved in academic planning for special populations, such as for rural areas.

Although some of this literature was dated, the core principles of academic planning were still quite relevant in today's community college environment. In a time where resources are scarce, academic planning becomes a process of great importance to maximize college funding and provide maximum benefits to the consumer. The literature looked at a variety of components related to academic planning such as motivational reasons to implement planning, relationships between individual departments and the institution, and relationships between planning and budgeting. Turning specifically to Kieft's (1978) work, "…it did not focus adequately on planning because it did not investigate or address process and procedural questions" (p. 7). Although there was limited literature about academic planning, there was a gap in this literature about planning in rural institutions.

Models for Academic Planning in Rural Communities

This section examined models for academic planning in rural communities. It attempted to discover programming strategies, promising practices, and steps that rural-serving community colleges could follow.

Unfortunately, the review revealed few models related to academic planning for a rural community. Killacky (1984) offered one approach called the Rural Free University Model which focused on adults in rural communities. The model he described was premised on the fact that anyone can learn and anyone can teach. In a monograph sponsored by the National Institute of Education, the author stated that a non-formal approach to curriculum development could provide substantial benefits to a community. He noted that such training provided informal and inexpensive learning opportunities; it allowed participants to traverse social and cultural barriers; it provided an opportunity for

safe discussions on difficult topics such as alcoholism, single parenting, and domestic abuse; and it helped address the serious issue of rural seclusion.

Killacky (1984) pointed out many benefits for the rural-serving community college such as reaching new audiences in a resourceful manner, gaining potential political support in the future, and respond to its mission. In addition, he noted that an increase in collaboration with community agencies may result, along with the possibility of further programming in the future. His insights on rural free university were derived from extensive experience in the field.

The Killacky model provided many benefits to rural communities and the community colleges serving rural populations. The Rural Free University Model was very different than the traditional comprehensive community college model. Perhaps incorporating the Rural Free University Model into an overall plan for a community college as a precursor to offering academic courses might ensure success of the academic offerings. This was a concept that could be examined in the future.

Hobbs (1973) authored a report for the National Dissemination Project (NDP) to assist community colleges serving minority and disadvantaged youth. NDP conducted assessments of projects undertaken by the Office of Economic Opportunity. In total over 100 community colleges in 16 states were reviewed. In the report Hobbs suggested that for academic planning to be effective the plan should ensure that minority/disadvantaged students would be served. She concluded that there were three critical models for academic planning, two of which were Modal Learning Program and Non-Campus Degree Programs. The Modal Learning Program allowed for a different way of looking at the educational process by examining the basic modes of intelligent behavior which

were expressive, symbolic, empirical, and prescriptive modes. It included courses to be taught through these human intelligences as opposed to the traditional divisions of departments and classes. Examples examined in the national assessment were cluster colleges which allowed for different learning opportunities, such as a college that was project oriented in which students learned through seminar discussions or creating and making presentations, as alternate ways to earn credit.

The Non-Campus Degree Program was described as the community college that provided non-traditional learning opportunities and acclimatized itself to the students' needs in the community (Hobbs, 1973). An example of a Non-Campus Degree program was the College of Human Services in New York. The two-year degree awarded to low-income adults was earned through subsidized work study programs. Some of the degrees that could be earned were in urban planning, social work, and law.

Between the years of 1979-1982 Treadway (1984) conducted a project that was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE), which led to a book titled *Higher Education in Rural America*. In this book he provided a handful of strategies for program development in the area of outreach when creating adult education programs to rural communities. Among them were (a) ability to reach people in their communities, (b) increasing local involvement, (c) determining needs and linking needs to institutional mission, and (d) nurturing inter-institutional collaborations. Although the book was outdated these suggestions provided a useful place to begin when looking at outreach to rural communities. Treadway concluded the chapter with a list of characteristics of effective outreach programs. These suggestions were compiled from a list made by rural students and facilitators that attended a conference on rural programs. It provided a

checklist for community colleges when delivering off-site programs in the community. Some of these were:

- has an effective means of reaching people and making them aware of opportunities;
- utilizes local resources and group and referral agents;
- utilizes good information free of jargon that is honest and reliable with respect to program descriptions, and
- provides for coordination of room facilities, community-events calendars, etc. and avoids duplication and competition for scheduling time (pp. 43-44).

Paton (2006) described a rural outreach project at her institution. She provided background information, steps taken, and analysis of a strategic plan. The University served a rural area encompassing a 131,000 square mile region. In an effort to reach out to the community, in 2000 Texas Tech embarked on a strategic plan titled "A Clear Vision for the Future." Two of the goals from the plan were (a) the expansion to educational access, and (b) outreach research. Ultimately, the plan produced four new rural off-campus teaching and research sites.

Some of the educational steps Texas Tech University took to increase access were to (a) expand distance and off-campus degree programs, (b) introduce graduate degrees, and (c) provide upper-division coursework in education, general business, or tourism. In addition, the university created and leveraged many partnerships with the community. Agreements were created with local community colleges to provide lower-division coursework and to assist students in transferring to the university. Non-competition agreements were signed with local private universities which provided undergraduate

degrees in math and science with curricula developed to ensure transferability to graduate programs offered by Texas Tech University (Paton, 2006).

The previous paragraph described examples of how a university outreach programs provided academic programming for rural communities. There were few comments in the literature about the process. There was mention of programs being offered that "had been identified as meeting high regional workforce needs" (Paton, 2006, p. 30). Also, Paton indicated that the graduate degree programs offered were due to regional workforce assessments. This was valuable information, but this literature did not suggest a path from the creation of the strategic plan to the creation of the academic programs for these rural areas.

Although not a model per se, Leist and Travis (2010) set out to determine how rural community colleges plan for courses that are offered online. They conducted interviews with distance learning administrators from six public rural community colleges in a southwestern state. The authors discovered that for all of the distance education programs the budgets were linked to the institutional budget. Most of the colleges discussed the practice of adding special fees to classes that were offered online. In addition, the distance learning programs were all linked to an institutional master plan. Many of the colleges surveyed used advisory boards to assist in creating and supporting online courses. All institutions surveyed agreed in the impotence of acquiring student feedback for assessment of online courses. Faculty issues were present in online course programming. Faculty availability, training, and monetary incentives for teaching online courses were mentioned. The authors concluded by stating that to ensure the success of

online courses, rural community colleges needed to ensure that online planning was included at the college strategic planning level.

The planning of online courses provided valuable information to rural community colleges when exploring the creation of academic planning. It was important to have rural academic programming embedded in the overall strategic plan to ensure funding, and that the resources were available to carry out the initiative. It was also important to have support from experts in the field, such as utilizing advisory boards. Lastly, assessment of programs was vital. Student feedback was extremely valuable as academic programming was being developed.

A great deal of literature existed in defining the characteristics of rural populations, problems that community colleges faced in reaching out to rural communities, and possible approaches to this work. There was a limited amount of literature about program models that provided the steps needed in academic planning by community colleges to implement academic programming in rural communities. The literature discovered in the models failed to provide any scholarly literature per se with the exception of one article. Thus, there remained a large gap in both the steps and the strategies to reach these rural communities in need. The focus of this literature research was to continue to search for other models that may exist to assist community colleges in this task.

Summary. The literature yielded a few models pertinent to academic planning in rural-serving community colleges. Killacky (1984) offered a model to that had potential to remove barrios and to provide services to rural areas. Although this study attempted to look at overall programming in rural areas, it did not identify specific methods to create

academic programming. The Hobbs model provided alternate ways of programming so that underserved populations could be successful. This model also did not provide steps needed to determine the ways in which this programming was created. Treadway (1984) gave some practical examples of strategies that community colleges could use in developing programs for rural areas. In addition he provided a list of effective outreach characteristics which an organization could find beneficial. Paton (2006) described an overall effort by a university to expand services to a large rural area. A few of the rationale and some of the stakeholders involved were discussed that guided them to the outcomes for the rural outreach. Yet, there was no discussion of the overall plan and the steps taken from the beginning. Leist and Travis (2010) provided some valuable information to review in the planning of online courses. Specifically they discussed the importance of encompassing the distance program planning within the master strategic plans of rural community colleges. Some of this information could be translated to creating academic plans for rural areas.

The information listed above was a monograph, a report, a personal interpretation of a project, and an article. With the exception of the article there was a lack of scholarly work on this topic. The findings of the literature review supported the need for this study.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this literature review was to collect and review research applicable to what motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas and the processes they initiate to implement the programming. This literature review was significant, because it revealed the need for additional research as there was very little

that discussed the topic of how community colleges create programming for rural areas. This chapter described the steps the researcher took to organize and retrieve the literature. It discussed the key themes that arose during the research. It discussed the literature and its relationship to the topic of this study.

The researcher conducted searches on various databases to find scholarly articles for the literature review. She searched phrases applicable to the topic including *rural, access, community college, and mission.* Much of the literature was collected from professional journals, government reports, and websites of professional organizations. Most materials retrieved through the search process were not directly related to the topic but provided additional perspective and understanding of the topic for the researcher and tangentially the relationships were examined.

Articles were difficult to find that related directly to the topic. Thus the researcher allowed for no specific timeframe. Most related literature was reviewed for potential relevancy to the study. The primary focus of the search was for literature about what motivates community colleges to serve rural populations and who makes the programming decisions.

Although much of the literature did not relate to the topic being investigated, a few themes emerged from the readings. They included (a) individual/family/community educational issues in rural areas; (b) community college issues in rural areas; (c) academic planning: history and procedures; and (d) models for academic planning in rural communities. Information on these key themes was synthesized, and summaries were provided as they related to the research topic presented.

The first key theme that immerged was individual/family/community. In creating academic programming for rural areas it was important to understand those factors which affected individuals, families and communities. Rural community college students faced an excess of barriers in their pursuit of higher education including lack of understanding of college processes specifically of financial aid (Bell et al., 2009). In her research reviewing barriers to rural students pursuing higher education, Carter (2014) discussed the financial barriers and the distance barriers for students. She also noted that opportunities for technology use were present.

Individuals looked at many factors when making decisions about remaining in college. Students faced many barriers during their educational path. Both Hinka et al. (2015) and Pitcher (2014) discussed student retention issues related directly to student services programming and not specifically to instructional programming. However, often student services and instructional departments worked together to provide a holistic experience for students. These two articles provided a wealth of information for community colleges to plan support services for students and how to increase success once they have embarked on their academic college careers. Some of these strategies were for community colleges to guide students through the college processes and to help students to understand the conflicting situations that they will find themselves in when balancing school, and family (Hinka et al., 2015). Other ways in which community colleges could assist students were to put into place Early Alert systems and Peer mentoring program (Pitcher, (2014)

Legutko (2008) administered a quantitative study to determine family influence on high school senior's decisions to enter postsecondary education. He compared data

from a study 10 years prior. He concluded that students planning to attend college after graduation who had parents that did not hold a postsecondary degree increased from 38% to 66%. He also noted that students that planned to enter into postsecondary education that perceived that they were from lower-middle class families increased by 21%. The study indicated that parents without college degree and with lower financial means value higher education for their children. It is important to note that this study was limited to one state and there were only 254 participants. Thus, it was difficult to generalize the findings to other geographic locations.

Rural communities also shaped the decisions rural youth make around college-going practices (Carr & Kefalas, 2009). These communities contributed in categorizing students into achievers (high-achievers in school and likely to succeed), stayers (average students who valued work), and seekers (average students with desires to move away). Rural communities "pushed" sometimes unconsciously these students into their perspective paths to either go away to college (achievers), stay in the community and forgo a post-secondary education (stayers), or to join the military before obtaining higher education (seekers).

Thus, this present study of how community colleges create academic programming for rural areas will inform other community colleges on how to provide these opportunities to other regions in the country and support these rural parents and families which have the desire for their children to attend post-secondary education.

A second key theme that immerged were community college issues. Community colleges faced a myriad of issues when conducting business in rural areas. Recruiting qualified faculty was a significant challenge for rural areas (Katsinas & Miller, 1998;

Pennington et al., 2006; Rankin, 2009). Providing professional development was difficult due to distance constraints. Implementing new programs could be unrealistic because often rural areas did not have qualified instructors. The authors suggested the need for government and private entities to support community colleges (Katsinas & Miller, 1998).

Often it was the mission of the community college to provide services to outlying rural areas, but factors such as lack of financial resources created barriers to fulfilling that mission (Treadway, 1984). Another part of the college mission that caused difficulties for the community college faculty in serving rural areas was the open door policy which invites a large range of diverse populations (Twombly, 2005). Meeting the diverse needs of a diverse population was difficult for community colleges (Pennington et al., 2006). Starobin and Bivens (2014) suggested that educators begin to understand the specific culture in which they are interacting with, and make available leaders that mirror that same culture. Although narrow in focus this research provided some direction for practice on how community colleges could create programming in rural areas. Community colleges must understand their rural populations and create trust within the community. In addition, collaborating and creating partnerships with institutions throughout the entire educational pathway is vital. Collaborating and partnering strategies support programming when finances are reduced and student bodies are diverse.

Research indicated that there were gaps in educational outreach for rural populations. Many rural communities were not satisfied with programming offered to

them by post-secondary institutions (Masoner & Miller, 1995). Understanding the needs of business was important to creating strong partnerships (Wilson, 2009).

Some believed that the role of a community college in regards to a rural community was twofold: (a) to provide economic development support and (b) to provide educational opportunities (MDC. 2002). Thomas (2013) cited that the collaboration between a community college and its community created a stronger economy and a skilled-up workforce. Although economic development support is important and warrants further study, the topic of this research is specifically academic planning and processes that create the academic programming needed for rural areas. The case study model utilized in the Thomas research conveyed an in-depth view of the relationship of the community and the community college. This research of how community colleges create programming for rural areas can benefit from a comprehensive and detailed look which case study will provide.

Often administrative policies of large community college bureaucracies are multi-faceted which can make it difficult to developing programming for rural populations. Funding issues complicate the delivery of that programming from year to year (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2006). Changes to national policies such as financial aid regulations can negatively affect student enrollment and graduation rates (Hicks et al., 2014). The structure of a community college has some impact on how academic programming is created for rural areas as does the funding it receives each year. These factors must be considered when creating academic programming for rural areas, but are not at the foundation of the process and procedures of the development.

Another key theme that immerged was academic planning: history and procedures. Academic planning has existed since the Middle Ages. It has evolved in post-secondary education to become an important component to providing direction to colleges (Jones, 1979). Kieft (1978) cited some core principles for community colleges when creating academic programming. He stated that academic planning takes a great deal of time, it should be both short and long term, it must include key areas of the college such as student services, finance and enrollment services, and it must contain timelines and schedules. These guidelines serve as a starting point for a community college, yet it is very general. Although there was literature about academic planning, there was a gap in describing process, procedures and exactly who is involved. The case study model was used by Kieft, and he was able to create a set of principles for academic planning to assist community colleges. Utilizing this same method would allow for the gathering of information on process and procedure of academic planning in rural areas by using targeted research questions.

The last theme that immerged were models for academic planning**.** The literature yielded a few models pertinent to academic planning in rural-serving community colleges. Killacky (1984) offered a model called the Rural Free University to remove barriers and to provide services to rural areas. The Hobbs model provided alternate ways of programming so that underserved populations could be successful. Neither the Killacky nor the Hobbs model provided steps used to determine the ways in which academic programming could be created. Treadway (1984) provided strategies that community colleges could employ in developing programs for rural areas. In addition he provided a list of effective outreach characteristics which an organization could utilize.

Paton (2006) described an overall effort by a university to expand services to a large rural area. She provided a small amount of discussion of the rationale for the project and the stakeholders involved. Yet, there was no discussion of the overall plan and the steps taken from the beginning. Leist and Travis (2010) provided some important insights on programming for online courses in rural areas. They discussed the need for funding and resources to be in place. They also mentioned the importance of distance programming planning and the need for it to be included in the college strategic plan. The literature collected regarding models was a scholarly article, a monograph, a report, or personal interpretation of a project. There was a lack of much scholarly work on this topic. This researcher believes that with a case study analysis and with targeted questions to the interviewees that the steps and process for academic programming for rural areas can be determined.

A great deal of literature existed in defining the characteristics of rural populations, problems that community colleges faced in reaching out to rural communities, and possible approaches to this work. There was a limited amount of literature about program models that included the steps needed in academic planning by community colleges to implement academic programming in rural communities. The literature discovered in the models failed to provide any scholarly literature per se. Thus, there remains a large gap in both the steps and the strategies to reach these rural communities in need. The focus of this literature research was to continue to search for other models that may exist to assist community colleges in this task.

The findings of the literature review supported the need for this study. The wide array of qualitative studies in the literature that was reviewed pointed to the method that

will provide the most useful information for this study. Specifically qualitative research allows for the reviewing of processes and the ability ask broad questions as to how those processes occur (Creswell, 2008) Some in-depth case studies of specific institutions and their approach to rural programming can yield findings that can be applied in practice and that can identify areas for future research. Thus, this qualitative study will undertake case studies with two colleges – one suburban college and one rural college – to address issues of transferability. Specifically, the results of this study could be applied to similar situations (Merriam, 2009).

The biggest limitation of the qualitative approach in the present research involves the number of participants. With a small sampling, the results may not represent all of the variations of issues. Furthermore, given that the institutions fall under the same overall governance structure, the results may not be applicable to other types of structures, such as those colleges that are part of a connected state system. Nevertheless, by using a qualitative approach, this study provides an in-depth examination of approaches taken by selected community colleges.

CHAPTER 3: DESIGN OF STUDY

The purpose of this comparative case study was to investigate how rural-serving community college personnel create academic planning for rural areas. The research further sought to determine what the processes are and who is involved in the decision-making of the creation of this rural programming. The research resulted in a series of processes that provide a foundation for community colleges when embarking on rural programming projects. The study is useful for community college administrators, community stakeholders and policymakers.

This chapter describes how the study was designed and the procedures used to execute the research. In addition, the rationale for reaching the chosen methodology is discussed. This chapter has three sections. They are (a) the philosophical approach, (b) the research method, and (c) the research procedures.

Philosophical Approach

In conducting this type of research it is fundamental to understand the researcher's philosophical approach towards the study. Recognizing the researcher's personal view creates an understanding of how the decisions for the research study were determined. Qualitative research can be "personal and interactive" and for that reason individual biases are often disclosed by the author (Pryczak, 2008, p. 137). One bias is that I have worked in the field of education for over 20 years. Most recently I have been at Oregon Coast Community College (OCCC). Throughout my career, I have worked in adult literacy in a variety of programs including English as a Second Language and Upward Bound. During my tenure as a Volunteer Literacy Tutor, I coordinated many programs to help students receive basic skills. In addition, during my career I taught

English to Head Start parents, Casino workers, and students in workforce education programs. The relevance here is twofold. I have a strong belief in education and the empowering nature it has. In addition, my experience has been with under-represented groups trying to master the English language.

Working in a recent position in the Upward Bound program, I understand the struggle and barriers high school students of under-represented groups face. I have witnessed the difficulties that the parents of these high school students encounter when in a new country and faced with learning a new educational system. I believe this is synonymous to what rural students and their parents face as they attempt to enter the gates of community college and navigate the path to educational attainment.

Another potential bias in this research is that I, as the researcher, was recently involved in a rural community outreach effort for PCC. It is important to note that the process of this rural outreach was initiated before I was hired into this position, and before my interest in this topic for this dissertation. It is also important to note that I am aware of potential biases in regards to how the project unfolds and as to how the decisions are reached as the dissertation unfolds.

I have always been interested in the topic of under-served populations as can be seen from the description above and have a lot of enthusiasm and energy for it. It was important to keep my bias in mind as I constructed questions for interviews for the study. In addition the manner in which I interpreted and evaluated the responses from the participants could also be affected, and I needed to remain impartial. Lastly, using validation techniques such as member checking and triangulation helped ensure accuracy and trustworthiness in the data (Creswell, 2008).

In summary, I believe that it is the community college's obligation and responsibility to provide educational access to all of its constituents. Such services include those to rural populations, who often have little access to these resources.

Purpose of this approach to research. When researchers begin to look at a problem they must first examine their own view of the world. They bring to research their own biases about knowledge. Epistemology is a way to look at that knowledge. The word epistemology has roots from the Greek language. It means knowledge. Epistemology is related to ontology and methodology. Ontology is "a particular theory about the nature of being or the kinds of things that have existence" (Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, 2015), whereas methodology has to do with the way in which knowledge is acquired. Thus, epistemology is the framework or worldview from which the researcher holds and uses in search of the truth (Krauss, 2005).

A researcher can look at the world with a realistic point of reference. There are many names to this view including constructivist, cognitive, idealist, interpretive social science, and phenomenological (Neuman, 2011). A constructive view is one in which the researcher believes that knowledge is only understood through the meanings of the events being studied. The researcher that subscribes to this paradigm is actively engaged with the participants of the study in gathering data (Krauss, 2005).

This researcher subscribes to the constructivist epistemology, because she believes that knowledge is created by one's interactions with the world and their personal experiences. In addition this researcher believes that there are no absolute truths in the world. Furthermore, the theoretical perspective with which she identifies is Interpretive. Neuman (2011) described the interpretive approach as "the systematic analysis of

socially meaningful action through the direct detailed observation of people in natural settings in order to arrive at understandings and interpretations of how people create and maintain their social worlds" (pp.101-102).

The interpretive social science (ISS) approach is related to hermeneutics. The word comes from a god in Greek mythology, Hermes (Neuman, 2011). He was the god of travel, athletics, language, and omens. The latter role, the one of omens, is the one related to interpretive philosophy. Hermes's responsibility was to interpret messages from the gods and then deliver them to the mortals (Atsma, n.d). According to Merriam Webster hermeneutics is a method or principle of interpretation (hermeneutics, 2011).

One of the first people to use the word hermeneutics as it relates to interpretation was Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834). He described interpretation as to understand. Schleiermacher stated that "all understanding consists of the two moments, of understanding the utterance as derived from the language and as a fact in the thinker" (Abulad, 2007, p. 16). Today the term hermeneutics is used to interpret and make sense of texts while trying to determine the viewpoint of the author (Patton, 2002).

This researcher believes that truth cannot be derived by quantitative data alone. Truth is embedded in meaning and is not always so transparent. Humans are complex. They experience the world in different ways and have different points of views. It is important to understand a phenomenon through its context.

Relation of approach to research. The purpose of this study was to acquire an understanding of how personnel from community colleges determine academic programming for rural areas. The researcher was examining a social group in order to discover how they create and maintain their social worlds. Thus ISS was the optimal choice.

This researcher believed that meaning found in participants' responses would provide information about processes used to create rural programming in community colleges. Using the case study method, the researcher became actively engaged in the course of the research with the participants. In addition, the researcher was true to hermeneutics in that she interpreted themes and key concepts derived from the interviewees as related to programming for rural areas.

Major authors. ISS stems from the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834) and is a subset of the constructivism paradigm. Other authors associated with ISS are Max Weber (1864-1920) and Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) (Neuman, 2011).

Research Method: Multiple Case Study

This section describes the case study research method and the rationale for its use. It includes a description of the design, and reasons for choosing the design. It also contains a discussion of criticisms and strengths of the design.

When deciding upon the type of method to use for the research the researcher looked at quantitative and qualitative studies. Quantitative methods are used for research that has certain characteristics such as results that apply to a large number of people, include measurement of variables, and/or test theories. In addition, its goal is to search for an absolute truth. This study explored how rural community college administrators went about creating new programs in rural areas. Because this study evaluated processes, a comparative case study was utilized.

Purpose of the method. The purpose of the case study research method was to consider a situation or circumstance within a bounded system (Creswell, 2008). The boundaries of this case were community college personnel who are involved in

programming for rural areas. This study fit the requirements of a case study, because a case study allows the researcher to collect data in order to offer in-depth meanings and descriptions (Merriam, 1988). I explored factors motivating community college personnel to create programming for rural areas, processes used, and personnel involved in this decision-making. "Case study research…endeavors to discover meaning, to investigate processes, and to gain insight into an in-depth understanding of an individual, group, or situation" (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegle, 2006, p. 269).

Key concepts. One key feature of case study is to study an entity within boundaries. Thus, it is called the bounded study. In case study research, there is a set amount of people or cases that can be employed (Merriam, 2009). Interviews were conducted with selected community college staff in an effort to determine what motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas.

Rationale for selection. In qualitative studies, the research allows for more exploration of experiences by subjects as the primary focus (Creswell, 2008). Thus, qualitative research is more appropriate for this study, because respondents will have the opportunity to provide answers that are unique to their experiences. This study using the case study method, employed open-ended questions to elicit participants' points of view. A case study allows researchers to examine complex situations and to create meaningful text to describe the case (Merriam, 2009). In ISS the researcher is the one interpreting or creating meaning from the behaviors or situation (Neuman, 2011).

The major research questions determine which type of research method will be used. When the researcher is asking how, what, or why type questions, then the appropriate method is case study (Ellinger, Watkins, & Marsick, 2005). The research

that was conducted in this study was asking: what motivates community college administrators to create academic programming for rural areas and what processes they utilize in this process; thus the case study method seems to be a natural fit for this work.

Yin (2014) contended that there are three types of case study research exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Exploratory is used for simply exploring a topic. Descriptive case study is an attempt to illustrate what has happened. Explanatory research can be used to look at process. Stake (1995) described case studies a little differently. He contended that case studies are intrinsic, instrumental, and collective. If the situation being researched is unique, it is intrinsic. If the objective is to gain insight and understanding then Stake defined it as instrumental. Lastly, Stake defined collective case study as a situation where more than one case is being studied. For the purpose of this research, Stake's definition of collective case study was used to study two different community colleges. The examination of two community college's and their methods for planning academic programs for rural communities will help in providing insight to practices and inform other colleges in the country.

One of the most important components of case study is defining the object that one will study. This is the entity that the researcher will study, but it must contain boundaries. Thus, it is called the bounded study (Merriam, 2009). The bounded sample for this case study will be personnel from the two community colleges that serve rural populations.

Case study research allows the researcher to gather information below the surface to provide in-depth meanings and descriptions (Merriam, 1988). It would be impossible to understand how decisions are made by community college staff without considering

the context in which those decisions are made and all of the multiple variables that are intertwined.

The strength of case study research is that it provides for responses with rich descriptions of situations and in depth information. This can also be considered by some to be a weakness. Critics may contend that all of this investigation not only takes a lot of time, but also creates a document that is too long and that no one has the time to read (Merriam, 1988). Yin (1981) agreed that case study reports can be extensive. He suggested using different techniques when creating a narrative. One option would be to report the study with open-ended questions and following them up with various answers. When reporting on a multiple case study he suggested taking each individual case and writing a summary for each; then concluding with the cross-case analysis.

Generalizability or conclusions derived from research in case study research has long been a criticism from the positivist sector. Some social scientists, such as Becker (2000), believe that by evaluating a case or cases against previously documented knowledge, experience, other cases, or other theories a researcher can further generalize from it. Stake (1995) had a different approach to generalization; he called it naturalistic generalization. He stated that, "naturalistic generalizations are conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life's affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves" (p. 85). This connection through the experience of reading the case that various readers make with the case creates a greater understanding of the phenomenon.

Stake (1995) offered a list to assist the researcher in validation of naturalistic generalization. Some suggestions were: (a) make accessible information about the

researcher, (b) provide in laymen's terms what methods were used in the case study research and how conclusions were reached, and (c) offer the reader some of the reactions by others of the study being conducted.

Research Procedures

This section describes the major steps in collecting and analyzing the data. It includes case selection, study participants, data needs, data collection techniques, data analysis, strategies to ensure soundness of data, and strategies to protect human subject. It concludes with a summary of the section.

In searching for the answer of how community college administrators create academic programming for rural areas, it becomes necessary to conduct research in community colleges. In addition, those serving rural populations also become a criterion in choosing colleges. The Carnegie classification of higher education has several categories for post-secondary educational institutions. Some of those categories indicate whether a community college is rural or not. There are 570 rural community colleges across the country and 14 are located in Oregon (Carnegie Foundation, 2010). However, community colleges with the "rural" designation are not the only community colleges that serve rural communities. For example, Mt. Hood Community College, located near Portland, Oregon, is not a rural designated college but does serve rural populations. Thus this study will examine one rural community college and one that is not designated as such but does serve a rural population. Studying the two different types of institutions will provide a source for richer data.

Oregon was chosen for several reasons to study. First, it has a significant number of rural community colleges. It also has community colleges that are not rural but that

serve rural areas. The selection of each type will make the study richer by examining the two community college categories.

Second, Oregon is not unlike many states in the nation in which both types of colleges exist – that is, rural community colleges and non-rural community colleges that serve rural areas. Thus, Oregon as a state can provide a reasonable representative sample to study.

Third, Oregon colleges were selected; because the researcher believed that a single case study would not provide enough information to satisfy the question and two colleges seemed like a manageable amount. These colleges specifically were chosen. because they were willing to participate in the research. In case study research it is not as important to random sample as it is to choose colleges in which rich information will be gathered. In this instance full cooperation was given by the colleges, and the fact that they are representative of both metropolitan and rural community colleges will provide a reasonable sample for the study (Cousin, 2005).

Case selection. In an attempt to choose a variety of community colleges that would provide the best data, the Carnegie Classification System was utilized. The Carnegie classification system is a way to organize all accredited degree-granting colleges and universities into different categories. There are six categories and some elective categories. For this study, both the Basic Classification and the Size and Setting Classifications were used to select the colleges for the study.

In looking at associate-level colleges there are three institutional classifications in which a college can fall; they are urban-serving, suburban-serving, and rural-serving.

> Urban-serving and suburban-serving institutions are physically located within Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs) or Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), respectively, with populations exceeding 500,000 people according to the 2000 Census. Institutions in PMSAs or MSAs with a lower total population, or not in a PMSA or MSA, were classified as rural-serving. (Carnegie Foundation, 2010, para. 5)

The second classification used was the Size and Setting Classification. This classification categorizes the college according to the full-time enrollment in the fall.

> Data are from the ***IPEDS*** Completions, Institutional Characteristics, and Fall Enrollment surveys corresponding to degree conferrals from July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009 (the most recent data available for all institutions) and Fall 2008 characteristics and enrollments, and the College Board *Annual Survey of Colleges* corresponding to Fall 2010. (Carnegie Methodology, 2010, para 3).

Each of the colleges was chosen from the Basic Classification Systems, which are rural, suburban, and urban. In addition each of the two colleges was chosen to represent at least two of the Size Classifications of very small, small, medium, large, and very large. Table 3.1 provides this information.

Table 3.1

Carnegie Classification System: Oregon Community College Break-Down

Category	FTE Enrollment	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Very small	1-500	Oregon Coast Tillamook		
Small	500-1999	Clatsop Southwestern Klamath Treasure Valley Columbia Gorge		
Medium	2000-4999	Linn Benton Central Oregon Rogue Blue Mountain	Clackamas	
Large		Lane Chemeketa		
Very Large				PCC

Two community colleges in Oregon were chosen – one with an urban or suburban designation and one with a rural designation under the Carnegie classification system. The colleges chosen were comparable in size to one another.

Study participants. To identify community college personnel that had experience programming for rural areas the researcher contacted administrators at each of the community colleges that had oversight of rural programming. This included people such as chief academic officers or vice president of instruction/student services. These administrators provided email addresses for the potential interviewees.

Data needs. One of the most significant components of case study is defining the object that one will study. This is the entity that the researcher will study, but it must contain boundaries. Thus, it is called the bounded study (Merriam, 2009). For this case study the researcher needed to locate personnel that were employed at community colleges. The people chosen had to have some experience in programming in rural areas. Additional boundaries were that the community colleges chosen needed to be rural serving and had to be situated in Oregon.

Data collection techniques. Once a researcher had chosen research questions a decision must be made as to what data to collect and how they will be collected. The interview is a common way to elicit data for case studies (Merriam, 1998). Potential data sources for the researcher to review included documents such as annual reports, meeting minutes, newspaper articles, and other archival records (Stake, 1995). Other data collection methods in case study research can include interviews, direct observations, and participant observation. Gathering a massive amount of data from an organization can be tempting. The problem is that the researcher can become overwhelmed very quickly (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Thus this researcher limited the process to interviews and the gathering of institutional and historical documents.

Obtaining information to answer the research questions was best discovered by interviewing the administrators at the community colleges. Interviews like all data gathering techniques have limitations and strengths. Robson (2002) described some of the limitations as interviews take a long time. There is preparation time for the interview, making appointments with the interviewee, the actual interview, and then the transcription which can take up to 10 times the time to the actual time of the interview.

Another limitation he described is the possibility for interviewer bias in interpreting the data and misinterpretation of the cues during the actual interview.

Strengths to using interviews include the opportunity to obtain more information from interviewees by having the ability to explain questions for clarity and to provide follow up questions. In the case of face to face interviews, as used in this research, the interviewer has the ability to read non-verbal cues during the interview, which can provide additional insight to some of the responses (Robson, 2002).

The interview was the major data gathering instrument for the research. A semi-structured type of interview was chosen. This allowed for the researcher to be prepared for interviews with a set of questions but allowed for flexibility of question order, question wording, and elimination of questions as determined by the interviewer (Robson, 2002). Questions were designed carefully to elicit information to inform the research questions; and the major questions can be followed by probes or sub-questions (Noor, 2008).

This study employed interviews from staff of two different community colleges in the same state. At the first community college four people were interviewed, and at the second, six people were intervened. The researcher traveled to each site to conduct the interviews.

The researcher contacted the vice presidents of instruction and asked them to provide a campus contact for the interviews of the college. The vice president of instruction provided contacts which varied from deans of instruction, to division deans, and to outreach personnel. The campus case study interviews varied depending on the schedules of the staff and the availability of key administrators to coordinate efforts. The

interviews were semi-structured and open ended to allow for participants to provide information that may provide researcher with increased understanding of how the community colleges create academic programs for rural areas. The interview protocol used open ended questions. Each interview took between 45 and 60 minutes, as recommended by Robson (2002).

Interviews were digitally recorded. Upon completion of each interview the information gathered was loaded onto the researcher's computer for further transcription. This recorder was synched only with the owner's computer, thus the information gathered could only be accessed by the researcher on her computer with a personal access code. The interviews were forwarded on a confidential link with a personal password to a transcription service. In conjunction with conducting interviews of community college personnel, this researcher reviewed existing documents within the colleges to assist in answering the research question. Some types of records that could be reviewed were from the internet, private and public records, and physical evidence. Some examples incorporated into this research were advisory board lists, surveys of rural populations, and newspaper articles.

Merriam (1988) indicated that there are limitations to using documents as opposed to other methods like interviews. One of those limitations is that documents can be incomplete. Documents are not created for research so they may be unfinished or irrelevant to the research study. Second, the form in which the documents come may not be fully understandable by the researcher. Lastly, documents may not be accurate or valid. This may or may not be intentional, and since the researcher may not always know

the context in which these documents were created, there may be difficulty in evaluating the accuracy.

Reasons for using documents despite their limitations are many. First, they are inexpensive and easy to access. In addition they can save the researcher a great deal of time. Using documents represents an unobtrusive data collection method that is not influenced by the researcher (Merriam, 1988).

The addition of this documentary evidence provided further sources for interpretation of the data (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). These data also enhanced the validity and reliability and trustworthiness of the findings (Noor, 2008).

Data analysis. Data analysis is an element of all research regardless of method. In quantitative research the analysis will be predetermined with the data classified by the research question or the hypothesis. In qualitative research the process will be developing as the data are collected and analyzed. In either case, a plan of specific steps will need to be created to identify how the data will be organized and analyzed. These steps will vary depending on the type of method the researcher has chosen (Ellinger et al., 2005).

Creswell (2008) suggested a sequence of steps that were used in the analysis of the qualitative data. Table 3.2 describes the steps that the researcher followed.

Table 3.2

Steps to Conduct Research

Steps	Description
Organize Data	There will be a great deal of data collected. The researcher will need to have a method to keep it organized.
Explore and Code Data	Once the interviews are complete the information will need to be sorted. The researcher will review each transcript and make notes. Then the text will be divided into segments which are called codes.
Build Categories	The codes will be reviewed and reduced to arrive at a smaller amount with similar themes.
Interpret the Data	The researcher will take these 5 to 7 themes and begin to interpret them.
Summarize Findings	The researcher will answer the proposed research question by using tables and figures and writing a narrative.

Organize data. Creswell (2008) stated that when analyzing data a researcher can perform hand data analysis or use a computer to help analyze the data. Hand analysis means that the researcher will read the data and break it into parts. This coding is usually done using visual representation. Another more popular way to organize and analyze data is through a computer analysis program. The latter is a good choice when there are large quantities of data collected and close inspection of the text is needed. These are two characteristics of this research study, thus a computer was used in the proposed study to organize and analyze the data.

Explore and code data. There is the potential of a researcher becoming overwhelmed by the enormous amount of data that can be collected in case study research (Ellinger, et. al, 2005). The authors suggested that to keep a focus on the research it is necessary to analyze data with three overlapping purposes: descriptive, analytic, and interpretive and explanatory.

1. Descriptive purpose is the narrative that is given by participants to best answer the research question. It involves using the data and applying it to the research.
2. Uncovering the data. It is looking at the questions of how, what, and why from the data that have been gathered.
3. Interpretive and explanatory purpose is the incorporation of the information and insights that have been discovered from the data sources.

It is important to remember that these three purposes of data analysis overlap and intersect throughout the data analysis process. This researcher took all of the collected data to include field notes, documents, and interviews and treated them with the three guidelines listed above (Ellinger et al., 2005).

Build descriptions. The researcher conducted one case study at a time. As data were collected, they were analyzed and tentative themes and categories were created. Merriam (1998) stated that the correct way of doing the research is to analyze the qualitative data at the same time that the data collection is taking place. Thus, the data analysis process was ongoing throughout the collection of data in the first case being studied. The data from the remaining community college were treated in the same manner. Upon completion of the two individual cases one rural and one rural-serving, the researcher began to aggregate the data from the two colleges and comparison began.

Interpret the data. The fundamental aspect of case study research is the interpretation and re-interpretation of the data as they relate to the research questions. With each piece of new information gathered comes the task of interpreting to help understand the topic being studied. As a researcher it becomes important to apply only the relevant information to the topic. Unfortunately, since this is an evolving process it is difficult to ascertain whether data may be useful at a later date. Thus developing a database to track used and unused date becomes crucial (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

Since this research examined two different types of community colleges, one rural and one rural-serving, there were two stages of analysis. First was the examination of each individual case or a within-case analysis. This entails looking at each college as if it were an individual case study. The second step was the cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1998). Lastly, a summary was created to answer the research questions.

Strategies to ensure soundness. Whether a researcher chooses a quantitative method to answer a research question or a qualitative method, it is important that a researcher take steps to ensure that the data collected and reported are accurate. The researcher must take steps to ensure reliability and validity and trustworthiness throughout the process to ensure accuracy (Creswell, 2008). Merriam (2009) described internal validity as credibility and reliability, and external validity as transferability. To follow is a list of strategies this researcher followed to ensure that the integrity of the data and the analysis.

One way to strengthen a study is by creating a trusting relationship with the participants and their organizations. Russ-Eft and Preskill (2009) suggested that

spending more time on site will increase the trust level of the participants and, thus, increase the validity of the information that is collected.

A second way is to utilize triangulation in the research. Creswell (2008) defined triangulation as using data from different people or different methods. To increase credibility of the study in the interpretation of the data, the researcher can use any of several protocols. This researcher adhered to three types of triangulation described by Denzin (1984)

1. Data source triangulation – This means what is observed is the same in various contexts. An example of such triangulation would involve asking a president of a community college his interpretation of serving a rural community and then also asking a division dean or a faculty member about the president's interpretation of serving a rural community.
2. Investigator triangulation – This refers to having other colleagues, or team members review certain interpretations of the study. I engaged colleagues to review data and asked for their interpretations. The reactions provided supplementary information for the study.
3. Methodological triangulation – This relates to the use of several methods within the case study. This researcher employed interviews and review of historical data; using two or more methods allows for the possibility of discovering the data in different ways to illuminate or nullify. It assists in clarifying the data or invalidates the data. It might add credibility to the finding or it might invalidate it. It aids to increase confidence in the interpretation.

Another way to increase internal validity in a study is to incorporate the use of member checking. This might include having the participants examine rough drafts of the writing as it is happening, or reviewing the interpretation of the data. They may also be encouraged to write their personal versions of the situation. This input is valuable as it serves as a source to triangulate the interpretation that the researcher has made (Stake, 1995). Several interviewees from both Altna and Brantna Colleges (pseudonyms used in place of the actual names). participated in the reviewing of a portion of their interviews and provided input to direct the researcher. The additional information provided by the interviewees was included in the narrative.

Lastly, the validity of a study can be increased by employing peer consultation. The researcher discussed the research findings with a peer to receive feedback on processes and interpretations. This feedback from a peer provided new avenues of thought for the research in regards to topics, coding, and explanations of phenomenon (Russ-Eft & Preskill, 2009).

Strategies to protect human subjects. Data collection is often done on someone else's territory. The researcher is encroaching on other people's lives and workplaces in some way. A researcher must ask for permission and what that permission grants (Stake, 1995). It is important to inform participants of the research. Stake (1995) suggested offering the participants a few paragraphs about the research to include "the nature of the study, the sponsor, the activity indented, the primarily issues, the time span and burden to the parties" (p. 57).

Prior to each interview every participant was emailed a human subject release form. If the form had not been filled out prior to the interview, the researcher provided

one at the time of the interview. Upon providing consent the sessions began with the digital recorder running.

Ethical issues can arise when conducting qualitative research. The researcher is responsible for the situation he/she creates and must take all necessary action needed when issues arise (Chambuss & Schutt, 2003). According to Chambuss and Schutt (2003) some of these ethical issues that may occur are

1. Voluntary participation – It is essential that all subjects participating in a study do so voluntarily. This is not an issue when conducting interviews, as in this case study participants signed consent forms to participate. It does become more difficult to measure when a researcher is conducting observations.
2. Subject well-being – It is the researchers responsibility to review all potential scenarios in which the participants may be harmed and avoid them at all lengths. It is especially important to be conscious of the status, character, and sentiments of individuals. The main way to reduce such harm is to preserve confidentiality of the research subjects, as was done in this research.
3. Identify disclosure – Researchers need to disclose their identity and the intent of the study. The research study being conducted on community college was very straightforward, and this component of ethics was not difficult to achieve.
4. Confidentiality – It is the researcher's duty to take all precautions possible to prevent discloser of the identity of all participants. This can be accomplished by creating fictitious names, altering unimportant aspects of descriptions that might lead to discloser, and even deleting possible identifying material from the published material.

The job of the researcher is to evaluate all aspects of their research proposal in regards to potential ethical issues and resolve them before beginning. In addition, as the project moves forward the researcher must be conscious of new ethical issues that may arise and take action upon them immediately (Chambuss & Schutt, 2003).

To be eligible to conduct research at Oregon State University all students must follow procedures to protect human subjects. First, a researcher must complete the National Institute of Health Human Participants Protection Education for Research Team online course. I completed this prerequisite. The second piece of the requirements was to apply to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for permission to conduct the study. Once permission was granted I proceeded with the research. This researcher followed the guidelines set forth by the Human Research handbook.

Chapter Summary

I resonate with the Interpretive epistemology. I believe in the importance of being actively engaged with the participants in the gathering of data. Given the research questions and my viewpoint, qualitative research was chosen for this study.

Although several options are available for qualitative research, case study was chosen. This method provided me the latitude to ask how and why questions of the interviewees. Two community colleges within the state of Oregon were selected for the case study research – one was a rural college and the other was a suburban college serving a rural area. Four participants from one college were interviewed, and six individuals from the other college were interviewed. Separate cases were developed using the interview data and archival records, and then a cross-case analysis was undertaken.

A sequence of steps within the case study method was followed to arrive at an answer for the research question. Specific procedures, including data source triangulation, investigator triangulation, and method triangulation, were followed to ensure soundness of data. Strict guidelines were followed including receiving permission from the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure human subject protection.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings from the examination of the interviews of selected staff at two rural-serving community colleges. The chapter consists of two sections. Section one discusses characteristics of the interviewees. Section two presents summaries of the participants divided by college in regards to the research questions: (a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities? (b) What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? And (c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process? Each question is concluded with a cross-case analysis of the responses from the two community colleges.

Characteristics of the Colleges and Participants

Two case studies were created to research how two rural-serving community colleges in Oregon create programming for their communities. In these studies, interviews were held with individuals employed at each of the colleges. In order to maintain confidentiality the community colleges were given fictitious names, Altna College and Brantna College. The participants were given fictitious names and will be identified with designated numbers such as Alice, or Belle, with Alice representing a person from Altna College and Belle representing a person from Brantna College.

The two community colleges were chosen for their size and physical location as designated by the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education System. Altna College was a medium-sized rural serving comprehensive community college located in a suburban area. Brantna College was a large comprehensive community college in a rural setting. The two colleges granted associates degrees. Both served students that lived in

rural areas. See below for the formal grouping designated by the Carnegie Classification System for community colleges.

Table 4.1

Carnegie Classification System for Community Colleges 2008-2010

Community College	Student Population	Classification: Size & Setting	Classification: Basic
Altna	12,217	L2 Large 2-year	Assoc/Pub-R-L: Associate's Public Rural-serving Large
Brantna	8145	M2 Medium 2-year	Assoc/Pub-S-MC: Associate's Public Suburban-serving Multi-campus

Altna College. I formally interviewed four college personnel in varying positions including chief academic officer, and executive deans in Altna College. This college was designated as a medium-sized college in a suburban-serving setting. It served over 12,000 students and had over 1,600 employees. Although the college was not designated as rural-serving per the Carnegie Classification System, it offered over 400 classes outside the main campus in the surrounding rural areas at various designated locations.

After meeting with the chief academic officer I was referred to the executive dean for academic advancement to coordinate the interviews. She identified the four interviewees that met the criteria for the project, and had knowledge about topics related to the three research questions, which are located in the Appendix. All of the interviewees were familiar with the college's efforts to create programming for rural areas. The interviewees were identified as Alice, Alex, Alan, and Adam.

Alice. Alice worked as an instructor, coordinator, director, dean and executive dean at Altna College for 35 years. She held a Doctorate in Community College Leadership. In her current position, as executive dean of academic progression and regional education series she oversaw a number of programs including some which overlapped into rural areas including two outreach centers as well as high school programs which encompassed 25 high schools over a three county area.

Alex. Alex worked with Altna College for over 19 years. During his tenure at the college, he held faculty and dean positions. He has been the executive dean of career and technical education, for the past three years. He worked closely with the rural community in programs such as the high school-based dual credit program, Emergency Medical Technology (EMT) basic classes, and the agricultural community offerings which helped support the wine industry.

Alan. Alan was the Chief Academic Officer at the time of the interview. Throughout his professional career he has worked at various colleges. He served in positions such as faculty, faculty coordinator, division chair and dean of instruction. He held a Doctorate in Community College Leadership.

Adam. Adam had a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership. He has been involved in community college administration since 1992 holding positions as assistant dean, director, and dean. At the time of the interview he oversaw a rural campus that is a full-service campus located in a rural area serving 1,450 students yearly. He worked at Altna Community College over 13 years where he was currently the campus dean at the branch campus.

Brantna College. After the initial appointment with the vice president of instruction and student services provost, I was provided with email addresses of six people that had knowledge of rural programming and that would be able to provide insight on the research questions identified.

I formally interviewed six college personnel in varying positions within the college. They held positions such as vice president of instruction, division dean, director, and department chair. This college was designated as large-sized college in a rural serving setting. It had approximately 8,000 students enrolled and between 900 and 1,000 employees. Brantna offered various classes at the main campus and in its surrounding areas which were designated as rural locations. The interviewees were identified as Belle, Beth, Bev, Bea, Barb and Ben.

Belle. Belle was employed at Brantna Community College for five years as the vice president of instruction and student services provost. She oversaw all of Instruction and Student Services. She supervised all of the deans in those areas. She was responsible for the integrity and breadth of services and instruction throughout the district.

Beth. Beth was hired as an instructor in the Horticulture Department about 11 years ago at Brantna College, and had been the department chair since 2012. The program had connections to rural areas and had developed relationships with regional nurseries and farms. Beth's department was often engaged in rural outreach activities such as serving as speakers for garden clubs, tabling at plant related-events, and providing workshops.

Bev. Bev had a Master's degree in Business. She worked at Brantna College since 1990 and had held a number of positions including Faculty, Director, and most recently dean of regional educational services where she oversaw campus operations as well as two rural areas where a range of college programming occurred.

Bea. Bea was the director of education partnerships at Brantna College. She had a Masters of Arts Degrees in Humanities/Second English Education and Reading Specialist. Her Bachelor of Arts was in English/Secondary Education. She was involved in many college initiatives that served rural areas including distance learning programs, and expansion of ESL offerings. In addition she was part of the leadership team that was involved in the expansion of the library management systems to reach rural populations. She was the statewide director for a Department of Labor Workforce Training grant for the State. The grant was designed to serve Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) eligible and other unemployed and under-employed participants across Oregon's community colleges.

Barb. Barb had a Master's in Education with an emphasis in adult education and worked for 12 years in various facets of adult education and in the prison system she contracted through community colleges. She was at Brantna College for over 12 years working with dual credit, high school/college programs and the GED (General Equivalency Diploma) program. She worked in both instructional and administrative capacities as a coordinator and now as a department chair.

Ben. Ben had worked for the college as both faculty and administration. He was department chair and was a division dean for the past 11 years. He served at the college's Technology Center, a somewhat rural site, and was involved with designing and

providing training and consulting services for high tech manufacturing firms. At the time of the interview, he was the dean of technology, health occupations and workforce.

Findings in Response to the Research Questions

This section provides an analysis of the responses of the study participants to the three foundational research questions.: (a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities?; (b) What is the planning process that the community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?, and (c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process? In addition, after each question evidence documents are inserted to assist in develop additional meaning to each research question.

Question 1: Motivation by community colleges. The first research question was designed to discover what motivates community colleges to create academic programming at offsite locations in rural areas. Its purpose was to uncover institutional differences about how decisions were made. This section will provide responses to the first research question with document evidence from the two case studies followed by a cross-case analysis of the findings.

Altna College interviews. The following provides a summary of each of the individual interviews. The evidence documents are listed afterwards. These are followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

Alice. The college became motivated to provide programming for rural communities when the communities themselves became involved. When people in outlying areas began to request services for their communities and these populations were able to present the college with viable partnerships, then the college began assembling

resources to expand into rural areas. This was what motivated the community college to begin rural programming.

Alex. The community college was motivated to create programs by reviewing what made economic sense for the differing areas. For instance the Willamette Valley agricultural programs such as horticulture, vineyard management, and viticulture were of interest to parts of community. Other programs had been developed for rural areas with different needs such as marketing and sales of wine and Agriculture Business Management in other areas. All of these programs were "…keeping Oregon working and keeping people in the rural areas employed as well."

Alan. Serving the region, which includes all of the rural areas in the district, was part of the college's mission. The college needed to provide access to education for everyone. Sometimes rural areas did not have the same access as the metropolitan areas to resources, such as transportation. In regards to economics, many of the rural counties in Oregon were poorer than some of the metro areas. It was the college's goal to assist in accessibility, which included transportation and affordability. The college was dedicated to serving the entire district whether that meant through career technical education or through workforce training, he said. Often in the rural areas the businesses themselves were looking for training.

Adam. "The college is about education." It is about:

> …lifelong learning and transition and success. Bringing opportunities to the rural areas was important because many folks were in the low-income wage category in the counties that the college serves and these populations don't have the financial means to access services.

The geographic location of the main campus created an access issue for people. It was about an hour commute each way for some students to travel to the college. Satellite campuses allowed people an opportunity to access education near their residences.

The satellite campus was once a place mostly of personal enrichment courses. It had very few traditional transitional or full-time students. The college was meeting the needs of the area, "but not really the essence of what the community college is supposed to be about, the idea of putting a general education foundation in place to launch you in whatever direction you'd care to go." Now the Associate of Arts Oregon Transfer (AAOT) model was in place so that students could transfer to universities with sophomore status. "Guess long answer to that question, but basically we wanna bring the opportunity of higher education locally."

Altna College evidence documents: Mission statement. The following section provides an overview of documents related to Altna College. It includes the Mission Statement.

All community colleges have a mission statement as part of their guiding documents. Altna College's Mission statement stated

> Altna College values access and diversity which is affirmed by how we care, collaborate, and innovate with each other and the community. We promise to actively support student learning from precollege to transfer or to the workplace and lifelong learning by focusing on student success, quality, and sustainability in all of our practices and by being responsible stewards of our resources (Altna Community College, n.d.).

The mission statement did not mention rural or outreach specifically. It did, however, mention their value of access which could be translated to all. This would include rural populations. No other relevant documents were provided or were available.

Summary: Altna College. Community colleges were motivated to create programming for rural areas for a myriad of reasons. According to Altna College interviewees, if rural community members came forth with a request for specific programming, a community college would often be motivated to create programming. Altna College had a mission and goals statements which they used for guidance. The interviewees thought that the mission of serving all constituents often provided a reason for programming for rural areas. The organizational goals for Altna College of providing access and increasing employability opportunities for rural areas represented another driving factor to providing rural programming. As with any business, the college needed to look at the economics of a venture in a rural community. Alice stated that, if a viable partnership were able to be created, a college may be motivated to provide rural programming.

The mission statement of Altna College stated that providing "access" is a core value. According to interviewees from Altna College that referred to access for all. Thus, the statement was interpreted by the college as related to the creation of access for rural areas.

Brantna College interviews. The following provides a summary of each of the individual interviews. The evidence documents are listed afterwards. These are followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

Belle. According to this interview, it was the mission of community colleges to meet the educational needs of the districts they serve, and that the mission motivated colleges to create programming for rural areas. Brantna Community College served a

diverse set of rural, urban, and suburban populations. College offerings were designed in response to specific needs from each target population.

The board members also played a key role in what the college offered for programming. The board members represented seven areas in the district. They resided where they served and had continuous communication with the local constituents. When a need arose the board members brought it to the college.

Beth. Since the college was situated in a very rural county and residents paid the taxes to support it, it was Brantna's responsibility to provide educational services to them. The college believed that it was important to take education and services to the many people that lived in the outlying rural areas. Since agriculture was a large industry in the county, the college had created programs to support needs of the people in those areas. Two examples were the Urban Agriculture Program and the Nursery Greenhouse Program.

Bev. The college created programming for rural areas for a couple of reasons. First, the college service area was a little urban, but predominately rural. As a comprehensive community college it was part of the mission to understand and provide for constituents' needs.

The second reason for creating programming for rural populations had to do with the college's large physical service area. It was so spread out that transportation to the main college campus became an issue for many of the students. "They can't just hop on a MAX or hop on a bus." The college created a bus route to reach as many of these communities as it could in response to the transportation need.

Bea. Brantna did not create programming specifically for rural areas. Rural programming was an extension of what the community college already did. The college created programming for the entire district depending on the needs of the particular community. For instance, there was a need in one community for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. As a result, the community college programmed a few classes in the area. Bea maintained that there was not enough interest in credit classes to sustain them in the college's rural communities. The students that would take them were already enrolled at the more urban main campus.

The college was responding to the need of the community, she said. Brantna did not develop something new or specifically to meet rural needs. Distance learning, for example, was affordable for the college because it could be accessed wherever you lived. The access to instruction was the same, "…whether you live in Timbuktu or Bora Bora it doesn't matter."

Several years ago the college intentionally developed several distance learning options believing that it would serve the need of the rural citizens. At that time the college was not having success offering face to face classes. Distance learning was meeting the needs of the rural areas and the community college.

About 80% of people from surrounding rural areas were commuting into the city for work. Having a good variety of evening classes was a way to meet their needs. Brantna was intentional in creating campuses that were in or near a population corridor. One campus for example was near a shopping area. "It's not out of people's way to go to class on their way home."

The rural community was part of the community college's overall vision. It was always looking for ways to meet constituents' needs. "They are the community in community college."

Barb. "I think, primarily the mission of the college…" is what motivated us to create programming in rural areas." The college served a large rural county. The college's job was to serve its constituents.

Ben. The primary motivation for the college to create rural programming were the needs of business and industry. The college took note if the community had a particular need in a certain area. Programming was a variety of things, such as a certificate or a degree for a specialized training at a certain industry or a career pathway plan. It depended on what the community needed. The college was just trying to respond to it.

Sometimes programming was guided by public service agencies that had a specific need; The Criminal Justice Program was an example of this. When an agency helped support a program, it became more viable for the college to invest into it. The college provided general education in the rural areas wherever they could find space. Sometimes those classes occurred within other buildings, and sometimes they were on the college's property.

At times the college was made aware of a need by community college staff who were engaged in community outreach. When that happened, the administration followed up to determine what the need was and what could be implemented. "It can be challenging." The college served the metro area on one side of their boundaries and a large rural area on the other side. It was difficult to get services out to the areas where there was not a large enough need. It was a case of "Cost-related logistics."

Brantna College evidence document: Mission statement. All community colleges have a mission statement as part of their guiding documents. Brantna College's mission statement is the following:

> To serve the people of the college district with high quality education and training opportunities that are accessible to all students, adaptable to changing needs, and accountable to the community we serve (Brantna Community College, n.d.).

The mission of Brantna College specifically stated that they served all of the people in their district. In addition, the college had to be accountable to the community that they served which included receiving input from rural community members and being responsive to it. No other relevant documents were available.

Summary: Brantna Community College. Brantna Community College interviewees identified a few different reasons why they were motivated to creating programming for rural areas. The most common reply was that the college was responding to the varied needs expressed in the rural community by constituents, college staff, and businesses. Some of these needs mentioned by interviewees included programming in agriculture, transportation to classes, and English classes for non-native speakers. Another popular response by Brantna College interviewees was that motivation for rural programming derived from the mission of the college. Other responses were that the college had a purpose of providing access and a responsibility to create employability opportunities for all in their service area.

The mission statement of Brantna College specifically cited responsibility for serving everyone in their district. This would include rural constituents. The college's mission statement also clearly stated that the programs would be easily accessed by all students.

Motivation by community colleges: cross-case analysis. The open-ended question asking about the motivation for community colleges to create academic programming in rural areas was created to determine how rural-serving community colleges initiate decisions to offer programming in rural areas. It served as a springboard to the future question in the research about how the college determines types of programming, including new and future programming, in rural areas.

The major themes that arose in the cross-case analysis were: (a) community needs, (b) community college mission, and (c) ability to sustain programming. A common theme that surfaced to this first research question was that personnel from both Altna and Brantna noted the importance of listening to the needs that were expressed by the community. Brantna College interviewees were more specific in stating rural programming was also moved forward by those who expressed the need. Such expressions came from local businesses, board members, and taxpayers. Both colleges stated the importance of the mission in providing motivation for creating rural programming. Interviewees from both colleges believed that goals of access and employability were important in determining the programming that was created for rural areas. Because of the importance of the mission as a guiding document the missions for both colleges were analyzed as supporting evidence. The wording in both statements clearly spoke to access for all. The ability to sustain rural programming was noted by personnel from both Altna and Brantna Colleges as a determinant to motivation to creating the programming. If the college had opportunities for partnerships, or other types of leveraging, they were more likely to create programming in rural areas.

Summary. This section summarized responses to the first research question from interviewees from Altna and Brantna. A cross-case analysis followed reviewing similarities and differences. There were relatively few differences between the cases in regards to what motivated the community college to create programming for rural areas. Both stated the importance of listening to the needs expressed by the community members in their districts. The college mission and how tit aligns with the college goals was mentioned. They also commented on the responsibility of the college to create access for all constituents. Lastly, the ability to sustain the rural programming was key factor in determining whether the colleges were motivated to create the programming.

Research question 2: Process for programming. The purpose of this question was to describe methods or processes used by community colleges to create academic programming for rural areas. This section provides responses to the second research question with document evidence from the two case studies and is followed by a cross-case analysis.

Altna College interviews. The following section provides a summary for Altna College interviewees. It includes evidence documents. It is followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

Alice. The types of programs that were offered in rural areas depended on many variables such as "alignment with our mission, promises, goals, community need, requests, partnerships, assessment of viability for the resources we'd invest." Viability for the resources spoke to costs that would be incurred to implement the program. The availability of facilities played a key role in the decision to support rural programming. For example, if a community partner provided facilities, and the college used part-time

faculty to teach the course, the outlay of funding to begin the programming might be fairly low. The real cost for the college was sustaining the programming until the enrollment built up enough to pay for itself. The college looked at its strategic plan in order to determine if this was a viable investment.

Another factor that affected the type of programming that was offered in rural areas was the staff required to teach and/or to operate the programs. If it was a very specialized program it could be difficult to find qualified instructors who were willing to travel to the rural area. Also, if the program required a great deal of administrative support in order to maintain operation, the additional costs might hinder the college from having the ability to offer the programming.

Often, experienced college staff could find the resources to get the programs running on a smaller scale until the momentum was built. This meant Full Time Equivalent (FTE) was being generated and community partners could see the value. (The state defines FTE as number of students in a course and the number of hours the course meets per term / 510 clock hours.) Once that foundation was built the college could invest more in these start-ups in the rural areas.

Staffing was determined by the type of program. For example, if the college wanted to offer general education courses in rural areas the college could utilize existing staff to deliver this programming. For specialty programs like The Alternative High School Program, which has detailed requirements, often the college had to hire faculty specifically for the duties required for the program. For career and technical education programs it was a little different. These programs might require expensive equipment and industry trained instructors. Thus, such programs were not as easy to initiate.

Often the types of programming were determined by the scope of the project. For instance, the book center was a regional investment. It was an effort that took a lot of capital, several years of planning, and many partners to make happen.

When implementing new programs in rural areas it depended on the type of project as to what steps were taken. If it was a rural site that reached capacity in terms of numbers of students that could occupy a classroom, the college looked at other resources in the surrounding community to expand services. One example was a center, which became full after a short while. Altna looked for partners in the local area and was able to collaborate with the mayor and the superintendent of the school district. The partners agreed that the high school could house the new classes for the community college in the fall.

Often the college did not have general funds to support new rural area initiatives. In these cases the programming had to bring in enough funds to support itself; that meant that the classes had to have enough students to pay for the space, the faculty, etc. If there were a deficit, there was a possibility that the programming would be cancelled. This was when the staff would to examine data relevant to the area, review service and community needs, and determine costs of sustaining the program. Once the information was studied, a determination was made if it was an investment the college wanted to make.

Another example was a specific rural area. The community was fairly remote and they wanted to set up an alternative high school program. It was a program that was very successful, had been around a long time, and had been replicated many places. The high school offered their building and several of the small school districts in the area came

together so that there were enough students to provide the services. It was a self-supporting project for five years until some of the districts needed to make changes. It was successful, served many students, and provided Altna with positive relationships in the community. The college weighed offering the programming that was needed in the community against the cost it took to provide the programming. Often the community was able to bring resources together to make the programming viable for the community college to invest, as in this example.

All new programming must be in alignment with the mission of the community college. If there were adequate resources to start programming, but it did not fit the work of the college, the program was not supported. With that programming the college also looked at creative ways to bring student services to the students. As an example, in one rural community, some counseling and advising were offered in the evenings.

The college determined future programming by taking "advantage of opportunities that are viable and align with the college purpose. … The need for consistency in meeting learning outcomes and standards" for all academic classes was the same for both on campus and at rural sites. The difference appeared in the demographics of the community and what was needed. Often rural areas needed developmental education and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programming. Altna could offer these types of classes fairly readily. Sometimes these areas were fairly remote and educational opportunities were somewhat limited. If the college decided that Career Technical programming was needed, then there would be a much larger financial outlay. Often programming had to do with the partnerships that were created in the rural areas. If viable partnerships were established to sustain programming with adequate

enrollment, then the college offered more programming. A course might be a hybrid, or taught at a different time, but it was the same course. "It's almost like it's not programming that differs so much as strategy for programming that differs."

One way in which Altna determined whether it was meeting community needs was to ask the community members for input. The college engaged in community forums at key locations around the district on a regular basis to ask questions of constituents such as "what do you need, how is this working, how can we serve you, what do you see as a possibility, how can we partner." The answers to those questions really helped the college determine (a) whether programming is meeting needs, (b) assessment of success of the programs, and (c) what the college will be programming in the rural community in the future.

Another way in which Altna determined if the programming was meeting the needs of the district was to get feedback from its various allies. People on advisory boards were working in various fields. They understood the economic needs and the upcoming trends of their perspective arenas and could provide valuable input. The college also got feedback from its partners in the school districts, local governments, and area grassroots community action groups.

Determining the success of the programming was ascertained by many factors such as student completion rates, enrollment numbers in the classes, and student and faculty evaluations. "The college also looks at student transition such as precollege to post-secondary enrollment, degree completion, and entry into employment."

Having college staff that were engaged and connected with the community also helped the community college determine whether the programming was meeting the

needs. When college deans were at community meetings, such as Rotaries, they had an inside look at what the community might need. Being present in the various communities allowed Altna staff the ability to communicate with students and their families directly. It was this feedback that the college received from its staff in the rural communities that assisted the decision-makers to determine whether what was being offered in the rural areas was meeting the needs.

Funding for rural areas came about a couple of different ways. Sometimes the dean in charge of a specific area might have made a request to start a program. The dean would try to look at how to fund that request. It might be moving current departmental resources around, or it might be finding new ones to help supplement the new initiative.

Sometimes the college made a decision that a certain program was a priority for strategic reasons. The college then set aside the general fund monies for the project. This ensured the project would take place. This was the case with the Viticulture and Agriculture emphasis currently. These types of initiatives were substantial. So, they required the monetary commitment from the entire college

Alex. The community college determined the types of programs that would be offered in rural areas by weighing different factors. The college gathered statistics from the Oregon Employment Department. They gathered information from job market forecasts. This information helped Altna determine the needs of the local businesses in the rural area.

The process for new programming began with an idea that came from the community. That idea was then analyzed looking at job and labor market information. If it appeared to be feasible it was routed through a dean, to the vice president's office, and

then on to the college president for final approval. Then the Board of Education made the decision whether to approve the new degree or program. Advisory councils and various community groups helped with the curriculum design and curriculum approval process. Upon community college curriculum committee approval, it was submitted to the Department of Education for the final approval process so that the course could be officially entered into the college catalog.

The college assessed the need and the location of that need. When the decision was made to offer programming in a rural area, the college had to determine the location or site for the classes. At that point the college looked at various options. They could choose to buy land and construct new buildings or they could decide to lease available space.

Another reason to create programming in rural areas was to improve small town capacity so that the town could better care for its constituency. An example was the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) basic training courses that were offered in outlying areas. They were not offered as a resource for employment but rather an avenue for people to be trained to be able to assist in fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) emergencies in their communities.

Altna determined future programming by reviewing current industry needs and what needs might be in the future. Another way the college tried to project programming was by working with an economic development company. This organization was able to provide insight to the college about "…what businesses they're trying to recruit to move into the area." This gave the college a heads up on what to focus on for future programming to ensure there was a workforce ready for the businesses.

Programming for the college had to follow accreditation regulations. That meant all classes need to "…be taught … under the same rules and guidelines…. The course outline and the course objectives are all the same." If it was held on the main campus, online, or in a rural setting, the course needed to have the same outcomes. Thus, there was no difference in the academic programming for rural areas. "How it may be different is we may require a class here to have a class size of 25 students, but in the rural area we can maybe have a class go with 10 or 11 students."

The advisory board members from industries provided the college with valuable feedback as to whether college courses were meeting the industry needs. These committee members worked in the specific industries and often could evaluate the college's work since they frequently accepted students as interns or as employees. In addition, upon completion of the specific programs, students were surveyed to determine if they felt that they were well prepared for their new positions.

The community college took steps to ensure that the programming they were offering was relevant and in demand. They often reviewed industry changes such as those related to technology. One example was the new uses for Global Positioning System (GPS) in agriculture. In addition, Altna was always reviewing employment trends to determine if the market was currently requiring workers in certain areas. This helped the college determine if certain programs should continue.

Funding for rural areas was addressed in a couple of ways, commented Alex. Sometimes if a program was no longer relevant (i.e. the degree was not required anymore), the program would be eliminated and a new one might be created to replace it. Another strategy that the college employed to gain additional funding was to apply for

grants or solicit industry assistance to help pay for the specific training that they might be requesting.

Altna was always reaching out to rural communities and creating partnerships to support rural communities. One example was the work the college was doing at rural high school to keep the students interested in careers in rural areas. Altna teamed up with the local grape growers to plant an acre and a half of grapes on the high school property. The students were in charge of the entire operation of the vineyard. In a couple of years they had grapes they could harvest and sell. The profits went into the school's Future Farmers of America (FFA) program. The impetus for the program was to keep youth engaged and interested in agriculture – to keep them interested in rural careers.

Alan. Several college staff served on various regional economic boards. This provided the college with connections to regional business and industry development. Some of the suggestions for determining types of programs that the college would offer were originated from these groups. There were around 250 people employed in business and industry that served on the college's many technical advisory committee boards. They helped drive decisions on needed program offerings since they were in the workforce.

Other factors in making rural programming decisions for Altna were the trends in occupations. The college worked with a regional economist to look at which jobs were in demand and which will become obsolete. They could help identify an "either replacement needs or emerging field."

An additional example was the work that Altna did for the state in regards to pesticide training. The state entomologist helped drive the content of this programming.

The entomologist was able to project the types of insects that would be prevalent in the future. Therefore the college could ensure that the information that students received would be current and relevant and could be included in the curriculum. This valuable partnership with the state assisted the college in determining types of needed programming. This was one way in which Altna stayed ahead of industry needs and provided relevant programs as needs surfaced.

New programming for rural areas was implemented through the college's academic planning process. All new programs were evaluated through this process. College personnel reviewed the mission and accepted input from approximately 50 people within the college in various programs and positions. At that point they decided whether the new programming would be implemented.

Altna determined future programming for rural areas from the feedback it received from existing advisory boards and community forums. A newer approach the college had been taking was having the executive deans conduct district-wide programming and "really trying to take a more comprehensive coordinated approach."

Something unique to Altna was the rotating of programs to different satellite sites. This was a benefit to the students because they could access programs closer to home. It was also a benefit to the college because the programs could draw from different populations and this ensured that there were enough students to allow the college to break even with enough students in the classes.

Altna had been trying to find ways to provide programming for the rural areas.

> We have the ability to do remote video and real time video classes. Wherever students are they all need to have the same level of access to the instructor and the

> class. … We've done that programming to bring diversity of offerings, both credit and non-credit offerings, that are in our rural district and area.

The college also offered a myriad of classes online, which provided additional opportunities for students living in rural areas to access college courses without having to travel to the main campus. Altna was trying to offer more hybrid classes where students meet face to face and also work remotely. "This offers the convenience of not having to come to campus so often."

Another option the college offered for students were internships in rural areas. The college partnered with other community colleges that had specific programs requiring out of classroom practice (internships). The students registered with Altna for their field experience in a rural area.

The college looked at the best fit for certain programs and often moved classes around to accommodate the audiences; this might mean moving some classes to rural areas. For example, the Tourism and Hospitality program was moved from the main campus to a rural campus, because there was more of a wine industry out there. It made more sense to have the program where the business was. Another example of putting programs in a certain area was the Wine and Viticulture and Wine Marketing Program. They were placed in another rural area altogether. The college was trying to offer more of the courses for these programs at the rural sites like Wine Appreciation and Soil Testing.

Another difference between the college campuses to the rural centers was that the centers did not have all of the student services amenities that the main campus and one of the rural campuses did. In this case, the college sent staff on a regular and rotating basis

to the outlying areas. This included counseling, advising, financial aid, and disability services for students to access since they were not always able to come to the main campus.

A way a college determined whether the rural programming was meeting the needs of rural areas was by input received from the advisory committees from the various industries mentioned above. Many committees met on a quarterly basis. Altna was also in the process of creating overarching advisory committees that were made up of some of the advisory board committee members and others that were important in industry, but that could commit to only a few meetings a year. These overarching advisory committees spanned several businesses and had the ability to work in a more holistic level to help inform the college.

The convening of ad hoc committees was another avenue that the college employed to gather information, determine if they were meeting needs, and help guide decisions on programming. These groups were different than advisory committees in that they were more of a one-time (or a few-time) gathering of major leaders in a particular industry. An example of an ad hoc committee was one that was formed 12 years ago of wine industry professionals. They suggested a need for wine marketing. Now Altna had such a program, and the Oregon wine industry had become more competitive with other wine growing regions.

Class size was one indicator the college used to determine success of programming. The college evaluated the demand, how many students were enrolled, and how many students were completing the classes. Another way to determine the success was through traditional feedback received from course evaluations.

In some cases, such as with the Job Growers Board contract, the organization conducted its own evaluations of the programming and then shared the results with the college. For the businesses with which Altna maintained training contracts, the college conducted follow-ups with them to get feedback.

Approximately every three to five years the community college came together with various partners to engage in a process to project needs for the region. This included annual check-ins to revisit the vision. Along with that Altna worked with a regional economist to obtain reports on anticipated trends. The college took all of this information and used it to make decisions on programming

Another way the college gathered information on needs in the community was to participate in tours of the region's businesses. This allowed for informal conversations, where the business community may express information on their needs. This information then got routed to the appropriate departments for review.

Basically the community college addressed funding in two ways. One was through the general fund monies that were received from the State of Oregon. These funds were divided within the college and distributed among departments. The department personnel decided which credit programs to offer. The college collected tuition from students and the expectation was that with these two funding streams (from the state and from tuition) that the cost for instruction and related fees will be covered "…some states fund career technical education and workforce development at a higher level because of some of the restrictions in the classes and the higher costs." Since that is not the case in Oregon, community colleges often created larger class sizes in order to have surplus funding to help cover costly career technical programs.

The other way that funding was addressed was through grants or self-support. This funding was often used for shorter term, more specific programs. These programs might have also received support from community partner agencies where the partner covered some of the credit cost and/or the equipment for the courses.

This year the college was looking at its goals as they related to the mission. They were creating enrollment targets to include general education, transfer, and Workforce and Career Technical Education. In addition it was looking at targets for pre-college students needing GED (General Equivalency Diploma) or developmental education as part of that big picture. "We are trying to be a little more strategic about that instead of the organic method that we've used in the past."

Another way the college addressed funding was through partnerships with corporations. These businesses were often willing to provide resources for training programs on the college campus. This provided students with reduced tuition and pathways towards a certificate or even a degree.

Adam. In determining types of programming in rural areas, the community college relied on good partnerships and relationships with many of the stakeholders in the rural areas including the business community, public schools, and the leadership in the specific areas. These established relationships allowed for dialogue with the college with regards to community challenges and needs. The college might initiate research to determine how the programming might be viable and then they would attempt to respond to the requests that were being made by the community.

A recent example of how a program was introduced successfully was the Human Dialysis Tech Program. A local company expressed a need for training. The college

conducted surveys and determined that many companies in the area had the same need. Altna developed a training program, and in the first cohort, 24 of the graduates had jobs before they finished their coursework.

Local industry needs were also examined when determining programming. For example the college had the wine growing sites located close to the campuses. Recently the wine industry identified needs for not only the growing and making of the wine but also the marketing and sales of viticulture. In a response to the demand Altna created programs for both.

Currently the satellite campus offered the general education requirements for these programs and a few of the initial program courses. This was beneficial for students in two ways. It allowed them to take courses close to home and also provided them the opportunity to test it out to see if it was something to which they wanted to commit. If the student determined they indeed wanted to pursue the degree, they could then finish the programming on the main campus.

All of the new programming created followed the same process college-wide. The program dean brought the suggestion to an executive dean, and if approved, then it went to the curriculum committee to move through the curriculum review process. After that it moved to the state to determine if it was within borders or restrictions in regards to meeting appropriate criteria.

The college definitely looked at economic trends and tried to predict future needs. Yet, “I've gotta say education is probably not a leading edge activity. It's more of a responsive activity, where you detect a need and respond to it rather than foresee the need.”

The way the rural campus was built was a lot of planning and projecting out. Altna used a university's demographics center to help determine the projected population for 2020. The college anticipated that if it grew 5% every year they would reach the 2020 target for the center. Since it moved in 2011 there has been an increase of 20% and in 2012. "I think this campus is an example of, if you can build it, they will come."

Programming for rural areas was often determined by the needs voiced from community partners. For instance, lately partners had been voicing a need for students to learn soft skills such as communication and teamwork. This was a need that the college continued to attempt to address.

There were some differences in programming for the campus and programming for rural areas, but they were due to various constraints in the rural areas like budget and capacity. It was not cost effective to offer a specialized math class if only a handful of students would enroll. Also, if there was not sufficient space, it was difficult to have a full set of offerings along with student services. Altna tried to balance the needs with these various constraints to provide the best programming possible in the rural areas, but it was never the same as it was on the campus.

The college was now offering more classes through "…technology conferencing system where two, three, or four sites can all be real-time connected audio-visually with one instructor teaching all those sites." This was a cost savings to the college because it paid only one instructor and got the enrollment needed from different areas to run the class. Decisions still needed to be made about what was offered since there was only one room that could be used for this, but it was one solution to reaching several rural communities.

In regards to whether the programming was meeting the needs of the community, the college was always looking at enrollment trends for each of the courses it offers. In addition, there were advisory committees in place for all of the career technical programs. The people on these committees were working in the perspective fields and helped guide Altna on the needs in industry. They also helped inform the college about the best avenue to move forward to meet those needs.

Deans were tasked with yearly planning in which they evaluate prior year outcomes and whether they were met or not. This allowed them to forecast programming for the upcoming year. It also helped them to determine budget necessities to achieve the next year's goals.

Funding for rural program could be difficult. The college received public support from the state but that had leveled off over the last few years. During that same time period, the student enrollment had increased nearly twofold. The conundrum was how to pay for tuition and fees when now the college was receiving about half of what it needs. This placed the college in the position of having to increase tuition. "It's an interesting thing because one of the things we're trying to do is just provide access, but on the other hand, as a public institution, our budget has to balance at the end of every year."

Altna College evidence documents: Advisory board rosters. The Horticulture department at Altna College had an advisory board that provides guidance to all of their programs. This included Horticulture, Landscape, and Urban Agriculture. For the Urban Agriculture program which was discussed by an Altna College interviewee, the companies representing that program were: OSU County Extension, Concentrates, Inc., Birds & Bee's, Community Farm, and Altna Urban Agriculture students. The program

relied on organizations with expertise on the subject to provide direction for the college. In addition, the students also provided important insight.

Summary Altna College. This section provided the interviewee responses, along with document review confirmation, to the second question: what is the planning process that community colleges were using when determining programming for rural communities? The major themes that emerged included: (a) types of programming, implementation of new programming, and determining future programming, (b) differences in process: campus versus rural areas, (c) community needs/feedback, (d) funding for rural areas, and (e) evidence documents.

(a) Types of programming, implementation of new programming, and determining future programming. For Altna College the types of programming that were implemented in the rural areas depended on a few factors. Needs for programming in rural areas were brought forth by the community members, a business, or an advisory board. A need might be determined by information from regional economic boards on trends or job market analysis. External partnerships could strengthen the likelihood that a program would be offered. The college would review its mission statement and/or strategic plan to determine if a specific program was in alignment with college goals. And lastly, appropriate resources, such as staff, facilities, and equipment played a part in determining the types of programs a college might be able to offer.

Implementing new programming for rural areas was an on-going process stated interviewees. There may be a request from the community to start the process. It must be determined if the proposal was in alignment with the college mission. Lastly, personnel from Altna College stated that there must be a determination as to whether the

proposed programming was viable and cost-effective for the college. After that, the process used to implement new programming in rural areas was the same for academic programming on the main campus. Everything went through the same academic planning process.

At Altna College, future programming for rural areas was determined by a variety of methods. Often the future programming for rural areas was triggered by feedback from advisory boards, the community members, and/or partners. Sometimes there might be a request from industry to fill a need. Sometimes, a community college reviewed information from economic development boards to foresee future trends. Before future programming could be designed, the college would evaluate to ascertain if it was in alignment with the mission.

(b) Difference in process: campus versus. rural. The process for programming in rural areas was similar on the main campus and for rural areas. The differences lied in the needs for each of the specific areas on campus and rural areas. Other differences were due to the constraints that were present in rural areas, such as reduced budget funding and less capacity. This was the reason that sometimes class size were allowed to be smaller in rural areas. The college tried to compensate the smaller capacity by finding ways to fill classes, in an attempt to be cost effective. Some of these strategies included increasing distance learning, using video technology, and creating more hybrid classes. In addition, the college was looking for opportunities to create internships in rural areas. Lastly, interviewees from Altna College realized that the rural populations had less access to student services than did students that were on campus, because the college did not always have the resources to allocate in outlying areas.

(c) Community needs/feedback. With all of the programming that Altna College offered, the personnel were always concerned with whether or not the programming was meeting the needs of its communities. This included the rural populations. Ways in which the college gathered information about its performance involved obtaining feedback from the community constituents, technical advisory boards, and Ad Hoc committees. Altna also surveyed businesses and partners in the community. Evaluations were also collected from students and faculty in the specific classes. In addition, the college conducted some internal monitoring, such as looking at enrollment trends and completion rates for the classes as well as comparing prior year outcomes. The college also reviewed the curriculum for relevancy and any industry changes. Lastly, Altna College tracked trends within their service areas to strategize whether needs were being met.

(d) Funding for rural areas. According to Altna College interviewees, funding for rural areas could vary greatly. If the program was in alignment with a strategic decision by the college, general fund monies were allocated to the initiative. Sometimes resources were moved to create funding for a program or programs might be eliminated to create funding for new ones. Sometimes the resources for the new programming came from partner industries in the community. Grants and self-support programs were two other options for funding. Lastly, the funding for rural areas could be college-generated funds that were surplus for the current or previous year.

(d) Evidence documents. The role of advisory boards was referenced on many occasions in this section by several interviewees. Members were instrumental in assisting the community college in determining types of programming and future

programming. In addition, they provided feedback to the college when determining if needs were being met.

Brantna College interviews. The following provides a summary of the interviews for Brantna College. This is followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

Belle. Determining the type of programming for rural areas was mostly a response to the needs that the community expressed. Sometimes, the community did not know what types of programming was available, and that was when the college might help out. For instance, some of the school districts have large non-native English speaking populations. The college had the ability to offer classes after school for the parents. The college believed that it was an investment "…because it ultimately helps the students all the way through the K-16 pipeline."

Sometimes business and industry in the rural areas expressed a need, she stated. For example, they wanted to have qualified pools of people to fill positions as they come open. Often it was difficult to draw qualified people to rural areas. Thus, businesses turned to the college to help fill that void. The college had resources through the Workforce Investment Act to finance these types of efforts. Due to the exceptional relationships Brantna had with business and industry, the college was made aware when layoffs were going to happen. This allowed the college to step in to assist unemployed workers for retraining as needed.

Brantna has had a position of dean of regional education services to facilitate contact with the rural communities. This person attended local community meetings like Kiwanis and Chamber of Commerce and was able to report back to the college on

community needs. This helped the college determine types of programming for the rural areas.

When creating new programming, the college followed the same process whether it was for rural or for on-campus college programming. The difference appeared in the needs of each area. The college had to determine what the needs were and if there were enough people to sustain the specific programming. If there were too few people the decision needed to be made whether it is monetarily feasible for the college to offer the courses. These budgetary matters were considered at the department chair and dean levels.

Brantna also reviewed geographically where the needs lied, she stated. Currently the college had a shuttle that transported students from certain outlying areas to one of the rural centers. If the shuttle was not accessible to certain areas or could not get students to a class in what was deemed a reasonable amount of time the college may have decided to provide a course offering at a remote rural site.

Brantna wanted to be effective reaching populations in the rural areas. If there was a population that needed specific programming and it was determined that this particular group would not commute to campus sites for classes, the college might consider offering a class off site. An example of this was the English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Schools were another example where the college created relationships with specific populations. They were able to connect with parents of K-12 students.

One difference in the way the college looked at academic programming on campus and in rural areas was that they reviewed enrollment data. They were a little

more flexible with minimum enrollment numbers in the outlying areas. In addition, the time of day the class was offered might varied depending on whether it was on campus or whether it was in rural areas.

The college's district had urban, suburban, and rural populations. The college's mission was to serve all of them. "We are aware that there are different needs, and that we may need to adjust the way we deliver services. But, the college doesn't look at academic programming different for any of them."

When determining whether needs were being met in the rural areas the college looked at data about all of its programs rural or non-rural. It reviewed enrollment in each class. This was weighed differently depending on the type of class or offering. One way the college attempted to engage rural students was to offer social type events on campus. The college believed this was an important educational offering for those in rural areas, since often they were more likely to come to campus than downtown for those types of events. The college monitored attendance at these types of events.

In addition college departments evaluated workforce environments that pertained to their specific areas. The departments created a blueprint, a strategic plan that outlined what they thought the programming needs would be, and then planned for classes to meet those needs. The college also looked to the community via surveys to obtain information on how to serve them better. The information then could be sorted "by region, by a zip code, by city." This information provided insight on how the community members were feeling about the programming in the rural areas and guided Brantna in future programming.

At this point the college was concluding its outreach campaign. It was a yearlong community engagement process in which Brantna solicited feedback in a variety of ways such as online surveys, interviews, and business focus groups. The topics of interest were community values, needs, and barriers to education. The college was to evaluate the information that had been gathered to help determine college-wide strategic planning.

Minimum enrollment requirements were not always the same for the rural, suburban, and urban areas, she commented. The college might offer a class in a rural area that was not cost-effective simply to fill a need that they have identified. The college sometimes relied on other classes offered on campus to create revenue to help offset rural expenditures.

Programming for rural areas could be costly. Often colleges depended on supplementary methods to help fund this outreach. Grants, for example, were an avenue that the college used to create funding for rural projects. Although the college did not have personnel to pursue such grants, if there was a particular project that the college had decided to follow, then often those associated with the project pursued them to help achieve the specific venture in the rural area. Recently Oregon received grant funding to provide internet connectivity to rural areas. This was a great benefit to creating a pipeline for healthcare.

An additional way to fund programming in rural areas sometimes came from college partners in the community. An example would be if a business had a desire for a specific type of program. It might be too expensive for the college to create the course alone, so the business would partner with the college to ensure there were enough resources to enable the programming to happen.

Another way the business could partner with the college was by providing a service to bring people to a class. This was effective because it increased the student enrollment in the class. The higher enrollment created a cost-effective scenario for Brantna.

Other important agencies with whom the college created partnerships in the rural areas were social and human services agencies. Collaborations with these partners made it possible for community colleges to extend programming opportunities to the rural areas because of the extra resources these partners provided.

Beth. The college determined types of programming for rural areas by examining the needs in the community and then searching for ways to meet that need. Brantna promoted new programming in rural areas by using the existing listserves. The staff was active in the community delivering workshops, providing public speaking engagements, and serving on various committees. Lastly, the college looked at existing partners to help with promotional efforts.

When the college looked at future programming, the technical advisory board members provided valuable input on current trends in their perspective fields. The college reviewed these suggestions to help it guide decisions for the courses that would be offered in the upcoming years. A difference in academic on-campus programming compared to the rural programming was that the on-campus programming did not require technical advisory committees, as was often the case for career technical programs that are offered in the rural areas.

Currently Brantna College did not have a formal process to determine whether programming was meeting the needs of the rural areas in the district. The college was

working on developing a structured program evaluation process that should be in place in the near future. This new process would be utilized throughout the college.

Funding for rural programming was drawn from the department budgets. The overall college budgets had been decreasing over the years, so to start something new would mean the elimination or reduction of something else. It might mean streamlining costs. This was the process used to develop the Urban Agriculture program.

Another way that Brantna created funding opportunities for rural areas was to establish partnerships with different businesses and non-profits to provide new opportunities for their constituents. One example was the trainings offered several times a year for the Master Gardeners. This program brought folks to the campus, introduced them to the staff, and exposed them to the types of programs the college was offering.

The department continued to build relationships with external partners. One example was the partnership with Oregon State University Extension and the Soil Water Conservation District. They offered the Small Farm School on a weekend. Over 200 people attended it last year. These types of efforts with partners allowed the college additional resources to provide valuable information and services for local communities.

Another example was the partnership with Oregon Landscape Contractor Association. The college hosted the certified landscape technician test every July. Certification allowed workers to potentially increase salaries and/or receive promotions. It benefited the college, the industry, and the workers.

Bev. Brantna determined the types of programs that would be offered to rural areas was by reviewing the needs of the community and looking to see if the college had the capacity to fulfill those needs. Another means the college used to examine the

barriers the rural area may have to accessing education, such as transportation. In addition, to programming, the College also provided services to the community. One example was the computer lab that was placed in a rural area a few years ago. The lab was open to the public to take whatever courses they choose.

Brantna was currently concluding a major outreach campaign. College staff led outreach meetings and interviews with business people. In addition online and paper-based surveys were conducted in order to gather community input. To encourage participation the college offered incentives such as iPads and bookstore coupons to those who participated. The information the college gathered should provide ideas for new and future programming both for the campus and for the rural areas.

Bev stated that "the programming is done … very demand oriented, based on budget, based on need, based on placement test scores that come in from our testing center." The college then evaluated attendance every term in each course to determine if more or less or needed. One difference between rural and on-campus programming was that off-site there was an intentional effort to place several levels of the same class in the same room and at the same time. Some examples are computer science and math. This strategy brought enough students into one classroom so that Brantna could justify the cost of an instructor.

Unlike on campus, programming for rural areas often depended on partnerships that had been formed with the college and the community. The Outreach Center was one example. The college used bond money to build the center at the high school which could be shared by other school districts. The facility was used by the high school during the day, and in the afternoon after 4:00pm, it was used by the college to offer

programming for the high school students and community members. This type of partnership made it cost-effective for the college to offer programming, because the college did not have the sole responsibility for custodial, front desk help, and all that may be required to maintain a building. It was a "win-win for their community."

The college determined whether programming was meeting the needs of rural areas in the district by conducting needs assessments through regular data reporting such as headcounts. Needs were also reviewed by personnel in the outreach department which had physical contact with the population in the outlying areas. Another way the college determined whether or not needs were being met in rural areas was through verbal feedback received from constituents. An example of this was the ESL classes that were held in various locations. Students communicated that they preferred to travel a bit further in order to have all of the class levels in one place. This provided them the convenience of having family members at the same location that might be at different English learning levels. Thus, the college eliminated one of the outlying sites and added the classes to a more central location.

In regards to headcounts the rural areas were sometimes treated a little differently. "We expected the data to be good. We don't expect it to be great. Sometimes good is good enough." The college did not always expect the enrollments to be as high as they were on campus.

When determining funding for rural areas, the community college created a budget every year for programming. Currently most of the funding for rural outreach was allocated to the high schools. Additional funding for rural areas "…would be put up

against all the other demands of the college and be put through the same exact process that everybody else is put through for determining whether or not it gets funded."

Potentially, there might be some shifts in how funding was distributed depending on the results from the outreach campaign. In addition the funding that the college received from the legislature could vary. "This also plays a role in how much funding there is to invest in rural areas," commented Bev.

Partnerships also played a role in funding for the programming in rural areas. One creative way that Brantna engaged with partners was the community education program. The college partnered with school districts in the surrounding areas to offer the types of programming that they need. The schools were in charge of staffing and scheduling. The college advertised for the classes, registered the students, and then paid the districts a percentage of the FTE (full time equivalency). It was a cost-effective way for the college to get the needed programming out into the rural areas.

Bea. The type of programming that the college offered in rural areas depended on the information it received concerning needs from community surveys, from board members, and from talking with people in the community. Sometimes it was a particular case in which the vice president of instruction would need to look at the case holistically in regards to the entire college offerings. She would reach out to the dean and/or the department chairs for additional information. The college captured the information, and then reviewed how it aligned with current work. "It's a very collaborative process."

When implementing new programming in rural areas, the college wanted to make education more accessible to the community whenever possible. To make ventures like new buildings possible Brantna often looked to opportunities to partner with others. This

was an example of how the rural campus was built. There was the growing population, the request from the community, and also Portland General Electric (PGE) who was looking to create some special programming. This rapid growth in the population, community interest, and investment by the partner, PGE, made the campus possible.

The college worked closely with the school districts in its service area. It had dialogue with the schools regarding their needs and vision for the future. These conversations brought about new programming. For instance, recently one school district expressed an interest in expanding their program offerings for students that were not interested in pursuing a college education. The high schools had not had any technical programs for their students in the past. Thus, the college was looking at their resources and exploring options that might meet the needs of both the college and the high school in regards to offering career technical programming.

The college determined future programming through reviewing enrollment patterns, persistence patterns, and demographics of the area. For instance the college noticed a growth in one area, so the college made plans and built a campus there. If the population was decreasing in an area, the college would review the locations of current programming and make modifications as needed. That might translate to offering fewer courses in certain areas, or perhaps moving them to areas that would draw more students.

In determining future programming for rural areas Brantna also engaged in "…community surveys, talking to community leaders, talking to business people." For instance, from recent communications with the business community they had expressed concerns regarding the levels of mathematical attainment in the recent workforce. The

college had collaborated with partners, like the area school districts, to look at bringing more advanced math classes in the high schools to help address this need.

Future programming in rural areas was also based on the college's strategic planning document that was developed every two years. An example of one of the college's strategic priorities was "to have more high school students come to the college…… than have been in the past." Each division was then required to outline the specific activities they would be undertaking to reach that strategic priority.

Future programming was also linked to funding and to Brantna's priorities. Each department needed to explain how their resources would be used to fulfill those college-wide goals. The information was compiled into a comprehensive document, which helped to illustrate how the college was meeting community needs.

Outcomes from this process might mean that departments had to be restructured or eliminated. That was what happened recently with the drafting department. The program was not meeting strategic goals, so the program was "disassembled." When these decisions revolved around the release of staff, it was difficult, but as a college, putting resources into thriving programs made more sense. "There are some very hard decisions to make in this budget environment, and they have to be driven by strategic planning and data—data inform rather than data driven. People are sensitive about that."

Academic programming was the same whether it was on the campus or in rural areas. The college served many types of areas including non-rural areas that were more suburban. The college has "… the same quality indicators, the same instructional processes, the same student learning outcomes, curriculum development exist whether the class is at the foot of Mount Hood or the foot of the Portland Pioneer fountain." The

college asks more "How does this set of priorities and the resources we're putting into it meet the needs of our rural constituents." The college was always trying to "balance the needs." This is where the differences began to appear in the programming.

As the college examined programming they were more than ever aware of the new legislation that was being channeled down called Outcomes-Based Funding.

> That means you're paid for the number of people who transfer to a four-year school, who earn a degree or certificate, who complete the requirements for the AAOT. At this point it's so new that the college hasn't figured out how this will fit into the programming in rural areas since traditionally rural areas have more constituents with skill deficits.…

Many of the people living in rural areas had lower levels of education including only a high school diploma or not even a General Education Degree (GED). In addition, there were many English Language Learners. The college was asking where does this leave classes like GED, English as a Second Language (ESL), and pesticide control. According to accreditation standards for the state, these classes did not lead to a certificate, so that might mean the college could not receive funding from the state to offer these types of classes. Unfortunately, these were the types of classes that were very much in demand in the rural areas.

> Community colleges have traditionally—by the legislature, we are charged to provide transfer education, career and technical education, and what's called adult compensatory education. We have a legal requirement to do that. We have an ethical requirement to do that.

It has been a strategic priority for the college to continue serving these outlying regions to assist populations in rural areas to attain skills for a better livelihood. The question at this point for the college was how would this outcome based funding model change the

mission of the college and the way programming was distributed in the district, she commented.

Brantna determined whether or not it was meeting the needs of the rural community by reviewing a couple of factors. It reviewed the enrollment data by zip code. The college looked at the population proportions from the zip codes and asked if the people from these areas were enrolling into college classes. The college also analyzed the numbers of students graduating from area high schools, including those in the rural areas. The college evaluated how many local high school graduates had enrolled in the community college in the fall. Persistence was another measure for the community college in determining success of rural programming. The college reviewed whether students from rural areas were persisting in the classes to the same degree that the non-rural students are. "Then what does that mean? Is it a matter of they can't get the right classes? It's too far? The schedule doesn't meet their needs? We're looking at all of that."

Brantna reviewed the data from the Distance Learning courses. It studied enrollment data in order to predict whether the classes were meeting the needs of the rural areas. "Rural communities are hard to serve because they have a particular culture. Sometimes it's hard to understand the needs of that culture. The college just asks lots of questions."

To determine if the college was meeting the needs of the rural areas, it often seeks feedback from the community. One way to do that was by conducting surveys. Another way was by having the board members engage in conversations with community members directly in places such as high school district board meetings.

When determining funding for rural areas the college looked at their priorities, their resources, and the need in the rural communities. The college tried to determine how all of this fit into its strategic priorities and comprehensive plan. After gathering this vital information the college was equipped to make future decisions on the programming of rural areas.

At this point in time there was no new funding for rural programs. If Brantna decided to focus on a new initiative, it meant that it had to be at the cost of something else. The college did this when it decided to expand the energy wind turbine repair program. It had to stop doing something else to fund the new program.

Another example in which the college earmarked funding was when it decided to strengthen the Distance Learning department. To do this, the college invested in a better technology infrastructure, a department chair to manage it, a new curriculum, and a staff person to create that curriculum. This was a huge undertaking that took several years to complete and a lot of money. It meant moving funds from other projects to ensure the distance learning initiative kept moving forward.

Funding for rural programming could come about through various types of grants. One example was a large federal Department of Labor grant that was being split among all 17 community colleges in Oregon. One community college was developing a new fire suppression-training program. In another community they developed the aquarium science program, and in a third community, they were developing additional seamanship certificates and degrees.

Sometimes funds were not used for new programs but to restructure existing ones. At times these new formats were of benefit to all of Brantna's constituents, including the

rural students. An example was the welding program that was changed from a five day a week program to an accelerated two-day a week program. This greatly helped the rural students reduce commute time.

The college also utilized grant funds to assist in the outreach work for the rural areas. One example was a grant Brantna received about 10 years ago to purchase computers. "That allowed faculty then to develop better ways to communicate with students at a distance. That's a good example of using technology in a proactive way to meet the needs of rural communities."

"We have used grant funds to develop new curriculum that might meet specific needs of rural communities." An example was the pesticide application program. It was initiated to meet a specific industry need, but the college was looking at the program in a larger capacity. The county had a large horticulture industry, and the need for the program could extend past this specific industry to other parts of the county.

Partnerships were also crucial to the ability of Brantna to fund programming in rural areas. One example was the dual credit programs and partnerships with the high schools. This program was created to allow high schools students to take classes at their home high schools for college credit. This saved the student a great deal of money and allowed them to enter the college after high school at a sophomore level.

Brantna was committed to providing this service because they believed that it was a great benefit to the populations in the rural areas that they serve. The college funded a Director of Education Partnerships and a Coordinator of Dual Credit programs with general fund monies to ensure this program was always sustained.

"When you combine that with distance learning and other accelerated and compressed programs, that's a lot for those communities… The college is offering less programming on site at the rural areas, because "it's not cost effective." The college was considering alternative ways to make education accessible to the rural populations but affordable for the college.

Barb. The type of programming the college offered in rural communities was dependent on a few variables. The college looked at the specific employment needs in the community. Next, the college communicated with their partners in the community, such as employment centers, businesses, and/or high schools. The partner's needs were identified, and then programming could be created to fill the void.

She was not very familiar with the college's process for the implementation of new programs. Her department had utilized off campus sites such as schools and community organization agency facilities to hold classes for implementing new programming. She was unable to comment more on the college process.

When discussing future programming for rural areas, she said, "It's primarily embedded in the mission, and then that trickles through the decision-making process. Creating or offering programming that's accessible to the broadest population in our district has always been our goal."

Having transportation to reach the college was a barrier for students in the rural areas and restricted their ability to get to campus and ultimately has reduced their access to an education. Using public transit was not a realistic option due to the multiple transfers required to reach the college campuses. Brantna had discussion with the regional transportation agency to assist in improving service for students in rural areas.

Within the past few years, the college began offering a shuttle that runs from the transit center at some outlying areas to help students access the campuses.

Another way Brantna attempted to address the issue of transportation was by looking at other ways to offer programming for rural areas so that the students did not need to travel to the main college sites. Providing web-based options to the rural areas was something that the college was considering. The situation was complicated by the fact that sometimes the "population tends to be less computer literate."

Other factors involved in how Brantna determined future programming for rural areas were departmental budgets and data. For example, analysis of data began by looking at the community surveys. In addition other data were reviewed, such as overall demographics of the county, high school completion rates, and the percentages of the population that were enrolled at the college in comparison to non-rural areas. In addition, the college looked to existing organizations in the area to determine if there were viable partnerships that could be built.

Brantna was always looking at new ways to reach rural areas. Online was one option because it so versatile. The next question the college was asking was how to get internet to these areas. Since the GED test is now only available online, internet is especially important. Recently, Brantna was talking with community partners to explore ways of getting computer labs or mobile laptop labs in these areas for the population to use, she said.

The campus addressed programming a little differently in rural areas than on campus. They offered services to rural areas that may not be available to students otherwise. For instance Brantna might provide childcare for parents with children.

Another difference involved the delivery of the curriculum, since some of the outlying sites were not equipped with computers. "But we try to keep the programming primarily uniform."

The college was always trying to get students from rural areas on campus, because they understood the "rich experience" that was derived from the college environment. In turn, the college understood that often students in outlying areas cannot get to the campus. Online education offered students flexibility, and it was an excellent option for some students, but it did not offer the same experience that being a student on the campus offered. "I think there's always a balance of trying to reach out to the rural areas in a way that will ultimately draw students to a comprehensive campus."

Brantna wanted to serve all students, whether they wanted to just take one class or whether they were looking for a career pathway in a technical program or to transfer to a four-year university. Sometimes the latter meant that the student needed to be on campus. The college had been proactive in determining the resources that the rural populations may need to get to campus and be successful. Transportation to reach campus had been a barrier, as mentioned previously. Also, the college was always in communication with partners in the community to determine what resources existed in the surrounding area to better serve the students.

The Brantna structure allowed for a lot of flexibility in the way each specific department determined if programming was meeting the needs of the rural population. Her particular department reviewed success rates of passing the GED exam, and they looked at student retention in the programs. All of the departments in the college were

subject to formal and informal program reviews. This also assisted in determining effectiveness of the rural programming.

If the program was in association with a partner, the college would invite feedback of that partner in regards to the rural programming to determine if it was meeting needs. Also, student attendance numbers in the classes helped determine whether classes would be continued. If the enrollment began to drop, this was be problematic for the college, since there was not anyone with whom to speak about possible issues. Generally though, the classes that were discontinued were due to lack of funding and not to lack of student enrollment in the classes, she stated.

Traditionally when the college had more financial resources, there were more outreach programs in rural areas. Often when college funding decreased, the rural programs were reduced. This was mostly due to the fact that there were not usually enough students enrolled to help the college pay for its overhead. Recently, Brantna had been exploring options on how to serve the rural areas by looking at models besides the traditional classroom delivery model. Traditional models did not allow the flexibility to serve rural areas when budgets got smaller.

Ben. Types of programming for rural areas were determined by various mechanisms. Often the board members who were connected to the districts in the college's territory might bring forth a need. Sometimes the college staff might be at a community meeting (i.e. rotary or business association function), and a need for a specific program would be brought forth.

One of Brantna's foci was economic development in the rural areas. The college was always monitoring what was happening in the community. Whether it was an

industry hiring or laying off, the college was aware of the movement. This movement might drive types of programming in rural areas. One example was when new large industries, such as wind turbine farms or solar panel farms, located in a rural area; the industries often wanted to be associated with the community college. The businesses had needs for a workforce. The community college could partner with them to create programs to train people for these specific needs. The college wanted to be ready to respond to those needs as they arise.

If a new program was being implemented in a rural area, it would follow a formal program approval process. First, the college would do a labor market analysis to determine need for the program. The college wanted to act responsibly so that "tax payer funds are being used wisely." The next step is for the program to be approved by the curriculum committee. The committee ensures that all programs are …in adherence to the accrediting body standards." The final step was a new one at Brantna. The executive team approved all new programs. People involved in this decision include the vice president of instruction along with any deans and associate deans in the specific program area. They determined if there was adequate funding and resources to implement and sustain the program.

The college determined future programming in a couple of different ways. First was the more formal step, when the college reviewed data on economic trends in the county. With this information they examined which were the vital businesses and what was growing in the county. For example, about 10 years ago it was hospitality and tourism, and today it was film. In a less formal way, the college acquired information

from various sources in the community. The college then investigated to confirm requests.

Brantna's budget was another factor in determining future programming. Currently the college was not financially at a place where a lot of new programming could occur. Perhaps in the future when the college had more funding, it would be pursuing more agriculture type programming to complement the farmers' markets, small farms, and dairies around the area.

As a general rule the college did not address academic programming on campus differently than in rural areas. One exception was when a specific campus was selected to act as a hub for the state. There was a specific training that was created for rural areas. Everything needed for the curriculum was housed in transportable Advanced Technology Attachment (ATA) cases. As people around the state needed the curriculum, it was shipped to those sites. Each college provided their own pre-approved faculty to teach the courses. "That was pretty successful for a couple of years."

When determining whether the college was meeting the needs of the rural communities Brantna relied on input from the college advisory boards for many of the career technical education program. These boards consisted of employers from companies for each of the program areas. These members provided input for the programming of the Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree, certificates, and the career pathway certificates.

The businesses served on advisory boards for Brantna. They also, often provided internship positions for the students. Having the students working at the sites translated

to additional opportunities to evaluate program effectiveness, because the faculty was in continuous contact.

The college also surveyed students to learn if programming had met their needs. In addition, certain departments tracked the success of students in obtaining employment. The college also housed a large federal grant, which was related to economic development in the county, specifically workforce development. These funds were used to get people back into the workforce.

Another indicator of success was simply through a third party certification. For instance, Brantna offered welding classes at remote locations at company sites. When the students completed these programs they went through an exam to prove that they learned the material. These sites helped provide feedback to the college.

"That's a challenge," in regards to funding for rural areas he said. When looking at the funding for rural areas the college often needed to leverage existing resources. For example the college might negotiate with a company to help offset costs for a specific training in the community. Often before offering a course in the rural areas, there must be enough students to cover the college's outlay for the instruction. Another option could be a special fee that is added to the regular tuition. Additionally, grants often helped subsidize funding and provided an avenue to get programs started. Lastly, if the college determined that there must be a certain program started in the rural area, and they believed that the venture would be successful, the college might decide to divert general funds to the project.

Brantna College evidence documents. The following provided some of the information from the document review. One document involved the newspaper, *The*

Oregonian. The other was a document titled "Imagine Brantna." These are discussed below.

Oregonian coverage. For Brantna College the types of programming and implementation of new programming depended on several factors. As mentioned earlier, Brantna is located within a large agricultural area. The article in a local newspaper discussed that Brantna College had created a new program in Urban Agriculture due to the aging rural farming population. The creation of this program served as a way to reach out to their constituents. In addition, it demonstrated the college's recognition of the need in the community for local, healthy food (Francke, 2013).

Imagine Brantna. Brantna College embarked on a one-year community engagement study entitled "Imagine Brantna" where over 2000 people participated. Some of the goals of the study were to strengthen relationships with the community, identify barriers to access, and increase communication channels. The effort included surveys and focus groups where many community members were asked for input. The college received feedback from community members that indicated they wanted more classrooms and lab space. In addition, students indicated their need for better transportation options. They requested expansion of bus routes (Imagine Brantna, n.d.). Many of the results from the survey corresponded with the observations made by the community college staff who were interviewed. Specifically, both highlighted concerns with available and accessible transportation to the college.

Summary Brantna College. The following subsection provides the interviewee responses to the question and the evidence documents retrieved, pertaining to the question, what is the planning process that community colleges are using when

determining programming for rural communities? The major themes that emerged included: (a) types of programming, implementation of new programming, and determining future programming, (b) differences in process: campus versus rural areas, (c) community need/feedback, (d) funding for rural areas, and (e) evidence documents.

(a) Types of programming, implementation of new programming, and determining future programming. Brantna College determined the types of programs that would be placed in the rural communities using a number of factors. The college reviewed the needs determined by staff/faculty, students, board members, and the community members; in addition, it reviewed employment/workforce needs. The college would move forward if there was a capacity to fill the needs and if there was sufficient partner interests to help share cost of the programming. Other factors for determining what types of programs were offered in rural areas by Brantna Community College were strategic priorities at the college level and new legislation that may affect how programming was funded.

The implementation of new programming in rural areas was almost the same process as that on campus. The college looked at needs expressed by constituents, the labor market analysis, and the special populations that might use the services. The college then reviewed budgets to determine if there was adequate funding, and/or if there were partners that could help sustain programming. Once the programming was implemented the college began promotion.

Brantna determined future programming by looking at their mission and the strategic priorities. In addition the budget was reviewed along with the effective partnerships that existed and that could be created. Also, the college attempted to

respond to needs in the community and to the feedback received from the community and advisory boards. Lastly, the college relied on data such as student enrollment, student persistence, and student completion in the courses. Additional data reviewed when determining what future programming would be offered in the rural areas were demographics and economic trends.

(b) Differences in process: campus versus. rural. Several interviewees from Brantna College stated that there were few if any differences in programming with on campus programs and those in the rural communities. Some differences that existed, other than programming, resulted from different needs in rural areas than on campus. Other differences noted were that minimum student enrollments for on campus were higher than those placed for rural areas. Also, rural areas needed different services such as childcare. Advisory boards were more often established for rural programming, as there was a need for partnerships. Lastly, classes were sometimes different in rural areas than on campus. For example, often several levels were offered in one classroom; there could be altered curriculum delivery in the rural classes; and the time of day the class was offered was sometimes different in the rural areas.

(c) Community needs/feedback. Brantna interviewees reported a few different methods for determining if needs were being met for the rural communities. The two most important ways in which the college retrieved information was from feedback of its constituents and from a variety of data that was collected. The feedback Brantna received on whether they were meeting the needs of the rural community came from the community members, advisory boards, student interviews, focus groups, board members, partners, and the outreach staff. The data that the college collected in order to determine

whether they were meeting needs of the rural communities came from information on enrollment and retention in classes, graduation rates, GED pass rates, student employment after completion of the programs, needs assessments, and analysis of the work environments.

(d) Funding for rural areas. According to Brantna College interviewees the funding for programming in rural areas varied. Often funding was made available by the college general fund monies, because the initiative may be a college priority or part of the overall college strategic plan. Sometimes the decision to fund a rural program was solely based on the funding the college received from the legislature for a certain year. Occasionally a program was eliminated or reduced so that new ones could be initiated in rural areas. Funds from different sources like grants, special fees, or partnerships with business all provided for funding in rural areas. Other comments from interviewees that work at Brantna College were that the process for funding rural areas was the same as for funding initiatives on campus and that often decisions were driven by community feedback. Lastly, one interviewee from Brantna College commented that when determining what will be funded in rural areas Brantna could only use existing resources.

(e) Evidence documents. The article from the local newspapers discussed the way in which the college was meeting needs of the farming community it serves by developing the new Urban Agriculture Certificate. In addition, the college's yearlong community engagement survey revealed the communities desire to have additional college facilities. In addition, the survey confirmed the need for additional transportation options to create increased access for their constituents.

Methods or processes used in rural programming: cross case analysis. The following subsection provides the interviewee responses to the question: what is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? The major themes that emerged included: (a) types of programming, implementation of new programming, and determining future programming, (b) differences in process: campus versus rural, (c) community needs/feedback, (d) funding for rural areas and (e) Altna and Brantna evidence documents.

(a) Types of programming, implementation of new programming, determining future programming. How a college determines the type of programming, new programming, and future programming are all intertwined. There were four specific ways in which both colleges determined their programming for rural areas. They were the mission, data analysis, community need/feedback, and funding. Note that community needs/feedback and funding were also mentioned as responses to other questions.

Mission. Mission, mission alignment, and the strategic plan helped guide the colleges in the programming they selected for rural areas. The mission also guided programming as the wording in the document affirms the importance of access.

Data analysis. Before embarking on any new initiatives, both colleges thoroughly reviewed relevant data. They examined demographics in the area, labor market analysis, and economic trends. Both Altna and Brantna Colleges also reviewed the college data such as enrollment, persistence, and completion rates.

Community needs/feedback. The needs of the community were important. Both colleges relied heavily on feedback from the array of constituents that they served such as the community at large, advisory boards, and ad hoc committees. They also listened to

industry, partners, and staff that worked closely with the rural population. Note that community needs/feedback was also discussed by college personnel when asked about determining needs of the community later in this section.

Funding for rural areas. The college's also looked at available funding for these initiatives in the rural areas. Table 4.2 provides a listing of the kinds of questions that colleges ask in order to decide on programming for rural areas.

Table 4.2

Questions Asked When Funding for Rural Programs

List of Questions
• Is there adequate funding to sustain the project? • Is there staff and space to implement the programming? • Are there viable partners to help with resources? • Are there enough resources to ensure the programming is sustainable?

All of these questions were reviewed before determining the types of programming, new programming, and future programming in rural areas. Other factors noted by Brantna College personnel as important to determining types of programming were new legislation and barriers in the community. Thus, both Altna and Brantna Colleges were very similar in the way they determined types, new, and future programming for rural areas. Note that funding is discussed later in this section when interviewees were asked specifically about funding for rural areas initiatives.

(b) Differences in process: campus versus rural. Interviewees from Altna and Brantna Colleges stated that there was no difference in the process that was used for rural or on-campus programming. Both campus and rural programming functioned under accreditation guidelines and must follow the community college mission, stated interviewees.

Differentiation between on campus and rural areas was noted by interviewees from both colleges, not in the programming but in the needs of each. For example special programming for rural areas could have come about due to partnerships that helped make the project cost effective. Other programming differences were enrollment and class delivery. Often the enrollment in rural areas may be lower. The college allowed smaller classes to continue, which was not be the case for an on-campus class. Also, due to the lower enrollments in rural areas, both Altna and Brantna College interviewees commented that the colleges looked at other options for delivery. For example there might be more of a selection of hybrid, or online video classes in rural areas. In addition, there were sometimes several levels of the same class offered in the same classroom. Class times might also vary between on campus and rural locations to cater to the different populations. An Altna Community College Interviewee stated that other differences were the constraints that rural areas had such as budget and capacity. Another difference stated by one Brantna Community College interviewee was the fact that there were advisory boards more often associated with the rural programming. Community college interviewees from Altna and Brantna believed that there were different services provided for campus and rural areas. Due to limited staff often the rural areas did not get the same amount of student services as there were available on

campus. One interviewee from Brantna College also stated that the service needs were different and that more childcare was provided in rural areas.

***(c) Community needs/feedback*.** Altna and Brantna Colleges interviewees commented that the colleges determined if they were meeting needs of the rural communities by using various measures. Interviewees from both colleges noted that getting feedback was important in determining whether needs were being met. Staff from Altna and Brantna Colleges stated that community surveys and focus groups were important in determining whether the needs were being met by the rural programming. Also important to both colleges was the feedback gathered from business, industry, advisory boards, and ad hoc committees. Additional overlap between the two colleges was that they both reviewed student and faculty evaluations and interviews. Brantna Community College staff also identified feedback from their outreach person and board members as an additional measure. Altna Community College interviewees stated that reviewing curriculum for relevancy and examining industry changes as also being important. Interviewees from both colleges noted the importance of reviewing data to include enrollment trends, completion rates, persistence, graduation rates, employment of students, and examination of prior year outcomes. An interviewee from Brantna Community College said that a needs assessment was conducted to determine whether needs were being met, whereas one Interviewee from Altna Community College noted that there was no formal process being utilized at that time. Note that data analysis was also reviewed in the question regarding types of programming, new programming and future programming.

(d) Funding for rural areas. One Brantna College interviewee commented that when looking at funding there was no difference in the process for funding for campus-based initiatives and rural initiatives. Both Altna and Brantna College's personnel said that decisions for funding for rural areas began with the college's strategic plan. One Brantna College interviewee also stated that community feedback helped drive the funding decisions when looking at programming for rural areas. In this case funding was diverted to these new initiatives from other areas.

For rural programming, interviewees from both Altna and Brantna Colleges stated that often resources were moved around such as eliminating or reducing existing programs to allow for additional funding to create new programming. Also interviewees from both colleges agreed that frequently other funding was sought to sustain the rural outreach programming such as college surplus funds, special fees, or grants. One Altna Community College interviewee also stated that for rural programming to be realized the programming must be self-support. One Brantna College interviewee said that existing resources needed to be used when looking at funding for rural areas. Established partnerships were also important to both of the colleges when determining funding for rural areas. The additional resources from industry helped leverage existing resources to fund the special programming for outlying initiatives. Lastly, two interviewees from Brantna Community College felt that often funding for rural areas relied on the legislative monies that were allocated to each college.

Grant funding such as the CASE (Credentials, Acceleration, and Support for Employment) grant impacted the ability for community colleges to create and implement new programming for rural areas. This grant allowed for many rural serving community

colleges including the ones interviewed to initiate programs that they would have not been possible due to funding constraints.

State funding has impacted the ability of community colleges to create programming in rural areas. The report distributed by the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (2015) presented the recent shortfalls in state funding. Thus, as commented by the interviewees from both community colleges, programming for rural areas occurs by reallocating funds from one place to another, reducing certain programs, or mandating that rural programs be self-sustaining.

Altna and Brantna College evidence documents. The following is a discussion of the documents presented by each of the colleges. In addition, there were two documents that were retrieved to assist in the discussion of the methods or processes that community colleges use to determine rural programming. The first is information on how grants funds were used to support rural programming in rural areas in Oregon. The second is a report by the Oregon Department of Community Colleges outlining the funding deficits that community colleges have been facing in the recent years.

Altna provided an Advisory Board Roster for the Horticulture Department. This document was a list of individuals with expertise in this field which provide input to college personnel to ensure that this program was meeting the needs of Industry and the community at large. Brantna provided two evidence documents. The first was a survey that was administered to their constituents in an attempt to gather feedback on community needs. The second was a newspaper article discussing how the college's new Urban Agriculture Program was meeting the needs of the rural areas.

CASE grant. An $18 million federal CASE grant was received by the Oregon colleges in 2013. The purpose was to provide additional resources for unemployed and under-employed populations in Oregon. Colleges were to create certificate programs for industry needs in the various college communities and to enhance current programming. The grant funds assisted in the creation of programs such as Fire Suppression, Automotive Technology, and Medical Assistant programs at small remote rural-serving community colleges. In addition, many of the colleges used the funds to enhance distance learning options (Oregon Credentials, Acceleration & Support for Employment Consortium, 2013).

State report. A report created by the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development showed a $100 million decrease in funding from 2001 – 2012 for Oregon Community Colleges. Even with recent increases colleges still remained below the amounts they received in prior years. For example, FTE (full time equivalency) reimbursement for student is $2,008 for the 2013-15 years, in contrast to $2,503 in 2007. Lastly, student tuition has increased about 50% in the state (Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, 2015).

Altna and Brantna College evidence documents cross-case analysis. Both colleges understood the importance of meeting the needs of their communities. They used various methods to gather information from their constituents. They then used this input to improve or create new programs to fill needs in their service areas.

When a community college has additional funding whether it be from a grant or from state allocations it has more bandwidth to explore more programming. These documents were in alignment with the information retrieved from the interviewees from

both Altna and Brantna Colleges, concerning available funding. Many interviewees spoke to the need for grant funding for their colleges to create rural programming. In addition, some spoke of the direct correlation of legislative funding to the programming the college could provide.

Summary. The development of academic programming was a task that community college personnel created every year, but they were continually reviewing data to inform their decisions. Several interview questions were asked of the interviewees from both colleges to determine methods or processes used by each of the community colleges in creating this academic programming to reach out to rural areas. When asked about types of programming, new programming, and future programming a common answer was in regards to the mission. Both stated that the programming was guided by the mission and the strategic plan that had been established for each community college. Both colleges stated the importance of data analysis. They reviewed student enrollment, employment needs, demographics, and economic trends. Another reason identified by both Altna and Brantna College interviewees that compelled the colleges to create academic programming in rural areas was the needs expressed by the community. The colleges noted the importance of obtaining feedback to help guide programming. Another important factor noted by interviewees from both Altna and Brantna Colleges in creating the programming for rural areas was that funding needed to be secured. Both colleges reviewed budgets and determined if there were partnerships in place to help support the initiative.

The process for creating academic programming for on campus and rural areas was the same as noted by personnel from both colleges. Interviewees from both Altna

and Brantna Colleges also stated that accreditation standards applied to both on campus and rural programming. The personnel from both colleges stated that the differences in programming between on campus and in rural areas were in the needs of each particular area. When programming was needed in rural areas the colleges attempted to fill that need while remaining cost effective while using strategies such as offering multiple levels of one class in the same room and offering more distance learning and hybrid classes.

Determining needs of the rural communities and whether they were being met was an important phase of the programming in rural areas. The colleges commented on the importance of listening to the needs of the community. Both colleges relied on feedback from community members, business and industry, advisory boards, students, faculty, and community partners in order to evaluate whether the programming was meeting stated needs. Surveys and focus groups were commonly used to obtain feedback. They also collected data on factors such as enrollment and retention rates, employment of students, and graduation rates.

The last consideration in determining programming for rural areas ascertained by this research was the ability to fund rural initiatives. Interviewees from both colleges said that funding decisions for programming referred to the college's strategic plan. Many options were reviewed for funding when proceeding forward with rural programming. First, resource reallocation occurred. A program might be eliminated or reduced to create additional funding for a new program. Also, colleges looked for other sources of funding to create programming for rural areas to include grants, special fees, or surplus funding that the college may have from the previous year. As with the CASE grant, several new programs were added and upgraded due to the extra funding received.

Partnerships with business, industry, social service agencies were also important for the programming in rural areas. Partners provided the additional resources needed to create a rural programming opportunity by offering financial support, facilities, and/or staffing. Lastly, the amount of state funding that the community college received each year was also a determinant as to how rural programming was implemented. In summary, both Altna and Brantna Colleges had minimal differences in the way that they determined academic programming for rural areas.

Research question 3: Stakeholders involved. Generally the stakeholders in community colleges involved in decision-making for academic planning in community colleges are presidents, deans of instruction, and division deans. The purpose of this question was to identify the stakeholders involved in the decision-making around planning for academic programming in rural areas and to determine if this varied from traditional academic planning at community.

Altna College interviews. The following provides a summary of the interviews for Altna College. This is followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

*Alice***.** In regards to the decision-making of rural programming there were a few people involved. There were the board members who represent different areas within the college's service district. They tended to understand the needs of their respective communities. They were often supporters of new initiatives and advocated strongly to upper administration at the community college for additional programming.

Two other ways in which the college heard about needs were through the community college personnel who saw opportunities/needs and then reported them back

to the college for approval. The second was through needs expressed by personnel employed in agencies located in the communities. They often had suggestions for programming that they brought forth to the college.

People involved in the decision-making for academic programming in rural areas were board members, community college personnel, and community businesses.

*Alex***.** The programming decisions began with the community because this was where the ideas began. The idea moved through a dean, and then the Vice president's office. The president had the final approval at the college level.

Alan. Alan said that the college had recently taken a more comprehensive approach to who was responsible for the programming in rural areas. There were systems in place to address the decision-making. It was much more of a shared responsibility that included feedback from the community members, directors of sites, and the deans of academic advancement, career technical education, and general education. The board and executive team were kept informed along the way. The actual implementation came from a program request, which would include the budget component, and would come through instruction and student services. He stated that it was not just one person that made these decisions.

*Adam***.** His community college did not have a different process for creating academic programming for the campus or for rural areas; the same people were involved. That was to say that the process was the same whether the program offered was on the main campus or on a small off-site location. Basically the same criteria were used for on campus courses such as fill rates and the trends. The people involved were the program

dean, the executive dean, and curriculum committees to ensure that all met state standards.

Altna College document evidence. The researcher was unable to locate document evidence for Altna College regarding stakeholders involved in decision-making of rural programming.

Summary Altna College. The stakeholders involved for planning programming for rural areas varied. Some of the staff from Altna Community College stated that these decisions began at the grassroots level with the constituents asking for specific programming and expressing needs for their community. These requests were routed through community agencies, board members, or staff that interfaced directly with the rural areas. Other decision-makers were directors and deans responsible for different areas such as career technical and general education. Ultimately, decisions were made at the president's level. The consensus for Altna College was that this decision-making of the planning and what gets offered in rural areas was shared. There was a process, but many people had input into the final outcome.

Brantna College interviews. The following provides a summary of the interviews for Brantna College. This is followed by a summary that combines the interview data with the document analysis.

Belle. In some ways everyone was involved in the decision-making about planning and programming for rural areas, but ultimately it was conducted by the executive team, which included the president and the board. If it was a new instructional program the board had to approve the idea so that it could move to the state for state approval. In addition, a board member who represented a certain district might bring a

new program idea forward. Operationally, the dean was the one that drove the program idea forward and moved it up through the process of executive team approval. Department chairs were sometimes involved in bringing programs to the first step of the process because a constituent had brought an idea to them.

Beth. There were technical advisory committees with people working in industry that had expertise in given fields that helped drive the decision-making process when determining academic programming for rural areas. The staff and faculty were involved in the initial development of the courses. Students' interests also helped drive decisions around rural programming. For instance if students demonstrated an interest in studying more about food production, this could prompt the staff and faculty to initiate discussions with advisory committees to begin creating additional coursework.

After ideas were created they needed to be approved at college. New courses went through a curriculum committee and got a dean's approval. A determination was made as to whether or not there was interest and a need for the program before a course could be created.

Bev. Everybody was involved in the planning of academic programming for rural areas including the president, the Board of Education, and the executive team. The dean, the department chairs, and the instructors were also decision makers in the process. Lastly, constituents provided input through community surveys.

Bea. The decision-making process was not exclusively for rural areas: it applied to all programming within the college. The vice president of instruction, who was informed by data from the student services area, directed the decision-making. In addition, the dean of outreach and the community members was involved. Academic

deans and department chairs also played a role in the programming decisions for rural areas.

Community colleges in Oregon are governed by an elected board, representing various communities within the district. The members were in touch with the needs of their community and were involved in the programming decisions for rural areas also.

The constituents were asked for input. There were periodic online and telephone surveys conducted by the college. They asked questions such as "What do you need from Brantna Community College? How do you need it? Where do you need it?" Everyone was involved in the decision-making for the programming.

Barb. It was not a single person but rather many people involved in the process of planning and determining rural programming. It began with Department Chairs working within their assigned budgets. When budgets were reduced, the decision-making moved up the chain to the dean level and ultimately to the vice president. In addition, the community was a stakeholder and in a sense drove the decision-making. For example, if the community requested specific programming or additional services, often additional funds needed to be accessed or reallocated. These decisions moved up the chain from department chair, dean, and again ultimately the vice president.

Ben. It depended on the type of programming as to who was making the decisions of planning and programming for rural areas. Generally though, the college had a structure in which input was given all along the way by various resources. Primarily the deans and associate deans and ultimately the vice president of instruction were involved in the decision-making process of programming for rural areas.

Brantna College document evidence. Brantna College embarked on a lengthy study entitled "Imagine Brantna" in which there were several goals. Some of them were to strengthen relationships with the community, identify barriers to access, and increase communication channels. The effort included surveys and focus groups where over 2000 constituents were asked for input (Imagine Brantna, n.d.).

Summary Brantna College. Of the six people interviewed from Brantna College all stated that there were several people involved in the decision-making related to the planning and programming in rural areas. Answers varied from the different constituent groups including community members, faculty, department chairs, board of director members, the vice president, and president of the community college. They all stated that the deans were involved in the process.

The college had made an attempt to include the community at large with an all-encompassing effort of "Imagine Brantna." Several modes were used in the community engagement process including surveys and focus groups. Brantna was enlisting the community through this process to become stakeholders in the decision-making of programming.

Stakeholders involved: cross-case analysis. The stakeholders making decisions about rural planning generally were presidents, deans of instruction, and division deans. This study sought to determine who was involved in rural academic planning decisions and whether or not they were different from those involved in traditional on-campus planning and programming.

Both Altna and Brantna interviewees stated that a variety of people were involved in the decision-making of the programming in rural areas. Personnel from both colleges

commented on the importance of the input received from the constituents in their service districts and that the community was an integral part of the team that helped make the decisions about rural programming decisions. One Altna Community College interviewee stated that outreach staff were involved in the decision-making. This would not apply for the traditional academic planning on campus. Both sets of interviewees stated that higher-level administration teams composed of the president, vice president of instruction, and the executive team, were involved in the decisions about rural planning and programming. These were the same people that determined on-campus programming. Table 4.3 depicts the respondent's answers concerning the stakeholders.

Table 4.3

Stakeholders Making Decisions About Rural Planning

	Variety of people	Community members	Outreach staff	Higher-level administrative teams
Altna College	x	x	x	x
Brantna College	x	x		x

Summary. This section provided the answers to the third research question from interviewees from Altna and Brantna Colleges. A cross-case analysis followed reviewing similarities and differences. Thus, there were relatively few differences in who was involved in decision-making of rural planning between Altna and Brantna Colleges. There were no differences in who determined planning for on campus academic

programming and rural academic programming. It was comprised of the community constituents in the community college district. In addition, the outreach staff and the administrative staff that were employed at the community college were also part of the process.

Chapter Summary

This chapter was comprised of the research findings from a review of interviews conducted at the two participant colleges. The first section discussed characteristics of the participants and cases. Section two provided summaries of the participant responses and document evidence divided by the respective college in regards to three research questions. There was a cross-case analysis of the two community colleges at the end for each of the research questions.

Characteristics of community colleges and participants. Two case studies were created in order to determine how community colleges create programming for rural areas. The two community colleges selected for the case studies were chosen for their size and physical location as designated by the Carnegie Classification of Higher Education System. The researcher formally interviewed four college personnel in a variety of positions from Altna Community College and six college personnel from Brantna College.

Findings in response to the research questions. This section summarized the interviewees' replies of each of the interviewees from Altna and Brantna Colleges to the three research questions in this study: (a) What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities? (b) What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?

And (c) Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process? In addition, document evidence will be discussed.

Research question 1: Motivation by community colleges. The first research question was: What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities? It was created to reveal what factors drive a college to create programming for rural areas and what if any different factors exist at different community colleges.

After review of replies from interviewees from both Altna and Brantna College, there were few differences in what motivated the college to create programming for rural areas. Interviewees from both colleges, Altna and Brantna, stated that motivation to create programming in rural areas related to the needs that were brought forth by the community members Second, the college mission played a key role in the motivation to create programming in rural areas. In addition, creating access, which was often part of the college mission, was mentioned by personnel from both colleges as an influencer to motivate colleges to create rural programming. Access was an important factor which was either specifically stated or presumed in each of the mission statements for both colleges. Finally, the ability to sustain the programming in the rural areas was noted by interviewees from both colleges as a key factor in motivation for creation of this new programming.

Research question 2: Methods or processes used. The second research question was, What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? It was asked to uncover methods or processes used by community colleges in creating academic programming for rural areas.

The planning process for the creation of academic programming was a task that community college personnel repeated every year. The interviewees from colleges Altna and Brantna were asked questions to ascertain the methods or processes used by each of the community colleges in creating this academic programming to reach rural areas. The questions inquired about how types of programs were chosen, how the college went about implementation of that programming, and how the future programming was determined for rural areas. The ways in which on campus and rural programming differed was also reviewed. Lastly, to fully explore the research question there was consideration of how the community colleges determined whether the programming was meeting the needs of the community and how the community colleges supplied funding for these efforts.

When asked about types of programming, new programming and future programming Altna and Brantna interviewees stated that the colleges looked to their missions and strategic plans to determine if programming supported college goals. Next, pertinent data was studied by colleges to validate the need and the viability of the rural programming. Both Altna and Brantna personnel stated that some of the development began with the needs that were expressed by the various stakeholders in the community such as community members, board members, outreach staff, advisory boards, and employment boards. Needs expressed from business, industry, and social service agencies were also taken into account before creating programming for rural areas. Both Altna and Brantna interviewees commented of the importance of having secure funding when looking at new rural programming. The colleges reviewed their budgets and also determined whether there were partnerships in place to sustain the programming.

Both Altna and Brantna personnel stated that the process for on campus and in rural areas was the same since state accreditation standards applied to both. According to personnel from Altna and Brantna, programming differences came about because of the distinctive needs on campus and in the rural community. Examples of modifications for programming in rural areas were offering multiple levels of one class in the same room and offering more distance learning and hybrid classes.

When asked how the community colleges determined needs and whether needs were being met in rural areas, personnel from both Altna and Brantna stated that the listening to the needs of the constituents was crucial. They relied on feedback from the stakeholders in the community and the data that they had collected on factors such as enrollment and retention rates, employment of students, and graduation rates.

Ways in which both Altna College and Brantna College addressed funding for rural initiatives were much the same, per interviewees from both colleges. According to personnel from Altna and Brantna, both colleges examined strategic goals to determine alignment and priority. The actual funding for the rural programming might be one or a combination of the following: resource allocation, grants, special fees or the use of surplus college funds. Attaining grants such as the CASE grant were a factor in determining future programming for rural areas. The amount of state funding allocated each year also played a part in deciding what rural programming would be initiated. Both Altna and Brantna interviewees commented that the colleges also looked to partnerships with community stakeholders to assist with resources for rural programming. In summary, both Altna and Brantna used similar processes in the way that they determined academic programming for rural areas.

Research question 3: Stakeholders involved. The third research question was, Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process? Its purpose was to identify the people that were involved when making decisions regarding academic programming for rural areas and to determine if it differs from that of academic programming on the main campus.

Decision-making for academic programming on campus are made by upper administration at the community colleges, such as presidents, deans of instruction, and division deans. The intention of this question was to ascertain which people make academic planning decisions for rural areas and to discover if it differed from the decision-makers for on campus.

There were no substantial differences in who was involved in decision-making of rural planning between Altna and Brantna Colleges. There was no difference in who determined the planning for on campus academic programming and rural academic programming. The decision-making for rural planning was comprised of the constituents that provided input from the community, the outreach and administrative staff that were employed at the community college. In the case of Brantna, they embarked on a large scale community engagement initiative to help determine needs in rural areas. This was one example in which they included the community as stakeholders in the involvement process.

The two case studies presented in this chapter were unique and yet similar. The three questions in this study provided insight on how community colleges created programming for rural areas. Several topics materialized from the interviewee responses.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This multiple case study was initiated in order to determine how community colleges determine the types of academic programming that will be created for rural areas. The purpose of this research was to explore if community colleges have processes or strategies in place that assist them in the implementation of such programming. This chapter contains the following sections: (a) a discussion of the results as related to the literature, (b) implications and questions for practice, (c) limitations of the study, (d) suggestions for future research, (e) acknowledgement of participants, and (f) personal reflections.

Discussion of Results

This section discusses the findings for each of the research questions and compares the related literature in Chapter Two and other relevant literature to those findings. The three research questions were:

1. What motivates community colleges to create programming for rural communities?
2. What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?
3. Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?

To answer these questions, a comparative case study was conducted. Faculty and administrators from two community colleges in Oregon were interviewed to determine motivation to create rural programming, identify methods and processes used for rural programming, and ascertain who the stakeholders are that participate in this decision-making. An open-ended question format was used and there were three research questions.

Research Question 1: What motivates community colleges to create programming for rural communities?

This section is an evaluation of the first research question as it relates to the material in this study to include the literature review in chapter Two, and interviews and the cross-case analysis from Chapter Four.

Community needs. Community colleges are motivated to creating programming for rural areas when needs are expressed by the community. Often these needs were expressed from local businesses, board members, and taxpayers. Killacky and Valadez (1995) stated that rural community colleges have been viewed by their communities as vehicles for supporting the increased quality of life for rural America. Miller and Tuttle (2007) agreed that the rural community college serves the needs of their communities. Similarly, Thomas (2013) found the partnership between the community and the rural community college was important. Yet, these authors argued that community college leaders need to take a broader look at their programming in serving their constituents. Leaders need to review the work they are doing, as it relates to the development of the area (Miller & Tuttle, 2007; Thomas, 2013).

Community college mission. The mission of the institution provided the motivation for creating academic programming for rural areas. It was a guiding document that affects the direction for both community colleges' decision-making. The mission statement motivated the work for rural programming in rural areas. The community colleges had goals or objectives related to that mission. Goals of access and employability were both important in determining the programming that is created for

rural areas. In inspecting the specific mission statements for the two colleges in this study, the wording clearly spoke to access for all.

Vaughan (2006) stated in *The Community College Story* that one component of the community college mission was to provide an open access policy, which means that all students from the society are to be served. The community college mission of an open-door access policy has been and continues to be important; and this policy has historically provided for equity in post-secondary education. Yet, for a community college to prosper it may need to re-evaluate which students they to serve and how to best support these students, as funding streams appear to be decreasing. Institutional goals may then need to shift (American Association of Community Colleges, 2012).

Ability to sustain program. Sustainability of the program was a factor that motivated a college to creating programming for rural areas. If the college had opportunities for partnerships or other types of leveraging to sustain the programs, they were more likely to create programming in rural areas. Katsinas and Miller (1998) argued that rural populations are geographically isolated; this isolation creates increased costs to train qualified staff and increased costs when establishing new programs. Miller and Tuttle (2007) suggested that one of the economic development functions of rural community colleges is to provide contract training. This means partnering directly with business to create programs that train workers for new jobs, or enhance the skills of current workers to increase performance. Miller and Kissinger (2007) agreed that working with other rural agencies is important for community advancement.

Summary of first question. The first research question (What motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas?) of this research study was

meant to discover what motivates community colleges to create academic programming at offsite locations in rural areas. The most noted reason that drives colleges to create academic programming in rural areas was driven by the needs that were expressed by the community at large, board members, and business. Community colleges are there to serve the needs of the constituents (Miller & Tuttle, 2007).

The researcher discovered that the personnel interviewed believed that the mission statement of the organization was important guiding documents for a college. This document provided a strategic direction for the institution to determine what type of programming would be instituted. Some of the literature was consistent in stating that the mission implies access to all (American Association of Community Colleges, 2010; Vaughan, 2006). However, although the "open door" policy has been important, community colleges may need to re-examine their organizational goals. With funding sources decreasing, colleges may need to re-examine who they are serving and how best to meet student needs (American Association of Community Colleges, 2012)

The sustainability of rural programming was another important factor. The literature confirmed that community colleges are poised to serve the needs of the community (Miller & Tuttle, 2007). The literature also confirmed the increased costs that are incurred when expanding to rural, isolated areas (Katsinas & Miller, 1998). The importance of partnerships were also validated by Paton (2006).

Research Question 2: What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities?

This section is a discussion of the second research question as it relates to the literature review, interviews, and the cross-case analysis from Chapter Four.

Types of programming, implementation of new programming and determining future programming.

How a college decides the type of programming, new programming and future programming are all connected. Both colleges determined their programming for rural areas by reviewing the community college mission, analyzing data, soliciting community feedback, and evaluating available funding. Note that community needs/feedback and funding will be addressed later in this section.

Community college mission. When determining programming for rural areas, the mission, mission alignment, and the strategic plan help to guide the colleges in the planning process as they determine what will be implemented for rural areas. The mission statement is at the core of the community college and directs its current and future programming for rural areas. The literature was consistent with the mission being at the center of the community college (American Association of Community Colleges, 2010). In addition, (Leist & Travis, 2010) confirmed the importance of embedding rural planning in the overall strategic plan of the college. This was mentioned in research question 1.

Data analysis. In determining programming it was imperative for colleges to review data to include demographics, labor market analysis, and economic trends. Other data such as enrollment trends, persistence, completion rates, graduation rates, employment of students, examination of prior year outcomes, and needs assessments were reviewed.

Kieft (1978) concurred as he discussed the importance of having current internal information such as enrollment figures and projections for incoming students. In addition

he noted that the external data included community needs assessments, and demographics. Ewell (2010) stated that tracking student's progress in community colleges can be difficult. Students place at different academic levels; they start and stop at different times; and they often enroll in more than one institution before obtaining a degree. Challenges are present in community college data collection such as lack of standard definitions for performance measures, and FERPA (Family Education Rights to Privacy Act) regulations. However he indicated that much progress has been made and that to make sound decisions about college programming good collection of data is necessary. The results from the research were congruent with the literature. Although the literature noted that the collection of accurate data can be difficult to obtain, such data provide an important part of academic planning (Ewell, 2010).

Differences in process; campus versus. rural. The process for creating academic programming for on campus and rural areas was the same, as accreditation standards applied to both on campus and rural programming and both must align to the mission. Sometimes gaps in rural programming may come about because of the policies and procedures that are in place in community colleges which affect expansion into rural communities. Such policies and procedures can provide additional barriers to serving rural areas. An example is that colleges must be able to prove a certain number of students would enroll to open new sites to be eligible to receive state funding (California Postsecondary Education Commission, 2006).

The colleges recognized that there are different needs when reviewing campus and rural populations. When programming is needed in rural areas the colleges attempted to fill that need while using cost-effective strategies. Often the enrollment in rural areas

may be lower than on the main campus. Community colleges permit this and allow smaller classes to continue, which may not be the case for an on-campus class. Also, due to the lower enrollments in rural areas, community colleges often look at other options for delivery. For example there may be more of a selection of hybrid, or online video classes. In addition, there were sometimes several levels of the same class offered in the same room. Class times might also vary between the on campus and the rural offerings to cater to the different populations.

In an article about rural expansion that Paton (2006) discussed, the need for expansion of online distance and off-campus degree programs to serve the outlying communities. "Nationally the primary forces of economics and access are driving the explosive growth of distance education, which is rapidly transforming postsecondary education" (Austin, 2010, p. 28). The growth will likely continue due to rising costs of transportation and post-secondary education. Distance education alters the way in which the community college can provide programming for students both in academic courses and in support services (Austin, 2010). Online courses offer rural community college benefits such as the ability to reach students who are often geographically remote (Leist & Travis, 2010).

Community needs/feedback. Determining the needs of the rural communities and whether they are being met was an important phase of the planning process for programming in rural areas. Determining if the needs of the rural community are being met was measured in various ways. The college received feedback through community surveys and focus groups. Feedback was gathered from business, industry, and advisory boards, and ad hoc committees were also important. Additionally there was review of

student and faculty evaluations and interviews to understand if programming was meeting needs. Lastly, feedback from college outreach personnel and board members was an additional measure.

One of the strategies that Treadway (1984) suggested for successful rural programming was having good outreach plans and access to people in their communities. This was especially important as colleges look for feedback from their constituents. Bruce et al. (2011) stated that outreach and collaboration with the community helps establish the role of the community college in the community. They suggested campus personnel involvement in the community, bringing constituents to the college, and providing a space for business members to provide input about future college curriculum. The literature supported the results. Creating avenues for community engagement to determine needs of the community appeared to be an important element to creating rural programming. In addition, creating reciprocal relationship, collaboration, communication, and creating trust were related to that community building (Thomas, 2013).

Funding for rural area. Reviewing funding is part of the process when progressing with rural programming. Available funding for these initiatives in the rural areas must be analyzed and a determination must be made as to whether or not adequate funding exists to sustain the project.

A college may need to reallocate resources in order to initiate a new rural program. A program might be eliminated or reduced in order to create additional funding for a new program. In addition, community feedback helps drive the funding decisions when looking at programming for rural areas. In this case funding may be diverted to

these new initiatives from other areas. Often for rural programming resources may be shuffled around such as eliminating or reducing existing programs to allow for additional funding to create new programming. Frequently other funding is sought to sustain the rural initiatives such as college surplus funds, special fees, or grants. An example of such special funding is the CASE grant (document evidence), in which several new programs were added and upgraded due to the extra funding received.

Sometimes rural programming must be self-supporting. Partnerships with business, industry, social service agencies are also important for subsidizing and/or sustaining the programming in rural areas. Partners provided the additional resources needed to create a rural programming opportunity by offering financial support, facilities, and/or staffing.

Paton (2006) discussed the ability to expand programming due to partnering over a 131,000 square-mile rural region. She stated that these initiatives to partner with communities had impacts on student access to higher education.

Katsinas and Miller (1998) also noted that the cost to bring new programs to rural areas was significant, and cost prohibitive. There were few qualified part-time staff pools to teach courses, and often sites for vocational internships were non-existent. Due to these barriers, rural community colleges must expend additional resources in order to ensure success. The authors suggested that community colleges cannot do this alone. The amount of state funding that the community college receives each year can also determine how rural programming is implemented. They argued that there was insufficient funding in state formulas. As noted in the report created by the Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development there was a 100

million dollar decrease in funding from 2001 to 2012 for Oregon Community Colleges. These funding deficits can be offset by community college personnel seeking other sources of funding such as public and private investments (American Association of Community Colleges, 2012).

American Association of Community Colleges (2012) suggested a different strategy. Community colleges must re-design themselves for the 21st Century. They "…must re-imagine their purposes and practices in order to meet the demands of the future, optimizing results for individuals, communities, and the nation" (p. ix).

Summary of second question. The second research question was, What is the planning process that community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? The purpose of the question was to determine if community colleges had planning processes or methods when creating academic programming to reach rural areas.

The review of the mission and the college's strategic plan was part of the process used in determining the creation of academic programming for rural areas. Leist and Travis (2010) concurred with the importance of a rural plan being incorporated in the strategic plan. Relevant data such as enrollment, employment needs, demographics, and economic trends were analyzed. Kieft (1978) validated the importance of data collection when embarking in academic planning.

There was not difference in the process for programming when looking at campus or rural populations. However, there were differences in regards to the needs of each particular area. When programming was needed in rural areas the colleges attempted to fill that need while remaining cost effective using strategies such as offering multiple

levels of one class in the same room and offering more distance learning and hybrid classes. Literature affirms the need for alternative programming to assist in rural programming delivery (Paton, 2006).

Determining the needs of the community or if they were being met was integral in planning programming for rural areas. The college used a varied of means to collect this information including surveys and focus groups. The literature was consistent with the research. Providing an avenue for community input is an important element of creating rural programming (Thomas, 2013).

The last consideration in reviewing processes for programming in rural areas ascertained by this research was the ability to fund and sustain these initiatives. Resource reallocation or other sources of funding might be considered when funding rural areas. Partnerships with business, industry, social service agencies are also important for the programming in rural areas. The review of the literature supported the need for partnerships to aid in the development of rural areas (Paton, 2006). In addition, Kieft, (1978) noted that academic planning and reallocation of resources are linked together.

Research Question 3: Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?

This section is an evaluation of the third research question as it relates to the material in this study to include the literature review in chapter Two, and interviews and the cross-case analysis from Chapter Four.

There are a variety of people involved in the decision-making of the programming for rural areas. It is important that input is received from constituents that the community college serves. They are an integral part of the team that helps make the decisions on

what programming is created for rural areas. Outreach staff are also involved in the decision-making process. The higher-level administration teams which are composed of the president, vice-president of instruction, and the executive team are involved in the decisions on rural programming.

Austin (2010) stated that in the planning of their new programming that the president of the community college initiated the project. Then, a small group of faculty and the specific department began to develop the courses, the schedules, and the infrastructure to support the courses. In their expansion to rural communities Texas Tech staff indicated that the president was also the lead in moving the project forward by designating resources, creating leadership roles and suggesting that academic programs become involved (Paton, 2006). Kieft (1978) concurred that most academic planning was conducted by management within the institution. Hicks and Jones (2011) stated that, "All stakeholders who will be affected are part of the decision-making process" (p. 42).

Summary of third question. The third research question was meant to determine which people make programming decisions regarding rural areas and to discover if it differed from the decision-makers for on campus programming. There was no difference in who determines programming for on campus academic programming and rural academic programming. It was comprised of the constituents that offered feedback from the community. Literature was consistent in that college relies on the community to guide the institution (Bruce et al, 2011). The outreach and administrative staff that are employed at the community college also provide input. In addition, the presidents of the community colleges (Austin, 2010; Paton, 2006) and management also assisted in the decision-making (Kieft, 1978).

Implications and Questions for Practice

The purpose of this study was to find out how community colleges create programming for rural areas. This researcher was interested in learning what motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural areas. Once the college determined that they will provide this programming, what are the steps or processes that guide the community college? Lastly, are certain people involved in making these decisions? The researcher for this study was interested in finding out whether there were differences in programming for the main campus and for rural areas. Upon conclusion the researcher hoped to have a set of steps or processes that other community colleges could follow to establish successful programming in rural areas.

As the researcher, I was motivated to embark on this research because I was in the midst of creating academic programming for a rural county in her district. I was provided a report that was created by the dean of instruction. The document contained demographic information about a community. I was interested in finding steps or processes that outlined how a community college determines the programming that will best serve rural communities.

Based on the literature review and the findings of this case study, the following is a listing of steps that colleges can use when deciding upon academic programming for rural areas:

Step 1: Applying community college documents. All community colleges have a mission statement that guides the everyday work. The mission statement is often text that influences community colleges into determining that rural programming is necessary. As resources ebb and flow into a community college, often it is this mere mission statement

that continues to direct the community college to continue to find ways to create programming for rural areas. The strategic plan of a college is a similar document that creates priorities for the college and often specifically outlines projects that must be completed for rural communities.

Questions for reflection on applying community college documents.

1. What does the community college mission include?
2. Are there strategic plans in place that provide guidance for your community college?
3. Are there documents or frameworks that indicate partnerships with rural communities in the past?

Step 2: Utilizing data. When making decisions on programming for rural areas, reviewing pertinent data, such as enrollment, employment needs, demographics, and economic trends, assist the college in making more informed decisions. Data such as enrollment and retention rates in classes and economic forecasting information assist the college in determining needs for programming.

Questions for reflection when data are reviewed by community college personnel.

1. Have there been surveys conducted in the past that can help guide future programming?
2. What are the resources at a community college that can help it locate relevant data?
3. How has a community college utilized data in the past and is it different than the way it is utilizing those data currently?
4. Are the community college data current?

5. Is there a wide array of data that a community college is utilizing?

Step 3: Assembling and reviewing feedback. The Community College can benefit from gathering feedback from a variety of sources when determining academic programming for rural areas. The different perspectives of businesses, students, and community members can convey additional information needed for decision-making.

Questions for reflection when assembling an analyzing feedback.

1. Does the community college have good relationships and good communication in place with their business and community partners in the rural community?
2. Does the community college have a reliable mechanism to obtain student input?
3. How often does the community college ask for feedback from its constituents?

Step 4: Identifying resources**.** Recently, state resources for community colleges have been very low. Often when a community college suffers a reduction in funding rural programming is also decreased. Community colleges can continue to provide academic programming by being open and creative. This includes finding funding in other places such as reallocating current monies and finding possible grant funding. In addition, often creating partnerships with business can assist with the cost of new programming.

Questions for reflection when community colleges review funding and sustainability for rural programs.

1. Is the community college collaborating when determining programming for rural areas?
2. Does the community college have effective lobbying in place to advocate for funding at the state and national levels?
3. Are the community college policies flexible to allow for creating community partnerships?

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Research

The objective of this study was to examine what motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas, what processes they use in this task, and who is involved in the decision-making. The following limitations to the study can lead to ideas for future research:

1. This study focused on interviewed administrative staff, such as vice presidents, deans, department chairs, outreach staff and faculty, employed at the community college and examined their views regarding rural programming. Opinions from students and community members may differ and reveal other information. Thus, a study that gathered perspectives from a more diverse set of participants, such as students and community members' views, and compared them with these results would provide further insights.

2. This study solely examined the rural programming that community colleges offer for credit. Additional research could include the programming for dual credits offerings and non-credit offerings. This different programming may uncover differing results. Such a study may involve the same methods and the same groups of participants but simply with a different focus.

3. The study focused on community colleges that were medium to large size according to the Carnegie Classification system. A future study looking at community colleges that are very small or very large to determine programming strategies for rural areas may reveal other results.

4. The study reviewed the viewpoints of staff and administrators from the community college. Research in the future might examine perceptions of staff at different types of post-secondary institutions and determine whether the same results surface.

5. This study had only two cases which decreases the application of the results on a broader scale. A similar study with more study participants would provide more, and potentially different, data.

6. This study focused on community colleges in Oregon. A study that included multiple states would provide further insights on rural outreach strategies of other states.

7. This research study was a case study analysis of community colleges. A future study could be initiated using a survey method of community colleges. Such a study could use the results of the present study to create a survey instrument. A survey process could provide a larger sample at a state, regional, or national level for analysis.

Upon completion of this study, the researcher surmised the need for future research in the following topics: Processes for rural programming, funding issues, and outreach to communities. These suggestions are offered in addition to those provided in the previous subsection.

Processes for rural programming. There was very little and very dated literature on the processes used by community colleges to create programming for rural areas. Yet, many colleges are serving rural areas across the country. Research needs to include strategic planning for community colleges in regards to rural programming and what types of programming can be successful in these areas. Additional research is needed on serving the diverse needs of the students and methods to support these communities.

Funding issues. Even though this study examined what motivates a community college to create programming for rural areas and what are the steps it takes to initiate this programming, it became evident that a key piece to making these decisions was how the community college could fund or sustain this programming. Additional research is needed on how community colleges can fund rural initiatives and sustain them, perhaps through additional government funding, or increased state support. More exploration is needed into other types of funding such as grants and investments.

Outreach to communities. During the course of this study, it became evident that personnel from community colleges relied heavily on the feedback from their partners, community members, and students. Further research needs to be conducted on what is the best way for a community college to gather information for rural programming. Would this be with surveys or some other method? Also, what are the best questions to be asked? And, finally, what are the best ways to administer these surveys and the most efficient ways to compile them?

Acknowledgement of Participants

I undertook this study in order to determine what motivates community colleges to create programming for rural areas. The people interviewed in this study were all

community college personnel that had major involvement in creating programming for rural areas. All of the interviewees contacted agreed to participate and made themselves readily available for the interviews. I was impressed by their sincere desire to serve the outlying rural communities and their honesty in identifying the barriers that the colleges faced in creating the programming for rural areas. I appreciated their willingness to allow me to be involved in this research with them.

Personal Reflection

When I began this research I was working on a project to create academic programming for rural areas just outside of the Portland Metropolitan area. I was not familiar with this particular rural area nor the processes at the college. I began this journey, curious, looking for answers that would ensure that I would conclude this task with a series of academic courses and or an educational path for this rural population that both met their needs and that was viable for the community college.

As the research unfolded, I was pleasantly surprised not only to discover answers to my research questions, but in the ISS way of thinking, I was able to derive additional meaning from the findings of the research that I was conducting. The more people I talked with the more I was struck by the true dedication that the people working in community colleges had when serving their constituents, including rural populations. The personnel I interviewed were creative as they found ways to design options to ensure that rural populations did not go unnerved.

After conducting this research I have a better knowledge of the components needed to create effective programming for rural areas. I believe that this knowledge translates to effective programming in general. These effective decisions can only be

made by reviewing one's mission statement, looking at data, asking stakeholders what they need, and being fiscally responsible. I am not sure that there is a set way or set of steps that can be applied universally. People are different, and situations are different. This is a good place to start though.

It has been several years since my first project to create academic programming for rural areas and I have held several jobs since then. I am not able to apply what I know today to that first project in Portland so many years ago, but I can apply this new knowledge to my current work. Funny how sometimes our lives come full circle, I am now working in a rural community college. Now, I *can* apply this knowledge.

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APPENDIX

The following interview questions were administered to the interviewees. The research question was not asked, but the supporting questions were asked in an open-ended format.

Research Questions	Interview Questions
#1: What motivates community colleges to create academic programming for rural communities?	1. What motivates your community college to create programming for rural communities in your district?
#2: What is the planning process that the community colleges are using when determining programming for rural communities? Supporting questions:	
a. Types, New, Future	2. How does your community college determine what types of programs will be offered in the rural areas in your district? 3. How does your community college implement new programs in the rural areas in your district? What are the steps or processes, if any, that are followed? 4. How does your community college determine future programming for the rural areas in your district?
b. Differences: Campus vs. rural	5. In what ways, if any, does your college address academic programming for your campus differently than they do the programming for rural areas in your district? If yes, please elaborate.
c. Meeting Needs	6. How does your community college determine whether programming is meeting the needs of the rural areas in your district? To what extent does your college use other indicators to determine success of the programming?
d. Funding	7. How does your community college address funding for rural programming?
#3: Who are the current stakeholders involved in the planning process?	8. Who in your community college is involved in the decision-making of creating programming for rural areas in your district?