

AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF

Christopher J. Hamilton for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education, presented January 15, 2015.

Title: Defining Drug Court Participant Community College Success

Abstract approved:

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Drug courts are collaborative community programs that provide active oversight and compliance monitoring of individuals engaged in the criminal justice continuum. Adult drug court program requirements include alcohol and other drug treatment, community support services, and other ancillary services intended to promote life changes in participants and ultimately, prosocial behaviors. One ancillary program service offered to drug court participants is the introduction or referral of individuals to community colleges when they do not possess a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED) and when participants otherwise experience difficulty securing employment.

Criminal recidivism is the default outcome measure used to determine drug court program performance. The academic research community strongly suggests the development of additional drug court outcome metrics. With an identified gap of community college success definition literature, this study provides a consensus definition of community college success for adult drug court participants.

Judges and program coordinators administer drug court operations and as such are experts working in the field. Through an interpretive qualitative methodological approach, all Oregon drug court judges and coordinators were solicited to participate as an expert Delphi panel. The Delphi expert panel of 10 offers statewide geographical representation including adult drug court coverage of urban, rural, and frontier territories.

The 10 panelists represent a combined 106.5 years of drug court experience. Several authors advocate that the minimum Delphi panel include 10 panelists (Keeney et al., 2011). Since the Delphi panel was a homogeneous group, only comprised of adult drug court judges and coordinators, the study achieved minimum panel size (Turoff, 2006).

The first Delphi round consisted of eight open ended questions that the expert panel responded electronically through Qualtrics © (Provo, UT). Responses were coded to reveal themes that were returned to the expert panel in the second Delphi round as potential metric definitions for selection. In Delphi Round Two the expert panel arrived at a consensus definition of community college success for drug court participants. In the third Delphi round the expert panel affirmed that the consensus definition was an acceptable definition for statewide use by Oregon's 27 adult drug courts.

Findings include a consensus community college success metric for adult drug court participants, a benevolent sobriety circle, and suggestions to implement and make the new metric operational. Study findings represent a statewide adult drug court experience in Oregon, but also have generalizability to drug court programs throughout the United States.

Keywords: community college, criminal justice, Delphi method, drug courts, education, performance metric, outcomes, recidivism, success

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Defining Drug Court Participant Community College Success

by

Christopher J. Hamilton

A DISSERTATION

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APPROVED

Major Professor, representing Education

Dean of the College of Education

Dean of the Graduate School

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

Christopher J. Hamilton, Author

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My wife, Stephanie Hamilton, for her never ending support and patience through my doctoral coursework and dissertation. This contribution would not have been possible if our daughters, Mercedes and Emma Hamilton, were not infinitely at task in their own academic endeavors and community engagement; somehow, they make it appear easy. Also thanks for the encouragement from my parents, James Hamilton and Julie Hart. Additionally, thanks to my uncle, Roland Daniel Stevenson III, for modeling behavior that I attempt to emulate. My pursuit of knowledge would not be possible without family.

During the dissertation process I lost two important mentors. First was Dr. Ridwan Laher Nytagodien. Ridwan's ability to embark wisdom was far in advance of his years. He is gone too soon, but not before sharing so much with his students; onward Ridwan. Second, was the loss of my grandmother, Betty Jane Stevenson. Her academic pursuit began in the 1940s at Oregon State Agricultural College but ended before degree attainment due to World War II efforts. Grandma's dedication to lifelong learning is showcased in her return to the Clackamas Community College classroom to retool herself with new knowledge, skills, and abilities before returning to the 1970s workforce.

My doctoral cohort for sharing their lived higher education leadership experience and the College of Education faculty. Finally, thanks to my entire doctoral committee for their guidance and sharing this journey with me.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my grandmother, Betty Jane Stevenson.

Chapter 1: Focus and Significance

This focus and significance chapter defines terms, outlines research questions, and discusses scholarly and practical significance. Drug courts are collaborative community programs that provide active oversight and compliance monitoring of individuals engaged in the criminal justice continuum. In 2008, an estimated 116,300 individuals participated in drug courts and in 2011, a combined \$306.8 million in Federal and State funding was invested in drug courts (Huddleston, Marlowe, & Casebolt, 2008). The \$306.8 million includes \$88.8 million in federal grant funding, but does not include local investments. Drug court program requirements include alcohol and other drug treatment, community support services, and other ancillary services. One ancillary service is the introduction or referral of participants to community colleges when participants do not possess a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED) and when participants otherwise have difficulty securing employment. Coupled with regular court hearings and probation officer check-ins, drug court programs provide participants with a framework that promotes prosocial community integration and lives free of drugs and criminal activity (National Association of Drug Court Professionals, 2004). The application and effect of these services, requirements, and treatments are crucial to individual participant and overall program success. Components of prosocial community integration include education and employment.

Drug and alcohol addiction is compounded by the influence of situative cognition which, in a holistic context, includes the history, culture, and social context of the individual and setting. In dealing with drug and alcohol addiction, drug courts must address both addiction and contributing factors to drug use including employment and education issues (Wolfer, 2006).

Terms

This review may have relevance to both criminal justice and higher education audiences. Several terms warrant further definition for higher education audiences unfamiliar with specific criminal justice terms and concepts.

Black box. Term coined by Goldkamp, White, and Robinson (2001) to encompass all unknowns of why drug courts are considered effective. Substance abusing offenders are “black box” inputs and successful or unsuccessful program completers are the outputs. Within the “black box,” individuals are bombarded with various program aspects including regular court status hearings, treatment, and other services. Because the effects of these “treatments,” in the experimental sense, and interactions, are unknown, it is difficult to determine which program aspects contribute to successful program completion, which contribute to program failure, and which have no effect (Goldkamp, White, & Robinson, 2001).

Criminal justice continuum. Criminal justice continuum is a term used by the researcher to describe the linear continuation of criminal justice system components and touch points with the offender ranging across the processing of criminal activity from arrest through subsequent supervision or incarceration. Included within the criminal justice continuum are law enforcement, district attorneys, courts, community corrections/probation, jails, prisons, and post-prison supervision/parole. When discussed in relation to a drug court program, the interactions and communication among the criminal justice entities are very frequent when compared to the traditional, “business as usual,” communications. These non-adversarial actions are intended to promote public benefits and potential offender rehabilitation.

Drug court. Drug courts are special criminal court dockets that provide judicial oversight, treatment, and other services to nonviolent drug-abusing defendants. Drug courts are offered as a voluntary option to eligible defendants as an alternative to traditional criminal case processing prosecution or incarceration. Individuals already on probation may be sentenced into drug court as a last chance before being sent to prison. It is estimated that approximately fifty percent of the individuals who are drug court eligible actually partake of the resource (Bhati, Roman, & Chalfin, 2008). Drug court programs are community collaborations with active participation by court officials, district attorneys, defense attorneys, treatment providers, probation officers, and representatives from other collaborating public and nonprofit entities. Aspects of the drug court docket include frequent defendant status hearings, mandatory completion of treatment, frequent urine and other drug screening tests, participant sanctions for noncompliance with program requirements, and incentives for compliant participant behavior (Marlowe, Festinger, Dugosh, Arabia, & Kirby, 2008).

Drug court coordinator. Drug court coordinators are responsible for day-to-day drug court operations. These individuals typically have a legal or treatment background and serve a gatekeeper function in terms of identifying individuals who will be considered for drug court admittance (Mackinem & Higgins, 2008). In addition to meeting directly with actual and potential program participants, the drug court coordinator identifies and establishes relationships with ancillary service providers (Mackinem & Higgins, 2008). Some of the ancillary services coordinated by the drug court coordinator are community colleges and workforce development.

Prosocial. Prosocial is positive behavior with concern for others and their wellbeing (Staub, 1990). The behavior includes preference to cooperate with groups and individuals (Iedema & Poppe, 1999).

Recidivism. Recidivism can be defined as criminal activity subsequent to an individual's entry into or separation from a drug court program. Criminal activity can range from arrest, to district attorney charge, to conviction. Criminal activity can be considered as misdemeanor or felony crimes as well as some infractions and violations, especially when related to drugs or alcohol. Recidivism is often only measured for a finite amount of time ranging from six months to three or more years (Heck, 2006). Since recidivism measures can vary, it is essential to understand the definition and metrics associated with any given study.

Self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is a commonly agreed upon term which encompasses a continuum of definitions associated with an individual's economic independence including ability to independently pay all bills associated with basic needs of food, shelter, and utilities. The term as used in this study was in the context of independence and a shift by drug court participants towards prosocial behavior.

Social services. Social services include health and treatment services available to the public at reduced or no-cost. Within the context of drug courts, these services can include mental health and substance use treatment, medical care, and other services typically available through local county and state agencies to underserved and criminal justice populations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to define drug court participant success in community college from the perspective of Oregon's expert practitioners. Literature on

existing drug court program outcomes is primarily focused on metrics associated with the two overall drug court program goals: a) reduce substance abuse, and b) reduce criminal behavior in drug-involved offenders (Spohn, Piper, Martin, & Frenzel, 2001).

Holistically focused on drug court participants, drug court programs are committed to help prepare individuals involved with criminal activity to live prosocial lives, free of drugs and criminal activity. Prosocial living denotes an individual's concern about the welfare of others (Staub, 1990) and the preference to cooperate (Iedema & Poppe, 1999).

In preparing participants for prosocial lives, drug court programs address participant employment and education status (Marlowe, Heck, Huddleston, & Casebolt, 2006; Wolfer, 2006). Annually, over \$300 million is invested in drug courts, however the academic community's understanding of "what makes drug courts work" is somewhat anecdotal and fixated on criminal recidivism. Academic research on drug court participant success in higher education is a gap in the current literature that warrants further exploration and this study hoped to bridge the current gap.

Research Questions

Given the research purpose, the following were the research questions for this study: 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success?

These research questions were intended to develop a consensus definition for drug court participant success in community college. To the researcher's knowledge, there are no states with consensus community college success metrics for drug court participants. A consensus definition is important for individual drug court participant success and for drug court program improvement. A definition and associated performance metric are

necessary to close a current literature gap. Drug court program improvements can be considered in light of the research findings and one of the unknown contributors to participant and program success, otherwise known as the “black box,” are highlighted. Drug court program and participant research findings expand the information available to local, state, and federal policy makers; potentially assisting in decision making that can perpetuate drug court program support through funding. Specifically, research findings may offer direction to future grant funds that promote and support drug court participant bifurcation into higher education.

Rationale and Study Significance

This study yields both scholarly and practical significance including filling the existing literature gap, and suggesting a new success metric to supplement current measures of criminal recidivism, quantifying outcomes in future research, program improvement, and researcher interest.

Scholarly Significance

Literature gap. This study attempted to address an academic literature gap. Specifically, there exists a need to quantify additional drug court participant outcomes, especially as there are no metrics of community college success. Most scholarly literature, including outcome evaluations, focuses on the recidivism of drug court participants. Recidivism, regardless of its definition (new police contact, arrest, charge, or conviction), is an important, but narrow, metric. Marlowe et al. (2006) discussed recidivism, due to the relative availability of law enforcement data, as the default outcome measure. Marlowe et al. (2006) suggested other important drug court outcomes that warrant further study including the client-level outcomes of family interactions, employment, medical, and psychiatric functioning. Belenko (1998) acknowledged that

there were gaps in the drug court knowledge, including education and employment, which required addressing. Program outputs should generally focus on more than one outcome. In critique of the academic community's response to closing the literature gap identified by Belenko (1998), a relatively small amount of literature has focused on "other than recidivism" drug court program outcomes over the past 12 years and generally includes process evaluations of program operation and the interconnectivity of education and employment. As Heck (2006) identifies, "Process evaluations are tools to be used by programs for improvement and should provide interested parties with a glimpse into the workings of a drug court program. These evaluations are focused on the how and why of drug court activity" (p.4). More research is necessary to understand how drug court participants are affected by drug court program services and requirements. Process evaluation has a specific purpose, but defining focused performance metrics has the potential to document drug court impact on participants. Heck (2006) notes "Performance measurement refers to the establishment of research-based indicators to measure program activity. There are several performance measures for drug courts that might be used to effectively document the effects of drug courts on clients" (p. 14). In order to better understand drug court programs, their effects on participants, the services and requirements of the programs, and subsequent program success, researchers of drug court programs require a more complete understanding of drug court outcomes.

New metric. A drug court outcome that has received little attention is the drug courts' role in introducing or referring individuals to higher education, specifically community colleges (Heck, 2006). Similarly, community college degree and certificate attainment and individual success, as defined by expert drug court practitioners, are

unexplored topics. Additionally, a working definition or metric for drug court participant success in community colleges has yet to be documented. Heck (2006) highlighted the need for further understanding drug court participant outcomes including the role of ancillary drug court services including vocational and educational programs, noting they may be as important as alcohol and drug treatment. Since these services are potentially as important as alcohol and other drug treatment, a further exploration and understanding of these services warrants research. The scholarly significance of this literature review is twofold, (a) to provide the academic community with evidence that there is sufficient exploration and understanding of existing drug court outcomes and (b) to identify a gap in the quantification of other qualitative outcomes related to drug court participants success in community college and their subsequent success within drug court programs. The study provides research evidence that informs drug court program practices and increase overall program transparency. Most of Oregon's adult drug court programs have a requirement of being employed or entering higher education as a condition of graduation. All Oregon adult drug court programs require GED completion for participants who have not completed high school.

Practical Significance

Quantify outcomes. The study's practical significance is attained by addressing the need by federal, state, and local level policy makers' quantification of drug court outcomes. This need includes greater specificity as to the factors within the "black box" (Goldkamp, White, and Robinson, 2001) making a significant difference in drug court effectiveness (Belenko, 1998). Within the "black box" are the interactions that occur among the program participants and the services, program requirements, and treatment. Shedding light on one aspect of the "black box" increases transparency and provides an

opportunity to understand what program services and requirements affect participants and lead to positive program outcomes, successful program completion, and subsequent prosocial lives. In other words, the interconnectivity of the community college is explored to understand one drug court “black box” component that affects drug court participant outputs. One of the “black box” components is education. Research demonstrates that drug court participants who make educational gains were more likely to be retained and graduate from drug court than clients who made no educational gains (Deschenes, Ireland, & Kleinpeter, 2009; Leukfeld, Webster, Staton-Tindall, & Duvall, 2007). By individually addressing “black box” components, the academic contributions may offer greater understanding as to why drug courts are successful, and ultimately what policies need to be in place to maximize their effectiveness. While this research study does not quantify drug court participation bifurcation into higher education and any subsequent outcomes, it offers a consensus outcome definition that provides a future focus for drug court programs, policy makers, and researchers.

Program improvement. Another issue of practical significance is the program improvement of existing and emerging programs to refine their practices and justify the program investments. Drug court programs have been examined through multiple process, outcome, and impact evaluations. Process evaluations have assessed program fidelity to the Drug Court 10 Key Components outlined by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals (2004). Two of the components that relate to the study include (see Appendix A for a complete list of the Drug Court 10 Key Components):

- Key Component #4: Drug courts provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services, and

- Key Component #10: Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness.

Key Component #10's relationship to community colleges is inferred as a community partner, but not directly stated. Education is a related treatment and rehabilitation service as identified in Key Component #4 as National Association of Drug Court Professionals' (2004) "basic educational deficits, unemployment and poor job preparation" (p. 6) are only two of the multiple rehabilitation issues that drug courts need to consider.

Depending on local resources, higher education, especially community colleges, is one of the community-based organizations that drug courts partner with as outlined in Key Component #10. Drug Court Key Component #4 and #10 directly relate to the availability of community college opportunities for drug court participants as a collaborative component of the care continuum. Outcome evaluations measure subsequent criminal activity through various measures and definitions of recidivism. Impact evaluations quantify cost savings and avoidance realized by criminal justice and social service continua.

NADCP (2013) recently provided drug court best practice standard guidance related to employment and education in the context of incentives, sanctions, and therapeutic adjustments. Specifically as it relates to incentivizing productivity,

The Drug Court places as much emphasis on incentivizing productive behaviors as it does on reducing crime, substance abuse, and other infractions. Criteria for phase advancement and graduation include objective evidence that participants are engaged in productive activities such as employment, education, or attendance in peer support groups (p. 28).

The NADCP (2013) goes on to state that better outcomes are achieved when adult drug courts incentivize what they have identified as "productive behaviors."

Carey, Finigan, Crumpton, and Waller (2006) outlined the development of a research design applicable to statewide and national cost-assessment of drug courts. The authors' research design included an in-depth case study and cost benefit of nine established California adult drug courts. Northwest Professional Consortium's Transactional Institutional Cost Analysis (TICA) demonstrated a \$3.50 return on every \$1.00 invested. The study showed promising treatment court practices, but was limited by the quality of data available and the use of a quasi-experimental comparison group, with no random assignment (Carey et al., 2006). One critique of the Carey et al. (2006) study is their definition of cost savings; while their data demonstrated a positive return on investment, some of that saving could be classified as cost avoidance.

Personal interest. I spent six years as the Oregon Judicial Department's (OJD) statewide treatment court manager. Further, I have conducted multiple process and outcome evaluations of Oregon drug court programs, provided technical assistance to emerging and operational programs, and represented the OJD at local, state, and national venues as the statewide drug court authority. In addition, I served as an extended team member to local drug court staffing teams and have direct experience observing, mapping, and advising drug court processes. Therefore, I have a personal interest in maximizing the potential of participant introduction to higher education and the associated potential for program improvements and transparency. Personal bias has the potential to influence any research study. For this study, I employed the Delphi method. Like other research methods, researcher bias is possible with the Delphi method and has the potential to reduce objectivity (Williams & Webb, 1994; Green, Jones, Hughes, & Williams, 1999). To address this, I employed National Research Agenda Question 13, "What additional or adjunctive services are most related to positive outcomes in drug

courts and most likely to serve public-safety aims? In particular, should employment or educational attainments be required prior to graduation from drug courts?” (Marlow et al., 2006 p. 16) as a starting point in my data collection. The National Research Agenda question was the basis of first round Delphi exploration. By grounding the questions in an existing study composed of an expert panel, this study mitigated for imposing my personal bias. As the researcher, my study involvement did not result in the leading of panelists’ responses, but rather through Delphi method application, I focused the expert panel responses feedback as identified by Uhl (1983). Additionally, Rowe and Wright (1999) suggest that the information flow between panelists through Delphi rounds has the potential to improve judgment and defuse bias.

Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 introduced drug courts, drug court participants, and the referral of participants to community colleges. The purpose of the study was to explore and arrive at a consensus definition of drug court participant success in community college from the perspective of an expert panel of drug court practitioners. The research questions for this study were: 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success? The research contributes to the scholarly and practical literature in helping to determine a definition of drug court participant success in community college. The definition, associated metric, and subsequent research fill the current literature gap and assists in the identification of best practices for practitioner consideration. Furthermore, the topic directly relates to the researcher’s previous experience and current interests.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As community collaborations, drug court programs provide active oversight and compliance monitoring of individuals engaged in the criminal justice continuum. Drug court program requirements include alcohol and other drug treatment, community support services, and other ancillary services. Community college referral is one drug court program ancillary service available to many drug court participants. This is true of drug court programs with general equivalency diploma (GED) or work requirements when participants do not possess a high school diploma or GED and when participants otherwise have difficulty securing employment. Rossman et al. (2011) identified “At 18 months, drug court participants were significantly less likely than comparison offenders to report a need for employment, education, and financial services, suggesting that drug court participation addressed those needs” (p. 4). Coupled with regular court hearings and probation officer check-ins, drug court programs provide participants with a framework that promotes prosocial community integration and lives free of drugs and criminal activity (U.S. Department of Justice, 2004). Participants often experience their first introduction to higher education or are reminded of its prosocial aspects of community integration through enrollment in community college as a drug court program requirement.

Pursuant to their mission, community colleges have a rich tradition of serving the community (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Cohen & Kisker, 2010). The community served by community colleges includes criminal justice populations preparing themselves with the tools and knowledge necessary for life changes. Education for criminal justice populations is crucial in preparing offenders with skills to transition to regular gainful employment. Employment is viewed by the treatment community as an entry point to

prosocial lives (Webster et al., 2007; Wolkstein, Bausch, & Weber, 2000). Like other criminal justice populations, drug court participants engage in higher education. The institutions of higher education most readily available to the drug court populations are community colleges. As one of the collaborative community entities, the community college will often work with or reach out to identify programs and opportunities for drug court participants (Reilly & Pierre-Lawson, 2008).

Coverage

The importance of the literature review is identified by Rudestam and Newton (2007) as providing context to the purpose, importance, and timeliness of a study. With both practical and scholarly significance, this literature review intends to identify (a) if there is sufficient documentation quantifying drug court outcomes, and (b) if there are gaps in the current literature related to outcomes that warrant subsequent exploration.

A literature review is necessary to fully vet the generativity of the existing knowledge base. Research conducted to date serves utility in following Creswell's (2002) recommended five-step process for meeting the literature review criteria: identification of terms, locating literature, reading and relevance checking, organization, and writing.

Approach

Terms and Locating Literature

Several terms were identified while querying Academic Search Premiere and Dissertation Abstracts academic databases. The first term used in all queries was "drug court." Other terms used were related to education including higher education, university, community college, training, and vocation. These terms were searched for within titles and abstracts of peer reviewed articles and doctoral dissertations. Several

anomalies were discovered while locating literature including some search terms with different connotations than the researcher had anticipated. An example included the use of the word “student” with “drug court” in the title of a peer reviewed journal article on drug courts and higher education. Such searches yielded articles focused on juvenile students, not students in the adult higher education sense.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

As the first drug court program only started in 1989, drug court programs are a relatively new phenomenon. All drug court literature dating as early as 1992 was considered for inclusion in this literature review. This literature review focused on an exploration of research related to drug court outcomes. Articles quantifying subsequent criminal recidivism were abundant, on the other hand, articles quantifying and qualifying other drug court program outcomes were less numerous. Recidivism related research may be more abundant due to the perceived availability of data, the proximal tie to the drug court goal to reduce criminal behavior, or because of a lack of a research agenda for other outcome measures. While this literature review includes some recidivism outcome studies, recidivism outcomes were not the main consideration. Excluded from this literature review are the bulk of individual drug court program studies focused on criminal recidivism as they do not report on or assist in the identification of other program and individual outcomes. Also excluded from this review is literature focused on juvenile drug courts, family drug courts, and other specialty court programs. This review of literature includes quantitative and qualitative articles that depict adult drug court outcomes.

Review of Literature

Literature Themes

Four main themes emerged from a review of drug court related literature: (a) drug court history, (b) criminal recidivism as the default outcome measure, (c) other outcomes and the call for other outcome measures, and (d) the interconnectivity of employment, vocation, and education. In comparison to the entire body of scholarly literature available on drug courts, relatively little literature existed that was specifically related to either the role of drug courts in admitting participants into higher education or the role of higher education in relation to drug court outcome performance. Literature related to the history of drug courts assists in placing the programs in a historical context and provides insight to the age, operation, and growth of the drug court movement. The section on criminal recidivism introduced the reader to the many definitions of the term, the reasons the term evolved as the default drug court outcome measure, and introduced the reader to some of the shortcomings of recidivism as the default outcome measure. The section on the call for other outcome measures provided the reader with the context to the academic community's call for additional "other than recidivism" outcome measures. The final literature section explores current scholarly research on employment and education of drug court participants highlighting the interconnectivity of the employment, vocation, and education.

Drug Court History

A history of drug courts is important for understanding the historical context of the programs and their growth. The first drug court emerged in Miami-Dade, Florida in 1989 as a new and innovative approach to address the ever growing number of drug related criminal cases processed through the court (Fox & Huddleston, 2003; Mackinem

& Higgins, 2008; Nolan, 2002; Terry, 1999). By 1991, there were five drug courts in the United States; this included Portland, Oregon. Substantial growth occurred between 2000 and 2007 when the number of adult programs grew from 665 to 2,147 such programs. Table 1 depicts national drug court program growth between 1989 and 2007.

Table 1

Nationwide Growth in Total Drug Court Programs (1989-2007)

Year	Programs
1989	1
1992	10
1995	75
1998	347
2001	847
2004	1,621
2007	2,147

Note: Adapted from “Painting the Current Picture: A National Report Card on Drug Courts and Other Problem-Solving Court Programs in the United States,” by C.W. Huddleston, D.B. Marlowe, and R. Casebolt, 2008, p. 3. Copyright 2008 by the National Drug Court Institute.

Oregon experienced similar growth in drug court programs. Between 1991 and 2007, Oregon’s drug court programs grew from one to 47 (Marlowe, Heck, Huddleston, & Casebolt, 2006). In 2008, an estimated 116,300 individuals participated in adult drug courts across the United States (Huddleston et al., 2008).

Criminal justice researchers realized the outcome performance of adult drug courts as superior to traditional criminal case processing and to the performance of other specialized programs focused on drug abusing offenders (Marlowe, Dematteo, & Festinger, 2003). Belenko (1998) identified substantial reduction in criminal behavior of

actively supervised drug court participants. Academic studies were validated in 2005 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), when the Office concluded that adult drug courts substantially reduced crime and provided positive cost benefits in comparison to the traditional case processing of individuals in comparison groups (GAO, 2005). The GAO report of 2005 was a monumental finding to both the academic community and professionals as it justified the work that was being accomplished in the field.

The success of adult drug court programs sparked initiatives to find innovative solutions for juveniles involved in delinquent and criminal activity and for parents whose children were removed from their homes and placed in state custody. The first juvenile drug court in Visalia, California and the first family drug court in Reno, Nevada both emerged in 1995 (Marlowe, et al., 2008). The intent of juvenile drug courts is similar to adult drug courts in that they are providing an alternative to incarceration and enhancing the frequency of court, probation, and other contacts with collaborating entities. The focus of family drug courts is the reunification of children with parents who are able to demonstrate sobriety and prosocial behavior (Marlowe et al., 2008).

The National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) was formed in 1994 to promote the profession of individuals from courts, probation, district attorney offices, defense counsel, and alcohol and other drug treatment providers who worked in collaborative drug court programs. Other milestones in the historical establishment of drug courts was the establishment of the U.S. Department of Justice's Drug Court Program Office in 1995 and the founding of the National Drug Court Institute in 1998 (Marlowe et al., 2008).

In summary, drug courts have been in operation for approximately 20 years. Drug court programs include the participative collaboration of criminal justice and social

service continua. Although there are multiple types of drug courts, including juvenile drug courts and family drug courts, the focus of this literature review is adult drug courts. Subsequent drug court references in this review are related to adult drug courts. A critique of the literature documenting the drug court movement is the lack of literature that explores and explains community college and drug court collaborations.

Recidivism

The current literature regularly identifies criminal recidivism as the default outcome measure of drug courts (Belenko, 2002). This reality has several justifications including the availability of composite criminal history information from state and federal data depositories. The practice is perpetuated as it is easier to determine criminal history than to validate abstinence from alcohol and other drugs. Recidivism measures have served as proxies to abstinence and living prosocial lives with limited or no social service involvement. Education and employment are identified in the literature, but their role has not been investigated. While recidivism serves as a proxy to abstinence, there is no question that there is a correlation between criminal activity and alcohol and other drug use. Mateyoke-Scriver, Webster, Staton, and Leukefeld (2004) discussed the increase in jail inmates incarcerated for drug offenses. The number of drug offenders nearly doubled between 1987 and 1998 (Webster et al., 2004). Community based programs work to keep criminal justice populations out of jail and prepare them with the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain jobs and live free of drugs and crime.

Recidivism measures cannot “stand-alone,” they must be considered in a broader context of the drug court participant and their life changing experiences. Recidivism measures are usually used to compare against the subsequent criminal activity of another group. Rempel, (2006) discussed how drug court participant performance is only

meaningful when the performance is compared against another group. Comparison groups are identified by matching as closely as possible to the demographic, substance use, and criminal history information of other criminal justice populations who did not enter drug court programs (Rempel, 2006). Unfortunately for researchers, there is an amount of self-selection that occurs in some drug court programs where drug court entry is not mandated. When drug court participants are offered the option to opt out of drug courts, it is difficult to identify the motivating factor intrinsic to this group.

Recidivism outcomes were explored by Spohn et al. (2001) in their evaluation of the Douglas County, Nebraska Drug Court. The purpose of the study was to determine if the program was effective in reducing recidivism. In the study, two quasi experimental comparison groups were selected and matched as closely as possible by demographic and composite criminal history information. Spohn et al. (2001) followed Belenko's (1998) suggestion to closely match the comparison group to the actual drug court participants when they identified factors that affect treatment outcomes. In their study, Spohn et al. (2001) conclude that drug court participant recidivism rates are lower than traditional court processes.

When identifying drug court program performance, the individual success or failures of participants and subsequently the program must be put into context. Researchers, the academic community, and policy makers all call for framing participant performance in comparison to another group (Belenko, 1998; Belenko, 2002; Heck, 2006; Rempel, 2006). Human subject protection, legal ethics, and treatment ethics prevent the use of true randomly selected control groups. Spohn et al. (2001) overcame this situation by closely matching the comparison groups in their study to the drug court

participants' most serious criminal history and demographic information including gender, race/ethnicity, and age.

An issue frequently addressed in the literature is what measure of criminal recidivism to employ in the research. From arrest to conviction there are three distinct measures; arrests, charges, and convictions that can be used for recidivism. Through the criminal justice continuum, arrests, charges, and convictions are each valid measures, but each measure also has intrinsic draw backs. Arrests are at the discretion of the "street level" bureaucrat, the officer or deputy making an arrest. In most locations, charges are up to the discretion of the jurisdiction's district attorney who will determine if a case warrants prosecution. On the far side continuum is the criminal conviction which requires full due process and relies on external factors like witnesses and evidence. These measures are only as good as the data systems in place to report them as well as the criminal justice process including the work of local law enforcement, district attorneys, and the courts. Another continuing issue as it is related to the definition of recidivism is what arrests, charges, or convictions are included in the measure. Criminal activity varies from violations and infractions including traffic situations and barking dogs to misdemeanors and felonies. To overcome some of these issues, Spohn et al. (2001) utilized a combination of arrests and conviction including the frequency of events and their time frame of the event following program discharge.

In their work, Spohn et al. (2001) determined that Nebraska's Douglas County Drug Court was effective in reducing criminal recidivism. In comparison to offenders processed through traditional means, drug court participants had substantially fewer arrests or convictions. The work of Spohn et al. was focused on one Nebraska program and was not without other caveats. Spohn et al.'s research included three groups, the

drug court population, traditionally processed offenders, and individuals participating in the Douglas County Attorney's Diversion Program. Individuals in the Diversion Program were at significantly lower risk to re-offend and had shorter criminal histories. The researchers addressed the between group differences by controlling for background characteristics and prior criminal records through a multivariate analysis and including individuals' Level of Service Inventory (LSI) scores. An additional shortcoming of the work of Spohn et al. was the short, twelve month follow-up period used to calculate recidivism.

Perry et al.'s (2009) meta-analysis of 13 randomized controlled studies examined the impact of drug court interventions on criminal activity. The study found that therapeutic community (TC) interventions reduced criminal recidivism and relapse when compared against a comparison group. Controlled study outcomes with focus on criminal recidivism as a default outcome measure vary. A critical limitation of the meta analysis was that the studies included only those focused on male offender populations. Further research is necessary to determine the generalizability of other criminal justice populations.

Koetzle Shaffer, Hartman, and Listuran, (2009) examined the experiences of female drug court participants and their subsequent recidivism; thereby filling a gap in the current literature for the criminal recidivism of female drug court participants. The non-equivalent control group design of drug court participants and a female probation comparison group employed Gilligan's (1982) theory of moral development for women. Statistically significant findings included a 26% drug court participant recidivism rate versus 63% of the comparison population. Koetzle Shaffer et al. (2009) suggest that

education and vocation were areas where criminal offenders did not receive appropriate service levels.

In summary, there are a plethora of drug court outcomes studies focused on criminal recidivism. Each of these studies suggested that drug court participation decreased the possibility of subsequent criminal activity which is a proxy to participants living lives that are prosocial and free of drugs use and crime. A critique of recidivism research is that its methods are rooted in data that is relatively easy for researchers to identify and access, but such methods do not provide a holistic understanding of program outcomes. Data associated with drug court participant success in community colleges is potentially not as accessible as criminal history information, but by defining drug court participant success and exploring the rates and participant experiences, a better understanding of drug courts and their impact on the community is determined.

Call for Other Outcomes

Every drug court program has two overall goals, (a) reduce substance abuse, and (b) reduce criminal behavior in drug-involved offenders. Most literature focuses on a default proxy of criminal recidivism to determine program outcomes and success measured through reduced costs to the state. Some literature has focused on other outcomes and the impact of ancillary services to the subsequent drug court completion and criminal recidivism outcomes. In discussion of existing outcomes, drug court completion and criminal recidivism, Butzin, Saum, and Scarpitti (2002) identified that relatively little research had explored which drug court processes lead to successful drug court program completion. The authors argued that, with knowledge of the processes that are identified with positive outcomes, programs could be adjusted to target populations that would most benefit drug court programs.

Butzin et al. (2002) explored factors associated with successful program completion including values, employment, race, education, and frequency of drug use of participants entering the Delaware Superior Court Drug Court. The study used chi-square comparison tests to examine participant demographic information at the time of drug court entry and compared it against participant completion or non-completion. It determined that participants with at least a high school education, higher than minimum wage jobs, and less frequent drug users were those most likely to complete the program requirements and ultimately graduate from drug treatment courts. This finding was insightful, but did little to explore the relationship between or juxtapose the impact of factors like education on the program and the future success of participants.

Researching a sample of 500 drug court offenders entering one of two Kentucky drug courts between March 2000 and November 2002, Webster, Staton-Tindall, Duvall, Garrity, and Leukefeld (2007) explored aspects of participant employment. Employment, education, and vocational training are outcomes that warrant further exploration. Webster et al. (2007) investigated the importance of long-term involvement and daily structure to realize relapse prevention with a focus including a model of measuring employment based on aspects including status (employed or not employed), earnings, stability (number of different jobs), and duration (amount of time at a job). They determined that employment was viewed by treatment providers and others within the criminal justice continuum as a path to prosocial living. They also determined that employment opportunities for criminal justice populations were less available than to non-criminal justice populations.

Through their demographics, substance use history and status, earnings, stability, and duration employment aspects analysis, Webster et al. (2007) determined that

employment should be viewed from a multidimensional position. Job status, earnings, stability, and duration were the four dimensions used in the study and each was determined to be statistically significant in reducing an individual's substance use. Generalizability of the study is questionable as the study participants were selected only from two Kentucky drug courts. A caution offered by the researcher, and shared by this author, was that, although employment can be viewed through four multidimensional quadrants, finite focus on status, earnings, stability, and duration can lead to limitations in intervention planning, implementation, and assessment.

An intrinsic attribute associated with recovery of substance users is the individual's motivations to change. Kinlock, Sear, O'Grady, Callman, and Brown (2009) investigated treatment retention among drug court participants entering the Baltimore City Drug Treatment Court between May 2002 and March 2004. Specifically, the authors explored motivational interviewing, a semi-directive counseling modality centered around client behavior change which includes the role of motivational interviewing treatment techniques, in improving motivation and treatment retention. Regression analysis showed that variables of days in program and retention in the program predicted that participants who received motivational interviewing did not differ from participants who received drug education, or participants who received neither. The authors determined more accurate assessments of treatment assessments need to be made based on findings from participants following a period of drug court participation, at a time when participants may be more honest about their substance use history. Kinlock et al. (2009) also concluded that positive treatment outcomes for drug court participants were possible through the intrinsic motivation of achieving goals set during motivational interviewing with treatment. Motivation and accurate assessment are factors that need to

be taken into consideration when defining drug court participant community college success.

Marlowe et al. (2006) reported on a national research agenda of 150 drug court professionals including judges, coordinators, and other key drug treatment court personnel. The experts identified an exploration of employment and educational attainment requirements during drug court participation as an important research area warranting further exploration in determining positive outcomes most likely to fulfill public safety.

In his recommendations for local drug court research, Heck (2006) called for the recording of all services received by drug court participants including job training and education. Heck (2006) recommended the recording of units of service to determine which are positively affecting participant outcomes and to display and fully understand the availability of services within the collaborative nature of drug courts. In addition to units of service subsequent to program entry, Heck (2006) also called for the recording of baseline data related to participant years of formal education, GED/high school diploma attainment, and college attendance. Baseline and subsequent data would allow researchers to depict participant progress and potentially to the role of services in participants' drug court program completion. A critique of Heck (2006) and other researchers calling for additional outcome measures in any explicit reference to community colleges which are the primary gateway to participant entry into higher education.

Rempel (2010) advised drug court personnel to administer special topic surveys in addition to catch-all surveys of participants as they separated from drug court programs. The surveys were designed to solicit treatment program feedback related to employment

and education using a five point Likert scale. The purpose of the research was to understand in greater detail, employment and education services and their usefulness in program completion.

In summary, the academic research community has called for additional research related to outcome measures other than criminal recidivism measures that have saturated the drug court outcome literature. The academic community has identified education and employment outcomes related to drug court participants as areas warranting further investigation especially to identify which lead to successful program completion and ultimately drug court participant self-sufficiency (Heck, 2006; Kinlock et al., 2009; Marlow et al., 2006; Rempel, 2010).

Education and Employment Interconnectivity

Educational attainment and subsequent employment can be strongly correlated. These two factors also are related to drug court participants' successful drug court completion (Deschenes et al., 2009; Leukfeld et al., 2007). Deschenes et al. (2009) examined the extent to which enhanced drug court program services including educational and vocational services, improve participant outcomes of 477 male and 273 female Orange County, California drug court participants. Logistic regression, multinomial regression, and mixed models were conducted to examine whether program enhancements predicted outcomes. Participants who made educational gains were more likely to be retained and graduate from drug court than clients who made no educational gains.

The longer a participant stays engaged in a drug court program, the more opportunity for the participant to learn the skills necessary to lead a prosocial life free of alcohol and other drugs. Leukfeld, McDonald, Staton, and Mateyoke-Scrivner (2004)

examined the role of employment (obtaining, maintaining, and upgrading) in retaining substance abusing drug court participants. The trial design included recruitment, intervention, and follow-up of 500 drug court participants with pre-test/post-test experimental design with random assignment and follow-ups that examined employment intervention. The study revealed that participants who were employed full-time earned more than other participants, worked fewer days at illegal jobs, and experienced fewer employment problems in the six months before drug court entry.

Leukfeld et al. (2004) explored the role of employment interventions with 500 drug court participants in obtaining, maintaining, and upgrading employment. Findings concluded that employment is an important part of drug user treatment and successful drug court program completion. Participants who upgraded employment reported less substance use and criminal outcomes at follow-up in comparison to low upgrade (not obtaining, maintaining, or improving employment) and control groups. In addition to drug court participant education and employment advancement during program engagement, participant education level and a few other factors can help predict successful drug court program completion. (Butzin, et al., 2002; Rempel et al., 2003).

Rossman et al. (2011) identified a statistically significant reduction in the need for employment, education, or financial services than the study comparison group at 18 months. At six-months, the study's 1,009 drug courts' participants were twice as likely to be in school as the 524 comparison group individuals. Rossman et al. quantify that drug court participants were introduced to higher education, but were silent in expanding on a definition of success.

In summary, preparation of individuals for work in a trade through vocational workforce development, education, employment, and healthy degrees of prosocial

behavior are interconnected; and subsequently affect their mutual efficacy. Due to this relationship, drug court participant success in community college may relate to the individual's ability to procure and maintain employment and lead prosocial lives free of crime and illicit substances.

Chapter Summary

Four main themes emerged from a review of drug court related literature: (a) a historical perspective of drug courts, (b) criminal recidivism as the default outcome measure, which may not truly reflect efficacy, (c) other suggested outcomes and the subsequent call for other outcome measures, and (d) the interconnectivity of employment, vocation, and education.

Drug courts have a rich history, but outcome metrics are focused on subsequent criminal activity by participants. Literature related to the history of drug courts placed the programs in a historical context and provide insights to the age, operation, growth, and number of individuals affected (scope) by the drug court movement.

As an outcome measure of drug court program success, recidivism has some value and merits, but it is superficial when considered in context of the holistic drug court participant and his/her experiences. Researchers have called for a further exploration of drug court program outcomes and their community impact. There is implicit interconnectivity between employment, vocation, and education. Employment attainment and retention can be considered a product of an individual's education. Determination of a metric of drug court participant community college success is to understand individual participant growth and improvement, overall drug court program success, and contributions to the communities in which drug court programs reside.

Little literature was identified that was specifically related to either the role of drug courts in introducing participants into higher education or the role of higher education in relation to drug court outcome performance; however the literature is clear that drug court participants who make educational gains were more likely to be retained and graduate from drug court than clients who made no educational gains (Deschenes, Ireland, & Kleinpeter, 2009; Leukfeld et al., 2007). This lack of specific literature demonstrates the need for additional study in the area of drug court participant success in community college.

Conclusion

This chapter was the initial step in identifying a current gap in drug court literature. This chapter introduced drug courts, drug court participants, and the connectivity between drug court participation and community colleges. The process justified the purpose of the study, identified the research questions driving the research, and stated practical and scholarly significance in reviewing the literature associated with drug court outcomes. The identified gap in literature warrants further study and was explored by the author. To address this gap, this study defined drug court participant success in community college from the perspective of Oregon's expert practitioners through the following research questions: 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success?

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter describes this study's methodology, rationale, and the associated interpretive research method approach. Included in the methodology and rationale section is a case for the researcher's epistemology in application of the research topic and a description of the Delphi process. The remainder of this chapter addressed: data collection, study participants, including human subject protection considerations, and data analysis techniques.

Research Purpose

The purpose of this research study was to determine a definition of success for drug court participants who entered community college as a component of their drug court program experience or requirement. The Delphi method was utilized for definition consensus exploration by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators.

Methodology and Rationale

Arriving at a consensus definition for drug court participant success in community college is important for drug court participants and for drug court program improvement (Heck, 2006). A definition and associated performance metric are necessary to close a current literature gap; as identified in the Chapter 2 literature review. Ownership through Delphi panel participation in the definition development will promote the use and adoption of the measure by the treatment court community. The study employed a qualitative methodology, an interpretive epistemology, and used the Delphi method and survey techniques to collect and interpret data.

A qualitative approach was identified by the researcher as the most appropriate way to interpretively explore a social process like drug court participant success in community college; a topic, as identified in the literature review, that has not received

adequate, if any, academic attention. Qualitative research “offers analysis and understanding of the patterned conduct and social processes of society” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c, p. 11). Qualitative methods are fluid and flexible, allowing multiple perspectives and application of multiple data collection and analysis tools to determine a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon.

The phenomenon of this study spans both criminal justice programs and higher education. The experiences and perceptions of judges and program coordinators (practitioners) are necessary to attain a deeper and broader understanding of the topic. This approach should provide insight to drug court participant activity in higher education, provide guidance to drug court program requirements for practitioners, and add to the growing movement of community college student success definitions. Through investigation, qualitative research answers questions, follows predetermined processes, identifies perspectives, and generates new outcomes and perspectives that can be generalized (Creswell, 2008).

Rooted in sociology and anthropology, qualitative methods “born out of concern to understand the ‘other,’ are nevertheless also committed to an understanding of the self” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998b, p. 42). It is not practical to believe that the researcher can disassociate herself or himself from a study at hand, but must be conscious of biases and retain objectivity in their study methods. In an attempt to make meaning and understanding of others, individuals themselves may grow and adapt their own nature of being, ontology. As a researcher, it is also imperative to be conscious of the social context in which data was collected (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007; Mason, 1996) and realize that they are bound to epistemological and ontological premises (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998c).

Lincoln and Denzin (1998a, 1998b, 1998c) identify interpretive sense making as artful, political, and constructed. Through the construction of the research design, researchers are situated “in the empirical world which connects them to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, p.28).

The flexibility and adaptability of qualitative research methods necessitates methodological rigor. Without the benefits of quantitative scientific inquiry, qualitative research necessitates clear methodological procedures and an audit trail, to allow either for the study to be retraced or repeated or to provide reasonable assurance to the reliability of the findings.

The epistemology for this research study is interpretive. As defined by Jacobson, Gewurtz, and Hayden (2007), “The interpretive process is collaborative: researchers immerse themselves in participants’ worlds and seek to understand and ‘give voice’ to their perspectives” (p. 2). In traditional interpretive research, flexible and iterative investigation is employed to mutually develop descriptions or theory by the researcher and study participants. Unlike other interpretive inquiry methods, the Delphi method distances the researcher from participants by providing a forum where individual panelists can safely voice their expert opinion; decreasing the possibility that the researcher will influence the expert opinion of the panel. Neuman (2003) notes,

In general, the interpretive approach is the systemic 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 world (p. 76).

Hermeneutics is a way to define truth that is the lens to the researcher’s world view. Conroy (2003) identifies that it is “through the hermeneutical spiral of interpretation, both researcher and participant build their background interpretation as

each reflects and interprets what is happening within and across narrative and interview session (concurrent interpretation)” (p. 14). In the case of this research project, the spiral of interpretation and interactions are replaced by the Delphi. Ultimately through the interpretive process, “the hermeneutical ripple effect of the spirals is dynamic, impinges on others’ interpretations, and, over time, changes the understandings of all” (Conroy, 2003, p. 14). Through the consensus definition of an expert panel and subsequent adoption and understanding of participant success in community college, drug court programs, as systems, may change through program improvement. Programs may begin to focus on outcomes that may be more meaningful than the current proxy measures dominated by subsequent criminal history through recidivism studies. A shift in focus from recidivism to meaningful life changing outcomes has the potential to positively affect participant lives and the overall success of drug courts.

Researcher Disclosure

The researcher’s interpretive approach is derived from previous life, education, and research experiences, and has been further refined through recent experiences in Oregon State University’s Community College Leadership Program. The researcher worked in a professional drug court capacity for six years supporting nearly 30 adult drug court programs. The researcher has completed several drug court process and outcome evaluations and has represented drug court programs to local, state, and federal officials, organizations, and agencies. Evaluation work completed by the researcher to date has not focused on rigorous exploration of drug court participant success in community college. Although the researcher has previously held a vested interest in the success of drug court programs and participants, the researcher is more interested in determining the effect of one of the factors that makes drug courts a success, thereby contributing to the “black

box” of drug court research, as defined in the literature review. Understanding success for drug court participants in higher education will assist in program development and refinement and affect participant outcomes.

A Delphi approach supports the researcher’s interpretive epistemology. The Delphi method is not applicable for solving problems requiring “precise analytic techniques” but rather for problems that require the “collective intelligence” of individual subjective judgments (Alder & Ziglio, 1996; Linstone & Turloff, 1975; Skulmoski et al., 2007). The Delphi method supports and provides the opportunity to develop, identify, forecast, and validate research for a topic as diverse as drug court participant success in community college (Skulmoski et al., 2007). Specifically, the Delphi Model is an appropriate method to set priorities and gain consensus through opinion, judgment, and choice (Keeney et al., 2011). As a researcher, experiences, values, beliefs, and views are always apparent. The researcher disclosed that he is conscious of and controlled for personal bias associated with working with drug court programs over the past 10 years.

Delphi Method

Delphi is derived from the ancient Greek Oracle of Delphi, who was the priestess at the Temple of Apollo and was credited for her prophecies (Morgan, 1990). As an expert, people would come to the priestess to answer questions. The method was developed by the Rand Corporation’s Norman Dalkey and was a 1950’s Cold War product (Colton & Hatcher, 2004; Fischer, 1978; Gordon, 1994; Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Kennedy, 2004). The Delphi method provides, “systematic solicitation and collation of judgments on a particular topic through a set of carefully designed sequential questionnaires interspersed with summarized information and feedback of opinions derived from earlier responses” (Delbecq, Vand de Ven, & Gustafson, 1975, p. 10). The

method was used “to solicit expert opinion to the selection, from the point of view of a Soviet strategic planner, of an optimal U.S. industrial target system and to the estimation of the number of A-bombs required to reduce the munitions output by a prescribed amount,” (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963, p. 458). The solicitation and collation of topic responses from experts yields findings that are validated and may represent an official perspective or opinion on a given subject. Delphi is “appropriately” used to determine an informed judgment (Alder & Ziglio, 1996). Skulmoski et al. (2007) defined the Delphi method as, “an iterative process to collect and distill the anonymous judgments of experts using a series of data collection and analysis techniques interspersed with feedback” (p. 1).

Linstone and Turoff (1975) and Franklin and Hart (2006) identified three Delphi method variations including classical, decision making, and policy. Each has a unique application: classic for establishing facts about a specific situation or topic, decision making for collaborative decision making, and idea generation for policy development (Franklin & Hart, 2006). For the purpose of this study, the decision making Delphi method most closely reflects the intent and objectives of arriving at a consensus definition for policy development.

Colton and Hatcher (2004) identified the potential for the expansion of qualitative aspects of the Delphi method using the World Wide Web. Specifically, the “web-based Delphi process proved to be a method rich in qualitative data and was a natural way of bringing together experts to discuss, debate, and organize a body of information in order to develop and validate an instrument, reach agreement on an issue, uncover common factors, or forecast trends (Colton & Hatcher, 2004, p. 185).

Advantages and Disadvantages

Like other qualitative and quantitative methods, the Delphi method has both advantages and disadvantages. The advantages and disadvantages of the method are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2

Delphi Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
adequate reflection time	lack of universal guidelines
participants are problem centered and focused	size of expert panel
face-to-face debates avoided	implications of lack of anonymity
mitigates dominant personality influence	expert 'opinion'
group think avoidance	level of consensus

Note: Advantages adapted from "Idea Generation and Exploration: Benefits and Limitations of the Policy Delphi Research Method," by K. K. Franklin and J. K. Hart, 2006, *Innovative Higher Education*, 13, p. 238. Copyright 2006 by Springer Science and Business Media, LLC 2006. Disadvantages adapted from *The Delphi Technique in Nursing and Health Research*, by S. Keeney, F. Hason, and H. McKenna, 2011, p. 20. Copyright 2011 by Wiley-Blackwell.

Structured communication by the researcher allowed the Delphi panel participants to remain problem-centered and focused (Delby et al., 1975; Lang, 1994). The benefits of the Delphi methods are further supported by Franklin and Hart (2007) who noted,

Regardless of the resources needed to complete a policy Delphi study, the benefits of the method simply outweigh the costs if the researcher is interested in studying an institutional or environmental phenomenon that has no historical context, if the changes in the environment are so rapid that the literature is dated or if the phenomenon is complex enough to require expert input providing structure for and understanding of the phenomenon (p. 245).

As identified by the literature gap in the chapter II literature review, the study has no historical context. The use of the Delphi method helped define a structure of the role of community colleges for drug court participants.

As a subjective method, Delphi is prone to potential negative bias (Franklin & Hart, 2007). Potential Delphi method bias identified by Hallowell and Gambatese (2010) includes: collective unconscious, contrast effect, neglect of probability, Von Restoff effect, myside bias, recency effect, primary effect, and dominance. Each of these biases are defined in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Delphi Method Bias

Bias	Definition
Collective unconscious	Decision makers join a popular trend
Contrast effect	Enhanced or diminished perception in comparison to the last subject
Neglect of probability	Disregard of likelihood when making uncertain decisions
Von Restoff effect	Distortion of probability perception through extreme event or severe outcome recognition
Myside bias	Generation of one sided arguments
Recency effect	Artificial inflated risk rating due to similar recent events
Primary effect	Inherent concern for initial stimuli
Dominance	Vocal or intimidating group member

Note: Adapted from “Qualitative Research: Application of Delphi Method to CEM Research,” by M. R. Hallowell and J. A. Gambatese, 2010, *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management*, 136(1) pp. 104-105. Copyright 2010 by American Society of Civil Engineers.

Delphi Disadvantage Mitigation

Techniques identified to mitigate Delphi process bias include randomized question order, inclusion of reasons in feedback, iteration and anonymity, separation of probability and severity ratings, reporting of medians, and removal of members who experienced recent events (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010). An additional disadvantage of the Delphi method is the question as to whether expert panels can arrive at consensus. Scott and

Black (1991) “concluded that given the overall aim of expert panels is to identify broad areas of agreement, that it would seem reasonable to disregard extreme opinions”

(Keeney, et al., 2011, p. 14).

Lack of universal guidelines, expert panel size, lack of anonymity, expert opinion, and level of consensus are identified Delphi method shortcomings (Keeney, Hasson, & McKenna, 2011). Additionally, potential Delphi method bias including collective unconscious, contrast effect, neglect of probability, Von Restoff effect, myside bias, recency effect, primary effect, and dominance was taken into consideration (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010). Dominance is possible when one panelist leads the direction of the panel, but this was mitigated in this study by providing panelists with anonymity and equal weighting applied to responses (Hallowell & Gambatese, 2010).

Delphi Characteristics

The four key classical Delphi Features were characterized by Rowe and Wright (1999) as:

1. Anonymity of Delphi participants: allows the participants to freely express their opinions without undue social pressures to conform from others in the group. Decisions are evaluated by the researcher on their merit, rather than who has proposed the idea.
2. Iteration: allows the participants to refine their views in light of the progress of the group’s work from round to round following the researcher’s qualitative data interpretation and synthesis.
3. Controlled feedback: informs the participants of the other participant’s perspectives, and provides the opportunity for Delphi participants to clarify or change their views.

4. Statistical aggregation of group responses: allows for a quantitative analysis and interpretation of data.

Delphi Process

The typical Delphi process used by graduate students was outlined by Skulmoski et al. (2007). The outline included 11 distinct steps that should be followed in research projects. The 11 steps are listed below for a three round Delphi process with key attributes associated with each step:

- 1) Develop the Research Question- a key component of this step is the literature review that is used to determine theoretical gaps.
- 2) Design the Research- determination of the methods to employ in the study is the key attribute of this step.
- 3) Research Participants- identify who will compose the expert panel.
- 4) Develop Delphi Round One Questionnaire- development of initial broad open ended questionnaire questions.
- 5) Delphi Pilot Study- test and adjust initial questionnaire questions for comprehension and understanding.
- 6) Release and Analyze Round One Questionnaire- distribute questionnaires and analyze by appropriate research paradigm.
- 7) Develop Round Two Questionnaire- develop questions based on responses in Round One.
- 8) Release and Analyze Round Two Questionnaire- distribute questionnaires and analyze by appropriate research paradigm.
- 9) Develop Round Three Questionnaire- develop questions based on responses in Round Two.

10) Release and Analyze Round Three Questionnaire- distribute questionnaires and analyze by appropriate research paradigm.

11) Verify, Generalize, and Document Research Results- substantiate Delphi findings through subsequent research including interviews or surveys (Skulmoski et al., 2007, pp. 3-5).

Through communication, the Delphi process allows the facilitation of solving problems and structuring models as groups (Linstone & Turoff, 1975). Questionnaires are the most common mode of interaction in a Delphi Study and personified through development, release, and analysis of each of the three rounds. Skulmoski et al. (2007) identified that “questionnaires are designed to focus on problems, opportunities, solutions, or forecasts” (p.2). Theoretical saturation is achieved with consensus (Skulmoski et al., 2007).

Delphi Application to the Study

The Delphi method has been adapted to studies as varied as information technology to nursing. An example of the method’s flexibility is its application in library planning. Fischer (1978) concluded that the Delphi method was an appropriate approach to library planning. Application of the Delphi method to the field of drug addiction was recently investigated by Kingston et al. (2011) to determine consensus among consumers, care givers (carers), and clinicians in helping problem drug users. In their study, Kingston et al. (2011) arrived at consensus best practices of strategies for addressing problem drug use. Similarly, the method applies to this study and the premise that a consensus definition of drug court participant community college success can be determined. The Delphi study approach aligns with Ziglio’s (1996) understanding that the Delphi approach is appropriate when seeking informed judgment.

The Delphi method fits this research study as the process was the original process used to identify a national drug court research agenda by Marlowe, Heck, Huddleston, and Casebolt (2006) in “A National Research Agenda for Drug Courts: Plotting the Course for Second-Generation Scientific Inquiry.” Through a solicitation of an expert panel of nationally recognized researchers and practitioners named the National Research Committee (NRAC), 23 research agenda topics were identified and subsequently ranked for perceived importance. Ranking of the 23 research agendas was performed by using a Likert Scale with a range from 0 (“not at all important”) to 5 (“extremely important”). National Research Agenda Question 13, “What additional or adjunctive services are most related to positive outcomes in drug courts and most likely to serve public-safety aims? In particular, should employment or educational attainments be required prior to graduation from drug courts?” (Marlow et al., 2006 p. 16) contributed to this study. This National Research Agenda question warrants further exploration of a definition, once consensus of a definition is reached by Delphi participants, the definition and any associated metrics need to be tested. Due to the preliminary work completed by Marlow et al., questionnaire questions were narrow in scope as related to the overall body of potential research topics, but broad in the sense that topics related to higher education were fully vetted. As Skulmoski et al. (2007), “The Delphi method is well suited as a research instrument when there is incomplete knowledge about a problem or phenomenon. . .” (p. 1).

Franklin and Hart (2006) and Simmonds (1977) identified that the development of the first round of questionnaire questions as the most important step in the Delphi process as these questions will drive subsequent questions and discussion. This issue will be

somewhat mitigated in this study since the first round of questions are ae grounded in a previous national study.

Data Collection: Participants, Plan, Analysis, and Procedures

The research study employed three rounds of questionnaires populated by an expert panel composed of Oregon drug court practitioners. It was possible to achieve consensus in three rounds as outlined below.

Research Questions

1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success?

Research Design

The study employed an interpretive qualitative method that included three Delphi rounds of questionnaires and analysis.

Research Participants

A Delphi panel was assembled from the judges and coordinators representing Oregon's 27 adult drug court programs. Bolger and Wright (1994) identified the importance of selecting Delphi study participants as it is their responses that will lead the study. According to Colton and Hatcher (2004), Delphi panelists should be selected for contributions to a topic based on their perceived expertise. Clayton (1997) stressed the importance of purposeful and judicious expert panel selection. Alder and Ziglio (1996) identified four Delphi participant study requirements:

1. Knowledge and expertise with the issue under investigation
2. Capacity and willingness to participate
3. Sufficient time to participate in the Delphi

4. Effective communication skills (p. 4).

In keeping with the interpretive epistemology of the researcher, data were collected in the drug court professional's place of work, otherwise known as the "natural setting." Keeney et al. (2011) defined experts as "informed, specialists in their field," or someone with specific subject knowledge. Kenney et al. (2011) identified increased accuracy in studies when expert panels were employed. Using Keeney et al.'s definition of experts, the heterogeneous composition of experts provided a diverse multi-faceted definition of success. The experts in their field for this study were Oregon's adult drug court program judges and coordinators.

Both the judges and program coordinators of each of Oregon's 27 adult drug courts were solicited to participate in the study. If each program had been represented by both the judge and program coordinator the panel could have included 54 experts. The researcher was realistic in assuming that each of Oregon's 27 adult drug court programs would not be represented, but had expected to yield 30 total participants.

Delbecq et al. (1975) indicate that the total panel size is less important when the panel is a homogenous group and a group of 10 to 15 may be sufficient. Clayton (1997) suggests 15 to 30 panelists for homogenous groups. In relation to drug court programs and outcomes, Oregon's adult drug court judges and program coordinators are a homogenous group who follow the drug court key components, attend the same trainings, and share in their responsibility of "shepherding" the drug court collaboration with other collaborating team members. Judges and coordinators combined will have the longest historical context of their individual adult drug court program.

The researcher initially contacted drug court judges and coordinators to increase awareness of the study through the Oregon Association of Drug Court Professionals

(OADCP). The study and the request for participation by adult drug court judges and coordinators was introduced in-person at a quarterly Association meeting. As one coordinator spanned the jurisdiction of two of Oregon's adult drug courts, 53 potential study participant invitations were distributed to Oregon's adult drug court judges and coordinators on September 2, 2013. A reminder was sent to 38 of the potential participants on September 22, 2013. The solicitation yielded 10 valid survey responses. Additional surveys were started but were not populated with any responses. Likely, the potential participants wanted to review the questions before populating the survey instrument.

Combined, the expert 10 panelists represented nine counties including urban and rural areas. Two of the counties can be described as frontier with limited populations and infrastructure. Five of the 10 panelists represent counties that are part of the Interstate 5 corridor. The 10 panelists represent a combined 106.5 years of drug court experience and were comprised of seven adult drug court coordinators and three adult drug court judges.

On the topic of expert panel size Keeney, Hasson, and McKenna (2011), state "There is no direction on the number of people required to constitute a representative sample, or the relationship to the larger sample. As a consequence Delphi panel sizes vary considerably by study, from under 15 to 15-100" (pp. 21-22). Several authors advocate that the minimum Delphi panel include 10 panelists (Keeney et al., 2011). Since the Delphi panel was a homogeneous group, only comprised of adult drug court judges and coordinators, the study met the requirements of the minimum panel size (Turoff, 2006).

Delphi Round One Questionnaire

Delbecq et al. (1975) suggested the use of broad questions for the first Delphi round. The broad questions should focus on a problem, objective, solution, or forecast (Delbecq et al., 1975). The study had a stated objective and solution, so the first round electronic questionnaire was based on broad open-ended questions.

The area of focus requiring definition has already been through a complete related Delphi series. The research focused on attaining a definition while answering and defining the National Research Agenda Question 13, “What additional or adjunctive services are most related to positive outcomes in drug courts and most likely to serve public-safety aims? In particular, should employment or educational attainments be required prior to graduation from drug courts?” (Marlow et al., 2006, p. 16). The intent of the National Research Agenda question was adapted as the basis of first round Delphi exploration. Concepts from the National Research Agenda question were broken into open-ended questions related to the definition of drug court participant success in community college. First round Delphi questions included:

- Discuss participant educational attainment in relation to positive drug court outcomes?
- How does participant educational attainment serve the community's public-safety aims?
- What are the merits of participant educational attainment requirements prior to drug court graduation?
- What amount of participant educational attainment should be required of participants?

- What other measure of participant educational attainment should be required of participants?

In addition to the broad open-ended questions, the panel provided contextual background information including:

- Name of drug court program representing?
- Judge or coordinator?
- Number of years as judge or coordinator?

The World Wide Web was utilized as the mechanism for the first round Delphi questionnaire expert panel distribution and all subsequent Delphi round distribution and response recording. The researcher utilized Qualtrics © (Provo, UT) to electronically distribute and compile survey responses. Panelists agreed to participate after reading a disclaimer developed by the researcher and approved by the Institutional Review Board before responding to the study's web based Delphi questions.

Delphi Round One Response Analysis

Each Delphi Round One response was recorded electronically through Qualtrics © (Provo, UT). Delphi responses were identified with respondent background information allowing the researcher to explore potential variation among responses from judges or coordinators, the amount of individual experience with drug court programs, and if there are any regional differences.

The researcher reviewed each text response and marked passages with brackets (Seidman, 2006). Seidman's (2006) advice was in relation to coding the transcripts of qualitative interviews, but equally applies to qualitative analysis of Delphi panel responses. The open-ended questions elicited the panels' narrative discussion and the marked passages revealed multiple themes. In discussion to coding, Keeney et al. (2011),

state “There is no standard approach used to analyse data from Delphi rounds” (p. 65). Keeney et al. (2011) suggest that content analysis for major theme identification is a sufficient approach depending on the purpose of the study and the types of questions. In discussion of theme identification, Keeney et al. note, “. . .similar items to be combined or collapsed with decisions to be made on items occurring infrequently on whether they should be included or omitted” (p.65).

Through the coding process, each panelist’s response was reviewed for themes and other considerations that should be accounted for in the discussion of community college and drug courts. After each response, potential community college success definitions were recorded for consideration in the Delphi Round Two. Themes for a performance metric definition were listed after each question. From these responses, multiple draft definitions of drug court participant success in community college in relation to the full continuum of responses from the expert panel and were inclusive of all panel themes. Additionally, items that should be further considered in the analysis were listed.

Delphi Round Two Questionnaire

Subsequent Delphi rounds should build on the proceeding questionnaires' responses (Delbecq et al., 1975). In Round Two, the expert Delphi panel was asked to review and select draft community college success definitions derived from the analysis findings of Delphi Round One responses. Using Qualtrics © (Provo, UT), the Delphi expert panelists were asked to select their top two definitions that most closely reflected their expert opinion. Delphi panelists each selected two of the definitions from the following list.

All Community College Success Definitions Derived From Round One

- Realizing education is related to job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism, community college success is individualized achievement of prosocial goals.
- Community college and educational success for drug court participants is achieving program educational attainment requirements.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced substance use.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced criminal recidivism.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as living wage job attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as community engagement.
- Community college success for drug court participants is acknowledgement of an individualized sense of accomplishment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as GED attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as enrollment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency.

- Community college success for drug court participants is individualized pro-social goal setting and completion.

Delphi Round Two Response Analysis

Responses to the second Delphi were tabulated. In round two, the expert panel was asked to choose their top two definitions, but not asked to rank the definitions. Each selection counted as one vote. With ten respondents, each with two votes, there were 20 total counts. The count of the selected definitions is outlined in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Delphi Round Two Definition Analysis

Definition	Count
individualized job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism	4
individualized pro-social goal setting and completion	0
achieving program educational attainment requirements	4
reduced substance use	0
reduced criminal recidivism	0
living wage job attainment	0
community engagement	0
acknowledgement of an individualized sense of accomplishment	0
GED attainment	1
Enrollment	0
taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week	2
attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency	9

The definition “Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” is the Delphi Round Two definition that received the highest count of votes and was presented back to the expert in Delphi Round Three. Other definitions were recorded by the researcher and reported in the findings section. The continuum of responses provided additional insight to the study.

Delphi Round Three Questions and Analysis

In the third Delphi round, the panel was asked whether the definition receiving the highest number of votes, as determined through the round two response analysis, was the consensus definition for the panel members and whether the definition was an acceptable statewide definition. Analysis of the third Delphi round was limited to a tabulation of yes responses and review of additional open ended responses. Keeney et al. (2011) suggest consensus in Delphi studies can range from 51% to 100%. A yes total of 51% or more was considered consensus of the new drug court success measure.

In Delphi Round Three, the expert panel was asked two questions:

1. The definition “Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” is the Delphi Round Two definition that received the highest count of votes. Is the definition acceptable as a statewide definition of drug court participant community college success?”
2. Is there anything else you would like to share with the researchers related to the definition?

In the first question the expert Delphi panel was provided with the option to select “yes” or “no.” The second question was an open ended text field.

Subject Protection

Since the study solicited an expert perspective on drug court participant success in community college, the human subjects for this study were composed of Oregon’s adult drug court judges and program coordinators. Participants were drug court professionals and there was little potential for this study to harm the human subjects. To mitigate for any potential harm to the Delphi panel experts, Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocol was followed. At the beginning of participation, the expert

Delphi panel was notified that the research was voluntary and was asked to acknowledge the voluntary nature of their responses as the very first question in the electronic Delphi survey. Study participant (expert Delphi panel) responses remained anonymous to the other study participants and anonymity precludes the disclosure of individual responses and their potential association with any adult drug court judge or program coordinator thus limiting exposure. Demographic information collected as part of the study was only presented in a tabulated format that did not identify any individual study participant.

Analysis Validity and Trustworthiness

The researcher has listed multiple practices that perpetuate the study's analysis validity and trustworthiness. Anonymity of the panelists and their responses, the documentation of the methods and process, and mitigation of potential negative Delphi attributes are all examples of ensuring analysis validity and trustworthiness. The Delphi technique process ensures trustworthiness through structured questions that are uniformly administered to the panel through a web application. The structured questions through multiple rounds also mitigate against distortion, falsification, and other bias. Data reliability may only be applicable to Oregon adult drug court programs as disclaimed in the "results applicability" section below.

Results Applicability

The outcome of the study was a consensus definition of drug court participant success in community college defined by a panel of experts who exclusively represented Oregon's adult drug courts so results may have limited applicability. The programmatic drug court structure, resources available for Oregon's community collaborations and external factors like the unemployment rate and numbers of community colleges are all variables unique to Oregon. Although these factors were not the emphasis of the study,

the researcher made note in the study findings that the study's definition of drug court participant success in community college may only apply to Oregon drug programs and participants. While the study findings may potentially have more applicability to other studies, the researcher's disclaimer is intended to mitigate any incorrect interpretation by readers and subsequent researchers.

Chapter Summary

A study's methodological approach needs to match the researcher's interests and be appropriate in application to the topic being studied. The researcher employed a qualitative methodology, an interpretive epistemology, and used the Delphi method and survey techniques to collect and interpret data. A qualitative approach was identified by the researcher as the most appropriate way to interpretively explore a social process like drug court participant success in community college; a topic, as identified in the literature review, that has not received adequate, if any, academic attention beyond citing the need for further exploration in this area. Qualitative methods are fluid and flexible, allowing multiple perspectives and application of multiple data collection and analysis tools to determine a detailed understanding of the central phenomenon. The researcher disclosed his personal interest in the study and built in safeguards to minimize any potential bias.

The researcher protected the identity of the Delphi panel and did not associate any one response with any individual. The researcher obtained the necessary Institutional Review Board approval before initiating the research.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the findings of an expert Delphi panel study to determine a consensus definition of success for drug court participants who enter community college as a component of their drug court program experience or requirement. The expert Delphi panel consisted of 10 participants: Three Oregon adult drug court judges and seven Oregon adult drug court coordinators. This chapter consists of two sections. The first section addresses the findings of the specific research questions. The second section describes other findings identified during the research.

Research Question Findings

The research questions employed in this study were: 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success?

Delphi Round One Responses

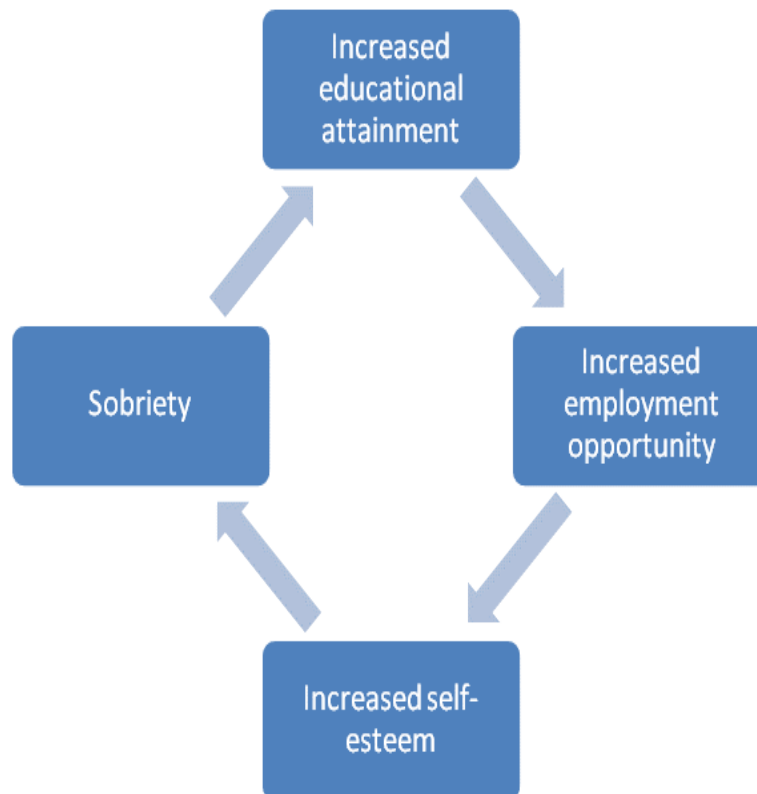
The Delphi Round One elicited an understanding of the relationship of community college education with Oregon's adult drug courts. The responses to Round One questions generated draft community college success for drug court participant definitions for the Delphi panel to consider in Delphi Round Two. Key themes were identified for each of the Round One research questions. In addition to the themes, potential definitions for Round Two were listed. The panels' complete responses are included in the appendix. (See Appendix B.)

Question 1: Discuss participant educational attainment in relation to positive drug court outcomes.

Question 1 Key Theme:

Through their responses, several respondents outlined a benevolent sobriety cycle that included sobriety, increased educational attainment, increased employment opportunity, and increased self-esteem. Each of the items on the cycle has dependence on the other items, but ultimately promotes sobriety. The literature reveals any two of the elements of the cycle studied or discussed, but never as part of a continuous cycle. This cycle identified through Question 1 analysis is diagrammed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Benevolent Sobriety Circle



Question 1 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

(Each Round One questions generated draft community college success for drug court participant definitions for the Delphi panel to consider in Delphi Round Two.)

- Realizing education is related to job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism, community college success is individualized achievement of prosocial goals.
- Community college and educational success for drug court participants is achieving program educational attainment requirements.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced substance use.

Question 2: How does participant educational attainment serve the community's public-safety aims?

Question 2 Key Themes:

Education leads to employment opportunity that leads to prosocial positive community contributions.

Question 2 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced criminal recidivism.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as living wage job attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as community engagement.

Question 3: What are the merits of participant educational attainment requirements prior to drug court graduation?

Question 3 Keys Themes:

- Short and long term goals
- Community
- Self-esteem

Question 3 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

- Community college success for drug court participants is acknowledgement of an individualized sense of accomplishment.

Question 4: What amount of participant educational attainment should be required of participants?

Question 4 Themes:

- GED at minimum
- Individualized

Question 4 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as GED attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as enrollment.

Question 5: What other measure of participant educational attainment should be required of participants?

Question 5 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week.

- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency

Question 6: Is GED completion a drug court program requirement for individuals without a high school diploma?

Question 6 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

Question 6 responses yielded no additional potential definitions.

Question 7: Is job attainment or higher education enrollment a drug court program requirement?

Question 7 Potential Round 2 Definitions:

Question 7 responses yielded no additional potential definitions.

Delphi Round One Themes

The Delphi panel's responses to the seven Delphi Round One questions yielded 12 potential community college success definitions. Eleven definitions were direct from unique panelist responses and the twelfth was derived from the common themes identified by the researcher in the other eleven responses.

Delphi Round One Community College Success Definitions

- Realizing education is related to job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism, community college success is individualized achievement of prosocial goals.
- Community college and educational success for drug court participants is achieving program educational attainment requirements.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced substance use.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced criminal recidivism.

- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as living wage job attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as community engagement.
- Community college success for drug court participants is acknowledgement of an individualized sense of accomplishment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as GED attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as enrollment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency.

Delphi Round One Synthesis

In the first Delphi round, specific terms specifically relate to a definition including community college and success came up the most frequently in the context of Delphi participant responses. Although the specific term prosocial showed up only four times in round one participant responses, specific prosocial activity examples including GED, reduced crime, work, school, sobriety, and vocation were numerous and, as depicted in the literature review, were discuss in interrelated. Goals, goal-setting, and goal completion were the most frequent theme with the term “goal” mentioned 15 times. The second most common theme, “individual” was used seven times. By combining the most numerous first Delphi responses including the emerging benevolent sobriety cycle’s individual interrelated prosocial concepts with individualized goals was the researcher’s

attempt to synthesize the Delphi Round One towards consensus. Rowe and Wright (1999) identify synthesis as one of the four key Delphi features.

Overall Definition (synthesized from common themes by researcher)

- Community college success for drug court participants is individualized pro-social goal setting and completion.

Delphi Round Two Responses

In Delphi Round Two, the twelve definitions began the filtering process of arriving at a consensus definition. The twelve potential definitions were reduced to five choices when each of the expert Delphi panel members were allowed to choose the two definitions that most closely reflected their definition of community college success for drug court participants. With a total possible 20 counts between the 10 expert Delphi panel, 90% percent of the panel selected “attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” as one of their two choices. Table 5 depicts the count of votes for the five definitions receiving votes. Having received votes, the other four definitions have potential for local use in drug court programs as individual program performance measures that may be adopted in addition to the statewide success metric. All 10 expert Delphi panel members participated in Delphi Round Two.

Table 5

Delphi Round Two Ranked Responses

Definition	Count
Individualized job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism	4
Achieving program educational attainment requirements	4
GED attainment	1
Taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week	2
Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency	9

Of interest and in support of the Delphi method for achieving consensus by an expert panel while minimizing researcher bias, not one of the Delphi panelists selected the researcher's synthesized definition "Community college success for drug court participants is individualized pro-social goal setting and completion" as one of their two measure definition selections in Delphi Round Two.

Delphi Round Three Responses

Nine expert Delphi panel members said yes they could affirmatively accept "Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency" as a statewide definition of drug court participant community college success. Delphi consensus was attained. Keeney et al. (2011) suggested that consensus in Delphi studies can range from 51% to 100%. For the Delphi Round Three, the tenth expert Delphi panel member did not participate; however, even if the tenth member had participated and not agreed with the definition, 90% would still reach consensus, which is considerably higher

than the 51% stated as consensus noted in the methods section. It should be noted that the consensus metric agreed upon by this study's expert Delphi panel may only be applicable in Oregon. Similar research should be carried out to determine the metric definition's applicability in other states.

Other Identified Findings

Delphi Round One questions one and four yielded additional responses related to the drug court participant's higher education experience. Although the themes related to a community college success metric for drug court participants, their comments were not directly part of the defining process. Each of the additional responses to Delphi Round One questions one and four has merit for further exploration and potential contributions to the academic knowledgebase.

Question One "Realizing education is related to job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism, community college success is individualized achievement of prosocial goals" other findings:

- Concern with unsuccessful students' financial burden.
- Local service organization provide participant funding support.
- A small number of participants take advantage of opportunity to complete college degree.
- College classes do not affect graduation rate.
- Those who attend school the longest tend to be those who graduate.
- Self support.
- Individual interests and strengths- Academic attainment should consider individual interests and strengths.

- Vocation versus academic tracks- Community college definitions should include academic and vocational tracks.
- Juvenile drug court uses community college GED program and HEP program.
- Drug addiction impact on cognitive ability.
- Many feel unattainable task.
- Organic brain injuries, history of trauma, learning disabilities, and other barriers.

Question Four “Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced criminal recidivism” other findings.

- Limited resource availability and program time due to large adult program volume.
- Not always realistic.

These additional findings, not directly related to defining a consensus definition of community college success for drug court participants, align with student retention and community college mission literature and will be discussed in Chapter 5. The additional findings have the potential to impact community college success, performance metric development, and offer the potential for further research efforts.

Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the findings of a 10-person expert Oregon drug court judge and coordinator Delphi study to determine a consensus definition of success for drug court participants who enter community college as a component of their drug court program experience or requirement. The expert Delphi panel’s geographical representation provided statewide coverage. Consensus was achieved with all Delphi Round Three expert panel members accepting “Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” as a statewide definition of drug court

participant community college success. Finally, several other findings were identified for consideration in future drug court and community college research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

In this study, the researcher achieved a consensus definition of community college success for Oregon's adult drug court participants using an expert Delphi panel of Oregon adult drug court judges and coordinators. This study was conducted as an initial step in implementing additional drug court metrics. Although drug court literature calls for the development of additional metrics, current drug court metrics and associated literature focus on criminal recidivism. In this chapter, the study findings are discussed in relation to existing drug court metric literature, a strategy for the metric's implementation is discussed, additional thoughts are provided including opportunities for additional drug court and community college research, and the application of the Delphi method to other internet based research studies.

Discussion

“Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” is the consensus community college success metric for adult drug court participants agreed upon by the expert Delphi panel. The definition was achieved through an exploration of drug court participant success in community college definitions using a qualitative Delphi method approach. The definition contributes to the literature gap by addressing the call for additional drug court success metrics and further emphasizes the interconnectivity of education and employment.

The first question for this research study was 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? This was answered by the expert Delphi Panel in their Delphi Round One responses which included:

- Realizing education is related to job attainment, recovery, sobriety, and reduced criminal recidivism, community college success is individualized achievement of prosocial goals.
- Community college and educational success for drug court participants is achieving program educational attainment requirements.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced substance use.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as reduced criminal recidivism.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as living wage job attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is measured as community engagement.
- Community college success for drug court participants is acknowledgement of an individualized sense of accomplishment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as GED attainment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as enrollment.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as taking full time credit hours if not working 30 or more hours per week.
- Community college success for drug court participants is defined as attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency.
- Community college success for drug court participants is individualized prosocial goal setting and completion.

The definitions were derived by asking the expert Delphi Panel to reflect on the National Research Agenda Question 13, “What additional or adjunctive services are most related to positive outcomes in drug courts and most likely to serve public-safety aims? In particular, should employment or educational attainments be required prior to graduation from drug courts?” (Marlow et al., 2006, p. 16). The questions yielded a robust discussion and shed additional light on drug court components. These drug court components require additional insight and further exploration of employment and educational attainment requirements during drug court participation. These are important research areas warranting further exploration in determining positive outcomes most likely to fulfill public safety. Specifically, these additional findings, not directly related to defining a consensus definition of community college success, provide opportunities for increased community college success, performance metric development, and further research efforts including community college literature and student retention and financing.

Three of these findings 1) Individual interests and strengths- Academic attainment should consider individual interests and strengths; 2) Vocation versus academic tracks- Community college definitions should include academic and vocational tracks; and 3) Juvenile drug court uses community college GED program and HEP program, align directly with literature on the community college mission. The mission of the community college is to provide open-access to traditional aged learners and adult lifelong learners (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Vaughan, 2006). This comprehensive mission offers adjustment to societal and environmental change for learners willing to engage (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). This role is personified by the current economic situation that has strained the community college in meeting the needs of multiple generations of learners,

especially those requiring occupational retooling. Core community college mission elements of remediation and degree granting are balanced among basic high school equivalency preparation and testing, non credit training, four year college, and technological preparation (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Vaughan, 2006). The comprehensive community college mission is a natural partner to drug courts and specifically aligns with Drug Court Key Component 10 and NADCP's (2013) best practice standards as they relate to employment and education. Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness. As recently as September 2014, community college open access is being rethought (Scherer & Anson, 2014). Further research should be considered with the drug court specific criminal justice population and cost savings that are realized when the population is introduced, through open access, to the community college.

Several other findings addressed retention issues once an individual is in college. These issues identified by the Delphi panel align with student retention literature. Specific concerns including: 1) Concern with unsuccessful students' financial burden; 2) Local service organization provide participant funding support; 3) Self support; 4) Drug addiction impact on cognitive ability; 5) Many feel unattainable task; 6) Organic brain injuries, history of trauma, learning disabilities, and other barriers; 7) Limited resource availability and program time due to large adult program volume; and 8) Not always realistic, all relate to student retention. Cohen and Brawer (2008) offer intervention, wrap around, and other engagement strategies to increase retention. There is opportunity to advance each of these topics with further research and insight can offer additional considerations to maximize drug court participant's community college success

outcomes, new metric development, and a better understanding of how to support the individual.

Call for Additional Metrics Discussion

This research is a step in the direction of moving the default national drug court metric discussion away from criminal recidivism and shedding some light on the processes that lead to successful drug court completion as identified by Butzin et al. (2002). Butzin et al. (2002) identified with positive outcomes that programs could be adjusted to target populations that would most benefit drug court programs. The correlation between educational attainment and positive drug court success is identified by Deschenes, Ireland, & Kleinpeter (2009) and Leukfeld et al. (2007).

The qualitative discussion in Delphi Round One also provided additional insight to the Webster et al. (2007) notion that employment should be viewed from a multidimensional position that includes job status, earnings, stability, and duration. The consensus community college success metric definition, “Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” provides an opportunity to classify the employment of individual drug court participants and also furthers the recommendation by Heck (2006) for local drug courts to record all services received by drug court participants including job training and education. As Heck (2006) recommends, local drug courts should record units of service to determine which are positively affecting participant outcomes and to display and fully understand the availability of services within the collaborative nature of drug courts. Heck (2006) also recommends the recording baseline data related to participant years of formal education, GED/high school diploma attainment, and college attendance. Additionally, Rempel (2010) advises drug court personnel to administer special topic surveys in addition to

catch-all surveys of participants as they separated from drug court programs. The surveys were designed to solicit treatment program feedback related to employment and education. These data collection strategies would help to quantify “attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency.”

The second research question for this research was 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success? The discussion around “what a metric is” and the arrival at a consensus metric definition derived by the expert Delphi Panel all address the gap in the literature and the call for additional drug court success metrics with Oregon’s “Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency” metric contribution.

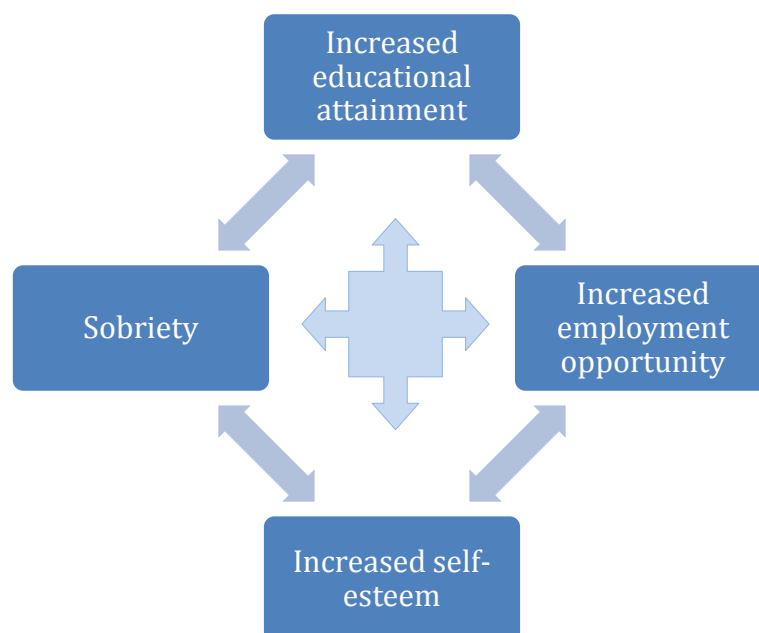
Education and Employment Interconnectivity Discussion

Knowledge, skills, and abilities leading to self-sufficiency is unequivocally connected to education and employment. As outlined in the Benevolent Sobriety Circle identified in Chapter Four, increased educational attainment, increased employment opportunity, increased self-esteem, and sobriety are integrally connected. Deschenes et al. (2009) and Leukfeld et al. (2007) correlated educational attainment and subsequent employment with drug court participants’ successful drug court completion. The research of Leukfeld et al. (2004) revealed that participants who were employed full-time earned more than other participants, worked fewer days at illegal jobs, and experienced fewer employment problems in the six months before drug court entry.

The Benevolent Sobriety Circle diagramed in Chapter 4 depicts a linear sequence outlay of terms leading to sobriety and, as suggested in the diagram, repeats the process. The increased educational attainment, increased employment opportunity, increased self-esteem, and sobriety concepts were provided in that order by Delphi expert panel

responses to Delphi Round One questions. On further reflection, what was described as a circle by Delphi panel respondents could also be described as a web with each of the four concepts forming unique and individual relationship connections with the other three interrelated concepts. For example, increased self-esteem may immediately be recognized following educational attainment.

Figure 2. Benevolent Sobriety Web



In summary, many researchers in the academic community have called for additional research related to outcome measures other than criminal recidivism measures that have saturated the drug court outcome literature. Many researchers in the academic community have identified education and employment outcomes related to drug court participants as areas warranting further investigation especially to identify which lead to successful program completion and ultimately drug court participant self-sufficiency (Heck, 2006; Kinlock et al., 2009; Marlow et al., 2006; Rempel, 2010). Additionally, educational attainment and subsequent employment correlate with drug court

participants' successful drug court completion (Deschenes et al., 2009; Leukfeld et al., 2007).

New Metric Implementation

The expert Delphi panel agreed on a consensus community college success metric for adult drug court participants, "Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency." The measure definition has little meaning until it is operationalized as a performance metric. Oregon's adult drug court community initially requires awareness of the measure's development. The researcher shared with the membership of the Oregon Association of Drug Court Professionals (OADCP) that the researcher would be undertaking the development of a measure, and that the membership of the OADCP representing adult drug courts would be solicited for participation in an expert Delphi panel. The researcher will present his research findings to the OADCP at their next formal meeting.

Beyond drug court community metric acceptance, which is somewhat mitigated by the expert panel's consensus process, are considerations in applying individuality of self-sufficiency and the systematic recording of datum related to the metric for individual analysis, program-wide reporting, and eventually, statewide metric reporting. Like the term recidivism and several other terms, self-sufficiency is a term open to interpretation. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines self-sufficiency as "able to maintain oneself or itself without outside aid: capable of providing for one's own needs." The metric does not necessarily need to be an outcome metric, although follow-up research studies should consider academic attainment as part of drug court participation and future earning or subsequent reliance on governmental or other subsidies, for the purpose of the measure, attainment of specific knowledge, skills, or abilities that have the potential to lead to self-

sufficiency can be tracked positively towards the metric. Knowledge, skills, and abilities will vary by individual adult drug court participant, but key to the measure's development is the need to allow individuality. The American community college has a continuum of programming including classes, academic degrees, and vocational certificates. Needs for adult drug court participants will vary. One participant may achieve the knowledge, skills, and abilities through one or more classes that provide the appropriate knowledge to run a cash register, whereas another participant may attain vocation certification that will allow her to participate in a trade, and yet another participant may complete an academic community college degree and continue on to attain advanced degrees in the university setting further increasing his/her individual and family's future self-sufficiency. In summary, the needs of each individual adult drug court participant vary, without one "correct" option. It is therefore important for drug court program staff to work directly with participants to identify their needs, present them with information, and hold the individual accountable, as is done with other drug court program requirements, to completing their identified goals.

Once identified and set as a goal, the individual adult drug court participant's goal needs to be tracked and updated. This can be achieved in many ways including a management information system (MIS). To that end, Heck (2006) recommends "While a sophisticated MIS is not absolutely required to collect information that will track the progress of drug court programs, it is certainly recommended" (p. 13). Oregon is fortunate in that a uniform database, the Oregon Treatment Court Management System (OTCMS), is used by Oregon's treatment court programs including adult drug courts. The OTCMS allows for the recording of individual participant goals, updates to goals including completion, and reports that allow for individual participant and entire adult

drug court program reporting. The OTCMS can be utilized as part of Oregon's adult drug court metric for community college success implementation. The researcher will provide the OADCP community with knowledge on how to use the database to capture and report on the new metric.

A Note to Drug Court Practitioners

Unfortunately it is often with hindsight which drug court program data elements are reflected. What may appear to be extra work in individual goal setting, recording of that goal, and follow-up to update the progress/status of the goal has the future potential to quantify program success. The extra effort can also benefit the individual drug court participant where the drug court team is reinforcing and offering accolades to the participant as they make progress towards and hopefully successful goal satisfaction. There is an identified need to quantify additional performance metrics and success, as individualized as it may be, has great potential in changing participant lives. Most drug courts have made improvements in their record keeping; moving from what once had been the common practice to maintain paper files filled with paper scraps and notes, to more streamlined and accessible record keeping systems. Today, tools are available that allow for data recoding and reporting.

Further Considerations

It is this researcher's hope that this research is the first step of filling the literature gap of additional drug court measures of success and additional research will follow. Assuming the measure is adopted, it should be reported on in the future both academically in public policy fora including the legislature. This measure may only be Oregon's experience; similar research should be carried out to determine the metric definition's applicability in other states. Once implemented, the metric should be

analyzed for outcomes and may serve as a variable for a cost analysis where the future earnings or governmental assistance of adult drug court participants from programs with community college success metrics are compared against programs without.

Areas also warranting additional consideration are Oregon's adult drug court programs and their proximity to Oregon Community Colleges. Specifically, do Oregon's adult drug courts that are in close proximity and engage the community college as community partners under NADCP's Key Component #10: "Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness" achieve better outcomes? Additionally, research findings concerning treatment outcomes and the utilization of the Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LS/CMI) assessment should be explored in future research, especially in the realm of educational attainment and offender criminogenic needs reduction (Labrecque, Smith, Lovins, & Latessa, 2014; Malarios, Sperber, & Latessa, 2014; Latessa & Livins, 2010). As noted earlier, the American community college offers a continuum of classes, vocational certificates, and academic degrees. There is no one program that fits all needs, but potentially certain participants will be more successful in or achieve better outcomes if they select one community college programming option over another.

Delphi Method

Unlike the ancient Greek Oracle or the Rand Corporation forecasting the technology application on warfare (Keeney et al., 2011), this researcher did not predict the future, but rather used the method to attain public policy consensus through the isolated knowledge and collective wisdom of an expert panel. Whereas the ancient Chinese Oracles I Ching and ancient Greek Oracle's outcomes were vague

interpretations, today's Delphi application relies upon collective group wisdom to interpret group consciousness and consensus. The informed input received from this participation allows for deeper understanding and robust exploration into practical aspects of the concepts application.

At a time when computers were in their infancy, the need for military knowledge drove the Rand Corporation to develop a method of predicting the future. Classic Delphi, as refined by the Rand Corporation through the 1950's, allowed for priority setting and consensus gain (Colton & Hatcher, 2004; Fischer, 1978; Gordon, 1994; Hsu & Sandford, 2007; Kennedy, 2004). Today, researchers have the luxury of internet based tools applied to the Delphi method to exchange information and arrive at consensus. Internet based Delphi's are commonly termed as e-Delphi. Keeney et al. (2011) note, "The advantages of e-Delphi are obvious; not only is it an environmentally friendly way to carry out research, it leads to more rapid feedback to and response from panel members" (p. 149). This researcher's application of a web based Delphi matched the advantageous findings of Keeney et al. (2001). Following each Delphi Round approval by Oregon State University's Institutional Review Board, the responses gleaned from the expert Delphi Panel were rapid and accessible to the expert Delphi Panel. Additionally, the web based application, for this study Qualtrics © (Provo, UT), allowed for the electronic recording of the expert panel's responses and assisted the researcher in response analysis and subsequent Delphi round development. The e-Delphi application for group priority setting and gaining consensus is almost limitless assuming researchers follow the method and are able to attain an appropriate expert panel.

Chapter Summary

A consensus definition of community college success for Oregon's adult drug court participants, "Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency," was attained using an expert Delphi panel of Oregon adult drug court judges and coordinators. This study was conducted as an initial step in implementing additional drug court metrics. Although drug court literature calls for the development of additional metrics, current drug court metrics and associated literature focus on criminal recidivism. This chapter presented study findings, a strategy for the consensus metric's implementation, additional thoughts for additional drug court and community college research, and the application of the Delphi method to other internet based research studies.

Study Summary

"Attainment of knowledge, skills, and abilities that will provide self-sufficiency," is the consensus community college success metric defined after through a qualitative Delphi method study with an expert panel of 10 drug court professionals. An interpretive methodological approach was taken as to construct artful and political sense (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998a, 1998b, 1998c). Chapter 1 introduced the reader to drug court, drug court participants, and the referral of drug court participants to community colleges. Two research questions were posed for the study: 1) How is drug court participant success in community college defined by Oregon adult drug court judges and program coordinators? 2) What is a consensus metric of community college success? The research contributes to the scholarly and practical literature and the definition and subsequent research fill the current literature gap.

The literature review associated with Chapter 2 identified four main themes: (a) a historical perspective of drug courts, (b) criminal recidivism as the default outcome measure, which may not truly reflect efficacy, (c) other suggested outcomes and the subsequent call for other outcome measures, and (d) the interconnectivity of employment, vocation, and education. The identified gap in literature related to drug court participant engagement and participation in community college warranted further study. The gap was addressed by a study that defined drug court participant success in community college from the perspective of Oregon's expert practitioners.

Chapter 3 outlined the methods employed in the web based Delphi study, steps taken for each of the three rounds, and the rationale for the qualitative approach based on the researcher's epistemology. Chapter 4 outlined the study findings, expert Delphi panel composition including statewide Oregon representation, and listed other findings identified for consideration in future drug court and community college research. Finally, Chapter 5 presented study findings, a strategy for the consensus metric's implementation, additional thoughts for additional drug court and community college research, and the application of the Delphi method to other internet based research studies.

Before engaging in research, a researcher must first determine their epistemological world view. Gall et al. (2007) identify that researchers must assume that social environmental features are real, exist independently of the researcher, and individuals construct their social environments. Through the construction of research design, researchers are situated "in the empirical world which connects them to specific sites, persons, groups, institutions, and bodies of relevant interpretive material. . ."

(Denzin & Lincoln, 1998a, p.28). Throughout my professional career I worked with and for criminal justice populations. Through this research, I am able to contribute back in

some small way while addressing a literature gap. The development of this community college success measure for adult drug court participants is a step in moving the discussion of drug court performance away from the default criminal recidivism measure.

On a final note as this research is completed, there are systematic changes coming to the drug court participant population through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and the Act's associated availability to behavioral health treatment. Through the ACA, the predominately unemployed and underemployed drug court population is theoretically more easily accessing behavioral health services that often, at least in Oregon's experience, have been cobbled together through various funding sources. Increased access to health care, physical and behavioral, and engagement in higher education has the future potential to yield additional drug court outcomes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Defining Drug Courts: The Key Components

1. Drug courts integrate alcohol and other drug treatment services with justice system case processing.
2. Using a non-adversarial approach, prosecution and defense counsel promote public safety while protecting participants' due process rights.
3. Eligible participants are identified early and promptly placed in the drug court program.
4. Drug courts provide access to a continuum of alcohol, drug, and other related treatment and rehabilitation services.
5. Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing.
6. A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participants' compliance.
7. Ongoing judicial interaction with each drug court participant is essential.
8. Monitoring and evaluation measure the achievement of program goals and gauge effectiveness.
9. Continuing interdisciplinary education promotes effective drug court planning, implementation, and operations.
10. Forging partnerships among drug courts, public agencies, and community-based organizations generates local support and enhances drug court program effectiveness.

Appendix B (Full Responses)

Delphi Round 1

Question 1 Response 1:

We take only high or medium risk to recidivate, drug dependent persons. Goal-setting and achieving are strong incentive and reinforcement of sobriety and continued recovery. Education is certainly a "pro-social activity," that should promote success and at least buffer other criminogenic issues. / I do worry some about the added financial burden working against sustained recovery and success. If participants enter community college courses on grants, those grants, as I understand it, will become re-payable if the student, for whatever reason, drops out (and many do in my observation).

Question 1 Response 1 Themes:

- Goal setting and achieving equate to incentives and reinforcement of sobriety and recovery.
- Sobriety
- Recovery
- Pro-social activity
- Promote success
- Minimize criminal activity

Question 1 Response 1 Other:

- Concern with unsuccessful students' financial burden.

Question Response 2:

Many participants begin taking courses at the community college because of the job-or-school requirement of DTC. A smaller percentage begin school because attending college has been a long term goal of theirs, and a local service organization provides funding

support for participants. A very small percentage of these participants make full use of the opportunity to finish a college degree. Anecdotally, I do not believe that taking classing alone affects the graduation rate, though the participants who attend school the longest tend to be those who graduate.

Question 1 Response 2 Themes:

- Program requirement
- Long term goal

Question 1 Response 2 Other:

- Local service organization provide participant funding support.
- A small number of participants take advantage of opportunity to complete college degree.
- College classes does not affect graduation rate.
- Those who attend school the longest tend to be those who graduate.

Question 1 Response 3:

While we encourage participants to either be working or attending school by the time they graduate, we do not enforce it or use it as a reason to keep someone who has completed other goals.

Response 3 Themes:

- Encouraged to work or attend school, but not enforced.
- Complete goals

Question 1 Response 4:

Sobriety contributes to improved educational attainment leading to improved employment opportunities which then support sobriety and increased self esteem It's a

benevolent cycle. Attention should be given to near term need for participant self support and to individual interests and strengths. Some participants may benefit more from vocational training than from academic tracks.

Question 1 Response 4 Themes:

- Sobriety contributes to improved educational attainment
- Educational attainment leads to improved employment opportunities
- Improved employments supports sobriety and self esteem
- Benevolent cycle

Question 1 Response 4 Other:

- Self support
- Individual interests and strengths- **Academic attainment should consider individual interest and strengths.**
- Vocation versus academic tracks- **Community college definitions should include academic and vocational tracks.**

Question 1 Response 5:

Many participants enter our program without HS diplomas or GEDs. We try to get them to obtain a GED at a bare minimum, and look continuing on at the community college for technical education to improve their employment opportunities. Obtaining living wage employment is critical to success n the treatment court program. In our Juvenile Court, many of the youth have left school and we use the GED program and HEP program at our local community college.

Question 1 Response 5 Themes:

- GED bare minimum
- Community college for technical support to improve employment opportunities

- Living wage critical to success.

Question 1 Response 5 Other:

- Juvenile drug court uses community college GED program and HEP program.

Question 1 Response 6:

Ideally, each drug court participant should experience an increase in their educational attainment which will lead to improved drug court outcomes and long term reductions in recidivism. Positive outcomes as a result of educational attainment depends largely on the participant's prior educational participation, short/long-term effects of drug addiction that impacts cognitive ability, and access to necessary resources.

Question 1 Response 6 Themes:

- Participants should experience increased education attainment
- Educational attainment leads to improved drug court outcomes and recidivism reduction
- Educational attainment depend on individual's prior participation, cognitive ability, and resource access.

Question 1 Response 6 Other:

- Drug addiction impact on cognitive ability.

Question 1 Response 7:

We find that, anecdotally, our participants who take advantage of using educational resources, such as obtaining their GED through our Londer Learning Center, or participating in college education classes, do better over time.

Question 1 Response 7 Themes:

- Participants who take advantage of GED, Learning Center, or college do better.
- Individual review of educational accomplishment at program entry.

Question 1 Response 8:

Our Drug Court reviews the educational accomplishments of each individual as they enter Drug Court. We have seen that those who have attained a GED, attending college classes or have graduated from college while in Drug Court (or after graduation) have greater success rates. for staying clean and sober.

Question 1 Response 8 Themes:

- Participants who take advantage of GED, Learning Center, or college do better.
- Education leads to staying clean and sober

Question 1 Response 9:

One of the requirements for participants in a healthy drug court model is to obtain a GED or high school diploma if they do not have one at the time of entry. For many participants this is a task that may feel unattainable. This can be one of the biggest goals to accomplish in a participants life. Many have organic brain injuries, history of trauma, learning disabilities and other barriers that can make this an especially difficult task. However, if the participant can achieve "clean time", receive substance abuse and mental health treatment, there is a much better chance of getting them engaged and excited to reach the goal that seemed so unattainable. This goal being achieved gives the participant self esteem, the ability to advocate for one self and a sense of accomplishment that can lend itself to longer sobriety and a better chance to continue to achieve other goals.

Question 1 Response 9 Themes:

- GED or high school diploma requirement.
- Goal

- Clean time equates to better change of engagement and excitement to reach educational goals.
- Achieving goal leads to self esteem, self advocacy, and sense of accomplishment.
- Leads to longer sobriety and better change to achieve other goals.

Question 1 Response 9 Other:

- Many feel unattainable task.
- Organic brain injuries, history of trauma, learning disabilities, and other barriers.

Question 2 Response 1:

By adding pro-social activity and skills, sense of self-worth, and otherwise offsetting some criminogenic needs that are, hopefully, also being addressed in drug court or otherwise.

Question 2 Response 1 Themes:

- Pro-social activity and skills
- Self-worth
- Offset criminogenic

Question 2 Response 2:

Many participants were not successful in school, and the opportunity to return with support helps them do well. Finding success helps participants break out of old roles and realize they can have a different life. If they can take on school successfully, they can stop using drugs, and vice versa.

Question 2 Response 2 Themes:

- Drug court support assists individual success
- Success helps breakout of old roles and have a different life
- Success in school may make them realize they can maintain sobriety

- Sobriety leads school success
- Ability to sustain a new, positive behavior = by sticking with school they learn that they can stick with sobriety – they can follow through on something important and positive.

Question 2 Response 3:

Achieving job-specific education may deter a participant from returning to a life of dealing and property crimes.

Question 2 Response 3 Themes:

- Offset criminogenic
- financial need and should be included – if the offender attends school to get a living wage job, their financial need is ameliorated and they may no longer need to deal drugs or steal things.

Question 2 Response 4:

It is commonly perceived and a growing body of research will confirm that juvenile justice involved youth have poorer educational attainment levels than do non justice-involved youth. This relationship carries on into adulthood as noted by studies of educational attainment among jailed and imprisoned populations. Further, research places low levels of personal educational, vocational or financial achievement among a major set of risk/needs from a criminogenics perspective (E. J. Latessa). However, other risk factors are considered more causative of criminal offending behavior and there is the caveat, "send a criminal to school and you'll have an educated criminal." Still, the education to employment link can be expected to reduce incidence of thefts when the offender's sole justification is lack of funds. // Anecdotally, I feel culture also comes into

play. Educational attainment can elevate a person's lifestyle and peer choices to a more pro-social level.

Question 2 Response 4 Themes:

- Low levels of personal educational, vocational, or financial achievement equal criminogenics risk
- Education to employment link
- Link to reduced crime
- Educational attainment elevate lifestyle and peer choices
- Pro-social
- Dr. Latessa's risk factors

Question 2 Response 5:

Involvement in educational programs keeps participants busy doing something positive and leads to better employment outcomes, both of which improve community safety.

Question 2 Response 5 Themes:

- Keep individual busy
- Education leads to better employment
- Education and employment improve community safety

Question 2 Response 6:

Increased educational attainment can improve public safety through a variety of ways. The first being that increased education should result in improved job attainment which leads to productive tax paying citizens. Also, participants who are employed are less likely to reoffend and more likely to provide for their families.

Question 2 Response 6 Themes:

- Increased education results in improved job attainment

- Improved job leads to productive tax paying citizens.
- Less likely to reoffend
- More likely to provide for families.

Question 2 Response 7:

it allows them to attain better employment and therefore contribute more strongly to the community. With employment, few crimes are committed.

Question 2 Response 7 Themes:

- Better employment leads to lower criminality
- Stronger community contributions

Question 2 Response 8:

Obtaining educational credentials enables the participants to obtain legitimate employment that they may not otherwise be able to obtain, motivating them to earn an income to keep stability in their lives, which we find deters further criminal activity.

Question 2 Response 8 Themes:

- Educational credentials allow legitimate employment.
- Better income
- Stability in lives
- Criminal activity deterrent

Question 2 Response 9:

Individuals who are involved in their educational processes are more involved in their future and are focused on being a part of the community. They are not participating in criminal activity.

Question 2 Response 9 Themes:

- Future

- Part of community
- Criminal activity deterrent

Question 2 Response 10:

Education empowers participants to see the positive results from their goal attained and in turn they then start to see how this change makes them a part of the community. When you are invested in something you care about it more.

Question 2 Response 10 Themes:

- Positive results of goal attainment
- Part of community
- Investment = increase in the level of caring

Question 3 Response 1:

Shorter term goals such as GED are attainable within the drug court participation period. Longer term education such as skill building and even an AA or other degree should help sustain recovery lifestyle.

Question 3 Response 1 Themes:

- Short term goals like GED attainable
- Long term goals are skill building, AA or other degree
- Sustain recovery lifestyle

Question 3 Response 2:

Those with more education tend to be those who are more successful in DTC, e.g. have less sanctions and finish sooner.

Question 3 Response 2 Themes:

- More education equals more DTC success
- Less sanctions

- Finish sooner

Question 3 Response 3:

Merits would include having a short-term and long-term plan in place - something this population may not have done previously.

Response 3 Themes:

- Short term and long term goals

Question 3 Response 4:

Drug courts are typically rigorous and place great demands on their participants.

Graduation imbues senses of accomplishment, hope and satisfaction in graduates.

Likewise will attainment of an educational goal. Graduates who have met educational requirements are likely to be more successful than those who have not through improved employment opportunities and improved financial security. In my judicial district, attainment of individualized educational goals is a requirement for graduation in our juvenile drug court program but not a graduation requirement in the adult program.

Question 3 Response 4 Themes:

- Senses of accomplishment, hope, and satisfaction
- More successful
- Improved employment
- Improved financial security
- JV v adult, include in future research with the importance of education on recidivism.

Question 3 Response 5:

Our goal is to integrate the participant back into the larger community, and education does this by improving employment opportunities, involving participants in the education community, raising self-esteem and instilling a sense of hope for a better future.

Question 3 Response 5 Themes:

- Community integration
- Improved employment opportunity
- Raise self-esteem
- Sense of hope for future

Question 3 Response 6:

Again, ideally, drug court participants should be seeking increased education opportunities, but it may look very different for each participant. Some participants may be seeking to take some courses to achieve their contractor's license. Others may be seeking to pass GED tests. Some may even be seeking to enroll in college. In the end, there has to be some exceptions because not everyone's circumstances are the same.

Question 3 Response 6 Themes:

- Different for each participant.
- Vocation, GED, or college.
- Circumstances are not the same. Individualize.

Question 3 Response 7:

This allows services to be provided to the participant while in treatment and therefore get support. Many of our participants have very little self-esteem and helping them with additional emotional support helps them get through education requirements more easily and with more success.

Question 3 Response 7 Themes:

- Support
- Low Self-esteem requires emotional support

Question 3 Response 8:

A sense of accomplishment and acknowledgment. The Drug Court team attends GED graduations and other graduations as they are invited, and the accomplishment is acknowledged in court by the judge and in other areas (treatment sessions, P.O. visits, etc.). For some, this is the first time they have really accomplished something so big.

Question 3 Response 8 Themes:

- Accomplishment and acknowledgement as two distinct concepts.

Question 3 Response 9:

Individuals who have attained a GED, HS diploma or college degree before graduation has a greater self esteem, direction in their lives, and a feeling of community.

Question 3 Response 9 Themes:

- Self-esteem
- Feeling of community

Question 3 Response 10:

I may not understand the question, but I feel that I have in some ways answered this question in the past questions. Our teams experience in requiring or encouraging additional education for participants is usually one that yields positive responses from participants, their families and community.

Question 3 Response 10 Themes:

- Positive responses participants and family
- Community

Question 4 Response 1:

GED. Possible enrollment in and success in classes in the later stages of drug court.

Question 4 Response 1 Themes:

- GED
- Enrollment and success

Question 4 Response 2:

Participants should have positive, prosocial activities to take up their time, whether it is a job or school. They do not need to attain a diploma, but if one does not work, attending is a good activity to replace destructive habits of the past.

Question 4 Response 2 Themes:

- Positive, pro-social activities
- Job or school
- Not working should attend school
- Diploma attainment not necessary

Question 4 Response 3:

I support having at least a GED or high school diploma as a requirement, although as a program we do not require any educational attainment.

Question 4 Response 3 Themes:

- GED

Question 4 Response 4:

In juvenile programs, the youth should be current with high school credits and on track to graduate or have obtained a high school diploma or GED, depending on their ages/enrolled grade level. In the ideal adult drug court/ world, no participant would graduate without a high school education equivalent. Such is not a requirement in my adult program as capacity pressure prioritizes the minimum six month continuous verified sobriety requirement and attainment and maintenance of employment in order to

keep total population numbers within capacity. That is, we cannot easily accommodate the additional time in program necessary for the participant to complete educational programs given the press of new entrants at the front door. Nonetheless, a good number of our participants enter with completed high school level educations and many obtain employment while in the program.

Question 4 Response 4 Themes:

- Sobriety and employment
- Should have high school equivalent

Question 4 Response 4 Other:

- Limited resource availability and program time due to large adult program volume

Question 4 Response 5:

At least a GED, and then whatever education the participant is capable of to obtain full time living wage employment.

Question 4 Response 5 Themes:

- GED
- Education to obtain full time living wage employment

Question 4 Response 6:

Again, this should be individualized based a variety of factors.

Question 4 Response 6 Themes:

- Individualized
- Encouragement from program staff

Question 4 Response 7:

they need to at least get a GED, and additional education if they have the capacity and interest for it.

Question 4 Response 7 Themes:

- GED
- Additional education if capacity and interest

Question 4 Response 8:

We require before a participant graduates from our drug court that they be enrolled in educational or vocational programs that are approved by the court or be employed. At times educational attainment is not realistic (possibly due to age, or the participant may already have a diploma, GED, or degree).

Question 4 Response 8 Themes:

- Enrolled in educational or vocational program or employed

Question 4 Response 8 Other:

- Not always realistic

Question 4 Response 9:

Each person is discussed on a case by case basis depending on their abilities, mental health, and living situation. Most everyone is encouraged to advance their education in some way.

Question 4 Response 9 Themes:

- Individualized

Question 4 Response 10:

Currently our court requires the participant to obtain the GED or High School Diploma if they have not achieved that goal. We do not have requirements for additional education. However, further education and training is encouraged and will be a positive asset to the participant. Many participants will complete their GED and then go on to further their skills and knowledge with additional education that will place them in skilled job they will thrive in.

Question 4 Response 10 Themes:

- GED/High School goal
- Education encouraged
- Education provides skills and knowledge for skilled job

Question 5 Response 1:

in general terms, we require full time employment, education, caregiving or a full time combination thereof in the later stages of drug court participation. Earlier priorities include honesty, abstinence (though relapse may occur in early stages) and showing up for court, PO appointments, drug treatment. I would not put community college on the list in the early stages. This is particularly important for meth dependent (addict) persons because of the damage meth does to the brain. Repair can occur with sustained abstinence, but sustained abstinence is difficult at first.

Question 5 Response 2:

Just as the job requirement is 30 hours of work, or more, a student should carry a full time load.

Question 5 Response 3:

do not understand the question

Question 5 Response 4:

Any combination of education, training and/or employment that will enable participant self sufficiency.

Question 5 Response 5:

They need to be literate, and some need English language skills.

Question 5 Response 6:

I'm not certain.

Question 5 Response 7:

can't think of any

Question 5 Response 8:

Vocational training

Question 5 Response 9:

Not sure

Question 5 Response 10:

I am not sure there should be any other measure.

Question 6 Response 1:

Yes, though I would say we don't always enforce it. It depends on individual case factors.

Question 6 Response 1:

Yes.

Question 6 Response 2:

no - should be though, in my opinion

Question 6 Response 3:

It's an ideal goal not attained here for reasons described two questions back. We encourage and facilitate, but not mandate, high school equivalent education or attaining and maintaining employment.

Question 6 Response 4:

Yes.

Question 6 Response 5:

No

Question 6 Response 6:

Either work on it or having it by the time of graduation.

Question 6 Response 7:

No, but it is highly encouraged since we get reports if they are not attending their GED classes as agreed or ordered. This helps to light the fire under the participant to achieve.

Question 6 Response 8:

We are moving toward that model. We review each person's ability to complete that requirement. Some take longer to get stable from drug use and run out of time to complete that requirement.

Question 6 Response 9:

yes

Question 7 Response 1:

See earlier answer. Participants, in later stages of participation, are required to seek and maintain full time employment, education, caregiving or combination thereof.

Question 7 Response 2:

Yes.

Question 7 Response 3:

No, but should be though, in my opinion.

Question 7 Response 4:

It seems I'm anticipating your questions ... Please see last answer.

Question 7 Response 5:

yes

Question 7 Response 6:

Not everyone. Some folks are on disability.

Question 7 Response 7:

yes

Question 7 Response 8:

yes

Question 7 Response 9:

Yes.

Question 7 Response 10:

Our program requires a participant to be working at least 32 hours a week or a combination of work and school 32 hours a week before they are eligible to graduate.

