

The Two-Year College

EDHI 8020

Syllabus, Final Version

Institute of Higher Education
University of Georgia

Fall, 2006
CTCLI

J. Douglas Toma

I. Overview and Objectives

I look forward to working with you in the fall. Below are the books that we will read during the semester. I have three aims for the course. The first is to introduce you to the major debates related to the purposes and directions of the two-year college in the United States. The second is to explore concepts and issues in strategy, management, and instruction at community colleges. Finally, the course centers on books. My third objective is thus for you to become familiar with significant scholarly work about community colleges and improve your ability to master arguments presented in book form.

I will prepare discussion questions roughly two weeks in advance of each class meeting, as indicated below, and will ask for written responses to them to be posted to the course webCT site during the week before we meet. I will also ask for an essay following each class reacting to our discussion. We will thus use the web platform regularly as a means to remain connected between monthly class sessions. The project for the course will be on modeling a community or technical college as a complex system. We will devote our final class session to a discussion of the project. I will provide more detail as the semester unfolds.

II. General Information

A. Meetings

The course is for three credits. We will meet five times during the semester at Meigs Hall on Fridays from 430p-9p:

Friday, August 18
Friday, September 8
Friday, September 29
Friday, November 3
Friday, December 1

B. Office and Office Hours

You may reach me outside of class by visiting my office at 8 Meigs Hall, via telephone, or through electronic mail. My preference is that you first contact me by e-mail, whenever possible. I check e-mail messages at least daily, even when away from Athens. My e-mail address is: jdt@uga.edu. You may reach me by telephone via his assistant, Jennifer Kilcrease, at 706-542-0576. The fax number at the Institute is 706-542-7588.

III. Texts

We have ordered the assigned texts through the University of Georgia Bookstore. I encourage you to find copies in libraries to reduce expenses. You may also find it more convenient and faster to use an Internet bookstore such as amazon.com.

IV. Assignments and Expectations

A. Assignments

There are several assignments over the course of the semester. These are detailed below.

B. Electronic Mail and Attachments

Please submit all of your coursework to me via electronic mail attachment to my regular account: jdt@uga.edu. Please save your work in a format readable by a Macintosh using the latest version of Microsoft Word.

C. Attendance, Class Participation, and Behavior

I expect that you will contact me, preferably by electronic mail, before any class meeting that he is teaching that you will not be able to attend. Missing a single class amounts to missing one-fifth of all of the sessions at which we will be together and must, therefore, have a negative effect on your evaluation for the course. Furthermore, your attendance is obviously essential to your class participation, which is an important element of your final grade. I define participation broadly to include your careful attention to discussions, as well as your direct contributions to our discussions. Finally, I expect your adherence to University of Georgia policies on plagiarism and student academic conduct.

D. Evaluation

I will use two primary criteria in determining your course grade. The first is the quality of your contributions in class and your regular class attendance. The second is the level of sophistication that you display in your written work, both papers you complete as an individual and those you do as part of a group (if applicable). Both are products of your attention to the assigned readings and your class attendance. I encourage you to read carefully and bring any questions that you might have to the attention of the class. I also encourage you to plan ahead to avoid conflicts with our scheduled class meetings. Finally, I do not assign a relative value or weight to any assignment in determining overall grades, instead viewing all work in total.

V. Topics and Meetings

1. Purposes

Questions Posted: Tuesday, August 8
Responses Due: Wednesday, August 16
Class Discussion: Friday, August 18
Essay Question Distributed: Tuesday, August 22
Essay Due: Monday, August 28

Background Reading (not necessarily discussed in class):

Cohen, Arthur M. The Shaping of American Higher Education: Emergency and Growth of the Contemporary System (Jossey-Bass, 1998) ISBN: 0787910295; LA226 .C66 1998

[please note: I expect you to read all background reading carefully and reserve the right to question the group about it in class or online]

Discussion Questions:

- Cohen attempts to offer both a chronological and thematic history of American higher education – one that addresses different institution types, including those often overlooked in standard histories. Does he miss or devote too little attention to particular themes?
- Is his approach to various institution types reasonably balanced? Is it perhaps too balanced with him not devoting sufficient attention to certain key areas?
- Describe what is most striking to you about the history of American higher education. What is most disappointing?
- Given the history of American higher education, what trends do you see being most prominent during the next two decades?

Reading for Discussion:

Cohen, Arthur M. and Brawer, Florence B. The American Community College, 4th Edition (Jossey-Bass, 2002) ISBN: 078796011X; LB2328 .C55 2003.

- Chapter 1: Background
- Chapter 2: Students
- Chapter 12: Scholarship
- Chapter 13: Social Role
- Chapter 14: Future

Discussion Questions:

- What are the expectations and priorities of the community college and how have these evolved over the past three decades?
- Have these expectations and priorities remained true to the circumstances that led to the establishment of the contemporary system of community colleges and the principles valued by the founding generation?
- Discuss the diverse missions of the community college in terms of the students it serves.
- Both in terms of your own practical experience and the argument in Cohen and Brawer, what are the gaps in theory and research about community colleges?
- Discuss Chapter 13 in terms of the argument in Grubb and Lazerson – is The Education Gospel a path breaking argument or is it more of a synthesis of other thinking?
- Are you hopeful about the future of American community colleges? Why or why not? Please refer specifically to Chapter 14 in Cohen and Brawer in your response.

Grubb, W. Norton and Marvin Lazerson. The Education Gospel: The Economic Power of Schooling (Harvard, 2004) ISBN: 0674015371; LC66 .G78 2004.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the main arguments in Grubb and Lazerson? If asked to summarize the book in a sentence, what would you say?

- What is, in your view, the central purpose of education at the technical or community college? Is it confined to workforce education or should students and society generally expect more (and is thus unreasonable to state a single purpose)?
- To what degree should society reasonably rely upon education to solve various social and economic problems, particularly our most difficult ones as a nation? When education “sells” itself in these terms to attract resources, is it risking its long-term credibility?
- Is the authors’ contention that increasing levels of education do not necessary correspond to the demands of the labor force sensible? Why or why not?
- How does your response to the questions immediately above differ in the context of the technical college and technical education side of community colleges versus, say, training at research universities for professional positions?
- Does worker preparation necessarily squeeze out civic education and what the authors term “learning for its own sake” in technical education? Is this necessary a troublesome outcome?
- What about the argument in the book about schooling as a mechanism of equity reinforcing social inequity? Please comment.
- Is it possible to, as the authors recommend, create environments in education that advance both economic and civic goals and diminish a preoccupation with narrow work skills?

Dougherty, Kevin J. The Contradictory College: The Conflict Origins, Impacts, and Futures of the Community College (SUNY, 1994) ISBN: 0791419568; LB2328.15 .U6 D68 1994 (available as e-book at UGA Libraries)

Discussion Questions:

- Why did Dougherty title his book “The Contradictory College?” What is so inherently contradictory about community colleges?
- What is the impact of community colleges, according to Dougherty, in terms of students, the economy, and institutions receiving transfer students?
- Do you agree with the defenders of community colleges who argue that community colleges serve all three of the above constituents or the critics who contend that students suffer to advance the other two ends? Please explain.
- How does Dougherty’s portrait of the emergence of the community college differ from that suggested by the other books? Are you persuaded that the community college emerged from a grass roots movement or was imposed by elites? Does this really matter, as Dougherty suggests, in how one views the contemporary purposes of the community college?
- Does Dougherty support the argument in Grubb and Lazerson about the vocational emphasis being the product of negative trends as opposed to an original and worthwhile goal of community colleges?

Optional Reading:

Brint, Steven and Jerome Karabel. The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900-1985 (Oxford, 1991). ISBN: 0195048164; LA226 .B74 1989

Essay Questions:

Instead of writing an essay on the readings and our class discussion, I would like you to write an e-mail message to me at this address <jdtdt@uga.edu> discussing, in general, your reaction to your first weekend in graduate school. Please consider the following questions in your response:

How do you think the program will serve your own needs as a professional?

How do you think it will serve your institution?

How do you think it will serve your own intellectual and personal development?

What are you most looking forward to?

What are you most apprehensive about?

Did the first class session provide you with new insights, new knowledge, new conceptual models, new practical tools?

Which of the four areas immediately above is most important to you?? Which is least relevant?

What do I need to know about you as a student to be effective as a teacher and advisor?

What do I need to know about your cohort to be effective as a teacher and advisor?

2. Policy and Management

Questions Posted: Thursday, August 31

Responses Due: Friday, September 8 (before noon)

Class Discussion: Friday, September 8

Essay Question Distributed: Monday, September 11

Essay Due: Monday, September 18

Background Reading (not necessarily discussed in class):

Cohen, Arthur M. Managing Community Colleges: A Handbook for Effective Practice (Jossey-Bass, 1994); ISBN 1-55542-620-4; LB2341 .C555 1994

[please note: Cohen is still in print but expensive to purchase; we can discuss sharing copies in class in August]

Discussion Questions:

None

Reading for Discussion:

Townsend, Barbara K. and Susan B. Twombly, eds. Community Colleges: Policy in Future Contexts (Ablex, 2001) ISBN: 1-567-50522-8; LB2328.15 .U6 C665 2001

Discussion Questions:

- Discuss the relative merits of a seamless K-14 or K-16 education system and the role of technical and community colleges within it. How does (or might) realizing such an approach to postsecondary education really change the mission, aspirations, governance, organization, management and culture of technical and community colleges?

- Are there important differences among Orr and Bragg, Dougherty, and Girardi and Stein, both conceptual and philosophical as well as practical, in more fully connecting K-12 and postsecondary education? In other words, is there consensus (at least among these authors) in whether we should have seamlessness, how we should approach achieving it, and how we should measure outcomes associated with it?
- Both federal and state policy influences technical and community colleges. Please name three important influences of federal policy on strategy at technical community colleges (see the definition of strategy in the last question under the Cohen and Brawer reading). Please name three important influences of state policy on day-to-day operations at technical and community colleges.
- Consider the Richardson and de los Santos framework. As an institution level leader, in what type of system would you most like to be situated? What about as a system level leader? Does this necessarily correspond to the approach that gives one the most power and influence – or are there merits to ceding some power and influence for greater coherence and efficiency?
- Are you persuaded that two-year colleges should be involved in remediation? Where would it be most efficient to place such work?
- Discuss retention at the community college. Does it really matter if students are securing satisfactory employment? Please ground your discussion in the chapters by Higginbottom and Romano and Jalemo.
- Having read an edited volume here and volumes like Grubb and Lazerson or Levin written by a given author or authors, what are the relative merits to each approach? In other words, are there advantages to authored books as opposed to edited books – and vice versa?

Reading for Discussion:

Cohen and Brawer

Chapter 4: Governance and Administration

Chapter 5: Finances

Chapter 7: Student Services

Discussion Questions:

- Is the overall context at technical and community colleges sufficiently distinct that theory and research centered on four-year institutions is inapplicable (or not particularly applicable) to governance, administration, finance, and student services challenges at community and technical colleges? Accordingly, should the exploration of and training in technical and community college management be separate from the study of and doctoral programs in higher education management generally – are these really two different academic fields?
- According to Cohen and Brawer, but also drawing on the other work assigned, what are the management features particular to technical and community colleges? Please focus on academic affairs, administration and finance, and student services, but discuss any other areas that you feel are relevant.
- How does the governance of technical and community colleges – in Georgia through DTAE – shape strategy and management on individual campuses? Is centralization more beneficial or detrimental as individual institutions seek to maximize opportunities in their service regions?

- Assess the discussion of Cohen and Brawer in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. Do they “get it,” particularly given the context in Georgia?
- Can management be considered apart from strategy? According to Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, and Lampel (1998), strategy is a plan, but it is also a pattern and thus consistent over time; a position, locating particular products in particular markets; a perspective, the fundamental ways an organization does things; and a ploy, a specific maneuver intended to outwit an opponent or competitor. Do Cohen and Brawer focus solely on management? Would their work be stronger if it was more situated in the context of strategy – or is simply writing clearly about management challenges sufficient?

Levin, John S. Globalizing the Community College: Strategies for Change in the Twenty-First Century (Palgrave, 2001); ISBN 0-312-23906-8; LB2328.15 .U6 L48 2001

Discussion Questions:

- Viewing both Levin’s book and chapter in Townsend and Twombly, do you agree that technical and community colleges are both buffered and buffeted by globalization? Given the context at your institution, is there a reasonable argument to be made that forces apart from globalization matter much more in strategy and operations at technical and community colleges? If you answered yes to the question above, should your institution be concerned that it is missing the “next wave?”
- Drawing on Levin’s illustrations from the U.S. and Canada, discuss how technical and community colleges are globalizing and how this has reshaped institutions.
- Levin notes the pros and cons of technical and community colleges extending their missions to embrace the needs of the global economy. If you had to take a side in a debate here, which would you prefer? Why?
- How does globalization fit within the broader trend of technical and community colleges broadening their missions and functions? Is it another function added on, like say a charter high school or a training center, or is globalization better described as cutting across functions?
- Are initiatives intended to respond to global forces necessarily (or often or even occasionally) at odds with the traditional portrayal of technical and community colleges as “democracy’s college” – open access and responsive to the needs of local communities?

Essay Question:

For those interested in technical colleges, please consider the intersection of DTAE-level policy and campus-level strategy and management at technical colleges in Georgia. What degree of statewide coordination is preferable relative to campus autonomy? In other words, what are the relative advantages of coordination -- and what are the disadvantages -- for individual technical campus, for the technical college system, and all post-secondary education in the state? Finally, suggest a preferable way to shape a system of two-year colleges in the state (both technical and community), considering mission (fundamental purposes of institutions), governance (who makes what decisions), and organization (how institutions and individuals are arrayed to do their work) -- or defend the present approach. Please draw on the readings from the past two sessions, as applicable, citing them where you draw material directly.

For those interested in community colleges, please consider the intersection of USG-level policy and campus-level strategy and management at community colleges in Georgia. What degree of statewide coordination is preferable relative to campus autonomy? In other words, what are the relative advantages of coordination -- and what are the disadvantages -- for individual community

campus, for the community colleges in the USG system, and all post-secondary education in the state? Finally, suggest a preferable way to shape a system of two-year colleges in the state (both technical and community), considering mission (fundamental purposes of institutions), governance (who makes what decisions), and organization (how institutions and individuals are arrayed to do their work) -- or defend the present approach. Please draw on the readings from the past two sessions, as applicable, citing them where you draw material directly.

3. Faculty and Curriculum

Questions Posted: Tuesday, September 19

Responses Due: Thursday, September 28

Class Discussion: Friday, September 29

Essay Question Distributed: Monday, October 2

Essay Due: Wednesday, October 11

Background Reading (not necessarily discussed in class):

Cohen and Brawer

Chapter 3: Faculty

Chapter 6: Instruction

Chapter 8: Vocational

Chapter 9: Developmental

Chapter 10: Community

Discussion Questions:

None

Reading for Discussion:

Grubb, W. Norton. Honored But Invisible: An Inside Look at Teaching in Community Colleges (Routledge, 1999) ISBN: 0 415 92164 3; LB2331 .G78 1999

Discussion Questions:

- Explain the title "Honored but Invisible." In other words, what does Grubb suggest in giving his book this title? For those teaching at community and technical colleges, what is honored and what is invisible?
- Is it realistic for teaching to be construed as a collective activity, rather than an individual and idiosyncratic one? Are institutions better served when it is? Are students? Are faculty themselves? Is there a negative side to Grubb's "collective" argument – is there the potential for abuse here by institutions?
- To what degree do respective variables such as these influence the professional lives of two-year college faculty – types of students taught, resources available, one's educational background and training in teaching, networks of peers, and institutional culture and incentives? In other words, do some of these variables matter more than others?
- What is a "teaching institution?" Is this empty rhetoric or are there real differences between and among institution types?
- Is it fair to say that technical and community colleges claim the teaching mission as paramount, but do little formally to improve and advance teaching on their campuses? Is teaching really through trial and error? Is that, to a significant degree, inevitable in any classroom setting?

- Is the divide between administrators and faculty as wide as Grubb suggests? Is this necessarily problematic? Is it more problematic than in other institutional settings given that technical and community colleges are “teaching institutions?”
- What constitutes “good teaching” at technical and community colleges, according to Grubb? Do you tend to agree with him – does he overstate anything or leave something out? Is there a difference here between academic and occupational courses? How do issues related to literacy and remediation affect “good teaching?”
- Does technology hold promise for improving teaching? How about learning communities, integrating academic and occupational education, and other emerging approaches?
- Are low standards an issue at technical and community colleges or are standards generally appropriate, particularly given open access? Are standards flexible enough to accommodate the diversity of student and courses found particularly at community colleges, where there are students taking courses for transfer to four-year institutions as well as students in remedial programs?
- Discuss “mission drift” in the context of teaching. Are technical and community colleges doing too much or losing focus such that teaching – and learning – suffers?
- Discuss the research design that Grubb and his colleagues employed – drawing data qualitatively through multiple means, including interviews, documents, and observations. How might a study using a different approach – say one based on survey data – yielded a different book? Is not having interviewed students here problematic?

Reading for Discussion:

Levin, John S., Susan Kater, and Richard L. Wagoner. Community College Faculty: At Work in the New Economy (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) ISBN: 1403966672; LB2331 .L475 2006

Discussion Questions:

- Levin and his colleagues attempt to place community college teaching in the context of the new economy. Does their overall argument resonate with you? Are external forces – social, political, and economic – increasingly shaping the faculty role at technical and community colleges? Are they doing so to the same extent that they are shaping institutions generally?
- Are technical and community college faculty “worker bees,” or do they have more autonomy than that – do they shape their own careers, in other words? What does it mean to say they are “part professionals?” Is being a “worker bee” to some extent natural or inevitable?
- In Chapter 4, Levin and his colleagues argue that community and technical college faculty are increasingly participating in governance in exchange for them being more productive. Is their argument persuasive? Are these institutions moving beyond a more legalistic framework of faculty-administration relations, grounded in contracts, toward a different model?
- Does technology really “change the game” for technical and community college faculty to the extent that the authors argue? Please consider the various uses of technology, including its use in distributed learning.
- Please discuss the impact of part-time faculty in technical and community colleges. Are these adjunct faculty really “globalized labor?” Are you persuaded by the argument that it is akin to workers in other industries?

- Are the educational values of community and technical colleges (including as discussed by Dougherty and others) naturally at odds with the entrepreneurial culture of institutions (including economic development)? What do Levin and his colleagues argue here – and do you agree? Is an accommodation between these values and this culture possible? Is it desirable?
- How is this book an extension of Levin's book "Globalizing the Community College?" Do you find the concept of the community college as "nouveau" compelling?

Essay Question:

Your president has assigned you the task of organizing new faculty orientation for your college. She has provided little guidance, but you know she and the college are feeling pressured to improve teaching. You have a template from previous years for the technical aspects of the orientation and are comfortable there. There will be presentations on benefits, a talk by the president on the recent strategic plan and her vision for the institution, a campus tour – enough to fill the first day. You feel strongly that there needs to be more – a second day focusing on other topics important to new faculty members. You do not have a budget for the orientation, aside from what is needed to purchase donuts and coffee and a box lunch.

In an essay (not a memorandum), please address the following questions:

Why is the second day so important to you?

Should the session include part-time faculty as well as full-time faculty? What about both vocational and academic faculty together? How will you address the "is it fair to have part-timers take so much time . . ." argument?

What topics will you cover and how much time will you devote to each? Describe each in sufficient detail so that your colleague will understand your purposes in including it on the program and your objectives for the session. Here, please refer to our readings, class discussions, as well as your own experiences. In crafting your discussion here, which should be the bulk of your essay, perhaps it will help to consider what you can offer that will cause your colleagues to crave being in the session and not feel compelled to hide in the hallway during it.

How are you going to present the material? Are you interested in "creative" approaches, such as the "good" teaching described by Grubb? If you are going to have breakout sessions, for instance, please explain why this is necessary?

Who are you going to involve from your college or elsewhere in delivering this content? How are you going to shape what they say so that the sessions fit together and are focused on the purposes and objectives you describe above without micromanaging?

Are you going to reach various campus survival skills, including those outside of class, such as understanding the president's "idiosyncrasies?" (You are comfortable, knowing your president, that there will not be repercussions for doing so.)

Finally, once your agenda is complete please reflect on its development? What did you add – or more likely delete – from your initial conception? How did you address questions about whether your approach is realistic – could it really be implemented? Did you learn something (perhaps about yourself) that you did not know when you started?

4. Culture

Questions Posted: Wednesday, October 25

Responses Due: Wednesday, November 8

Class Discussion: Saturday, November 11

Essay Question Distributed: Monday, November 6

Essay Due: Wednesday, November 15

Reading for Discussion:

Shaw, Kathleen M., James R. Valadez, and Robert A. Rhoades, Eds. Community Colleges As Cultural Texts: Qualitative Explorations of Organizational and Student Culture (SUNY, 1999) ISBN 079144290X; LB2328.15 .U6 C656 1999 (available as e-book at UGA Libraries);

Discussion Questions:

- The editors contend that technical and community colleges can either reproduce or dismantle inequality and that that latter is served by educational practices that empower and transform students. Is the situation really one of two extremes?
- What do the editors mean by technical and community colleges being “cultural texts”? Are there shortcomings inherent in using the “text” metaphor here? Does the approach, as intended, really focus on the positions from which faculty, staff, and students speak? Are, for instance, students really “equal participants in knowledge construction,” as the editors intend in using a critical approach? Finally, are you comfortable with the assumption in critical approaches that findings are not drawn purely empirically but rather as the result of the interplay between theory and research?
- Is recognizing and embracing cultural diversity necessary if technical and community colleges are to provide for the upward mobility of their students?
- Discuss the concept of emotional and social capital in the McGrath and Van Buskirk chapter. Is the inclusive culture that comes from recognizing these necessary, in your view, to build successful programs such as the two programs discussed in Chapter 2?
- What is a democratic pedagogy, as discussed by Goto? Is this really different than what technical and community college teachers regularly attempt? Is such an approach realistic, including in the settings in which you work, given the challenges discussed? Would it work better, in your view, in a more homogenous environment?
- Does Amey’s contention that bureaucratic and hierarchical organizational structures of community colleges tend to isolate and alienate those within these organization make sense given your experience at technical or community colleges? Is dissatisfaction always the fault of the organization – or does Amey understate the influence of individuals here on their own professional lives?
- Several authors, including Valadez in Chapter 5, are troubled by technical and community colleges serving to socialize students into becoming workers pleasing to local businesses. Are you troubled by the tendency of these institutions, in programs such as Valadez describes, to prepare students workers for low-wage, low-skilled jobs?
- Discuss Rhoads’ argument about monoculturalism and multiculturalism as defining types of faculty. In practice, as opposed to simply theory, does the former really suppress meaningful differences – and does the latter really embrace them?

- Is the link between a particular type of institutional culture and student success identified by Trujillo and Diaz sensible, in your view? Is this all that matters in, say, effective practice in transfer?
- Discuss Shaw's argument about multiple identities defining technical or community college students. How is this useful in managing institutions or crafting approaches to teaching? Does Shaw's conception conflict with the rationale behind the general approach Laden describes in Chapter 9?
- Describe the new vision for the technical and community college that Rendon proposes in the concluding chapter. Does it resonate with you? Is it realistic? Are institutions developing the new generation of leaders needed? Are graduate programs such as ours?

Reading for Discussion:

Rhoads, Robert A. and James R. Valadez. Democracy, Multiculturalism, and the Community College: A Critical Perspective (Garland, 1996) ISBN 081532197X; LB2328.15 .U6 R46 1996

Discussion Questions:

- Discuss what Rhoads and Valadez call "border knowledge." What is it and how does it connect with cultural diversity in the context of technical and community colleges?
- Is the knowledge taught in technical or community colleges, particularly in applied fields, necessarily "authoritarian," given how Rhoads and Valadez frame the term? Is this necessarily problematic? Within the technical and community college, does multiculturalism sit in opposition to authoritarian views of knowledge? Must it?
- Is there really a tension or opposition in the technical and community college between "monolithic centers of power" and "democratic constellations in which organizational structures reflect diverse cultures and perspectives" (page 9)? Is the reality – and should the reality – be somewhere in the middle? In other words, are democratic constellations realistic in an environment that measures efficiency and effectiveness as it does? Is the problem here that these measures need to change?
- Summarize the theoretical framework that Rhoads and Valadez propose. Is drawing on feminism, critical theory, and postmodernism, as they suggest, useful as managers and teachers in technical and community colleges approach their work?
- Discuss the multiple roles of community colleges, as defined by Rhoads and Valadez, and how these relate to multicultural issues. Do you find their approach to be sensible? Why or why not?
- When they suggest that issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status have fragmented the academy, are Rhoads and Valadez offering an accurate portrayal of the technical and community college? Are their illustrations throughout the book persuasive here? If not, does this undermine their overarching argument?
- Discuss the case studies of immigrant education (Chapter 4), community responsiveness (Chapter 5), and developmental education (Chapter 6). Even with their shortcomings, are these efforts a reflection of a new order in technical and community colleges – one dominated by multiculturalism – or are they essentially extensions of traditional approaches?

- Qualitative research requires what is termed “thick description.” Are the case studies that the authors offer satisfying in their approach? In other words, do they provide sufficient description and detail for the reader to really understand the contexts explored?
- Rhoads and Valadez are interested in how institutions – technical and community colleges here – shape self-identification (as workers in Chapter 3) and critical awareness (as discussed in Chapter 7). Discuss how they consider these concepts within the context of the technical and community college. How important are such concepts as self-identification and critical awareness in building what you believe is a successful technical or community college? In other words, should an institution that does not focus here be called into question?
- What would the ideal technical or community college look like, according to the authors? How does this conform to what Grubb and Lazerson champion? Consider the tension, as framed by both sets of authors, between education for work and developing an educated citizenry.
- In the end, does the argument that institutions should broaden, not narrow, their focus to embrace democratic education through organizational multiplicity resonate with you? If so, do Rhoads and Valadez have the ammunition needed to persuade those with the power and influence to make this a reality?

Essay Question:

None assigned. Work on readings and questions for next session.

5. Change

Questions Posted: Wednesday, October 25

Responses Due: Wednesday, November 29

Class Discussion: Friday, December 1

Essay Question Distributed: Monday, December 4

Essay Due: Thursday, December 14

Reading for Discussion:

Bolman, Lee and Terrance Deal, *Reframing Organizations, 3d Edition* (Jossey-Bass, 2004), paperback, ISBN 0787908215

Discussion Questions:

- Are corporate illustrations really applicable to community and technical colleges, particularly to the academic side of institutions?
- Is restructuring inevitable in any organization due to environmental shifts, emerging technology, growth in the organization, changes in leadership, etc.? What do Bolman and Deal argue – and do you agree?
- Consider the overarching dilemmas in structuring organizations, such as differentiation v. integration and gaps v. overlaps. Is there a balance point here? Is it possible to find? How might community and technical colleges differ from other organizations, particularly corporate settings?
- What best characterizes community and technical colleges: baseball, football, or basketball? Does the answer differ in different parts of the institution?

- Even with the shortcomings associated with viewing organizations as machines or using only the structure frame, is it still somewhat necessary at community and technical colleges to focus heavily on structure?
- What are the core assumptions of the human resources frame? Do you agree with them as they apply within technical and community colleges? Do concepts such as “people and organizations need each other” apply similarly across institution types within the two-year sector, for instance?
- Consider technical and community colleges within McGregor’s Theory X (hard and soft) and Theory Y. Does one apply more readily? Does the answer here differ relative to different parts of a given institution or relative to different institution types in the two-year sector? What about the two-year sector compared with the four-year sector?
- What does Argyris suggest that individuals do in response to frustration in organizations generally? Do these same responses apply within technical and community colleges, as a rule?
- How does what Bolman and Deal call the “new employment contract” – the turn to consultants and the move toward downsizing across the U.S. economy – shape contemporary higher education and two-year colleges within them? Where do these trends tend to arise across and within technical and community colleges? Is higher education more immune to such market pressures when it is more mission centered? What are the advantages and disadvantages of these trends in our industry?
- Does long-term success in an organization depend on investing in employees and responding to their needs, as Bolman and Deal suggest? Is higher education, in general, investing and responding to the degree necessary? What about in particular areas of particular technical and community colleges?
- Consider the human resources function at technical and community colleges. Do institutions tend to follow the human resources principles and practices that Bolman and Deal outline? Is TQM, as applied within higher education, a potential answer – or is it, as Birnbaum suggests in his book on the topic, a management fad?
- In higher education, what tends to motivate people to act – is it more Model I or Model II behavior, as Argyris and Schon propose? Does this differ based on institution type or role within an institution? How might gender and patriarchy, as raised by Morgan, influence action within organizations? Do organizations operate on “male” terms?
- Discuss the influence of politics – the political frame – on technical and community colleges. Is it one of four equal frames – or does politics matter more . . . or less?
- Within technical and community colleges, what tends to bring people together into culture or causes them to fragment into subcultures within an organization?
- Does manipulating culture tend to serve the interests of institutions much more than the interests of individuals within these institutions? How do the forms of institutional culture such as myths, stories, and ritual, provide tools for shaping behavior within organization?
- In the end, how important is culture – symbolism, really – in organizations? Is the frame, as Bolman and Deal term it, essential in understanding and, more importantly, shaping organizational life?
- Is real organizational change grounded, first and foremost, in understanding organizational culture? Can one, even an insider, even ever grasp the culture of his or her organization

sufficiently to actually manipulate it? After all, as Bolman and Deal suggest, events have multiple meanings, people interpret experiences differently, life is ambiguous and uncertain, etc. and this undercuts rational strategy and decisions.

- In the end, do events and does process really matter more than what is produced, as Bolman and Deal argue? Is what is expressed, attracted, and legitimized really more significant in an organization than what is accomplished? What about in higher education and at different institution types, including across the two- and four-year sectors? What about in different functional areas of higher education?
- Having now explored each of Bolman and Deal's four frames, how are they best integrated? Is it possible, as the authors suggest, to match frames to situations? Consider the blind spots for each frame – not everything is rational (structural), human nature may not pure (human resources), politics may become a fixation (political), symbolism requires great artistry (symbolic). Do these shortcomings render the frames, in the end, not necessarily useless but of much less utility than it would appear?

Reading for Discussion:

Collins, Jim, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . and Others Don't* (HarperBusiness, 2001), hardcover, ISBN 0066620996

Collins, Jim, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors: A Monograph to Accompany Good to Great* (Collins, 2005), softcover, ISBN 0977326403

Discussion Questions:

- Collins argues that good is the enemy of great – and too often, institutions (and individuals) settle for good. Is the postsecondary education sector different, especially community and technical colleges? Is it enough to simply be good in postsecondary education, given the stakes (not just strategic but given the fundamental purposes of our sector)?
- Consider how the “fraternal twins” approach in Collins might apply to postsecondary education – a great twin and a good twin? Is it possible given that higher education does not have a measure like stock performance to empirically demonstrate the move from good to great relative to a twin organization?
- Applied to postsecondary education, must all “great” institutions have a great early history? Does this inherently disadvantage newer institutions or even sectors or postsecondary education? Is this a potential shortcoming in Collins' framework.
- What constitutes a great organization in the social sector? Collins suggests four outputs: (1) results in relationship to their mission (research, for example, at a research university); (2) impact, which Collins defines in terms of distinctiveness (would there be a hole that would be difficult to fill if the institution closed down tomorrow); (3) esteem, both from those within the organization (like students) and from experts in the field; (4) endurance; they last over time. Are these sensible as applied to higher education institutions generally and community and technical colleges more particularly?
- What types of corporations (and, by extension, institutions) break out to become great? How important is building momentum through disciplined people, disciplined thought, and then disciplined action? Collins calls this being a hedgehog and not a fox. Do postsecondary education institutions ever exhibit these characteristics?
- Collins suggest that organizations need to decide on who, then what; not strategy but people – getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off, and the right people in the right

seats. Is this possible in higher education, given tenure, etc.? Does it make sense to think in terms of units (minibuses?) instead of institutionally?

- Great firms have “level five” leadership, according to Collins. Do you accept his premise that all CEOs are capable, contribute to a team, can manage, and are effective leaders, but that level five leaders are humble and have ambition for the firm, its work, and its cause, not for themselves -- and they have the will to make it happen? What about Collins’ argument about great companies having home grown leaders? Why do higher education institutions so often look to the outside when these new presidents have a much harder time sorting through who to have and place on the bus -- they have not worked with their people so they do not know their capacities
- Organizational change, according to Collins, requires an understanding the core values and core purposes of the organization and then changing cultural and operational practices and specific goals and strategies. Do postsecondary education organizations confuse process with the core? Tenure may be a good example; it is a process not a core value or purpose. It is a means to an end, not an end in itself.

Essay Question:

If most businesses are willing to settle for being mediocre, why do postsecondary education institutions so consistently fixated on running more like a business? Does Collins good versus great approach offer a better approach? How does the four frames approach that Bolman and Deal offer help to answer this question?