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A Delphi Study of the Understanding of the Definition of Student Success
in California Community Colleges and Its Impact on Practice

A Dissertation by
Susan Topham

Brandman University
Irvine, California
School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

July 2016

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Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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July 2016

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ABSTRACT

A Delphi Study of the Understanding of the Definition of Student Success in California Community Colleges and Its Impact on Practice

by Susan Topham

With the signing of Senate Bill 1456, the Student Success Act of 2012, California state legislation has mandated that California Community Colleges deliver services that will increase the probability of student persistence and completion. There is a need for the Instruction and Student Services sides of the house to come together in a collaborative manner to address and resolve this challenge and therefore bridge the gap between these two divisions.

Research has demonstrated that Instructional Services and Student Services in California Community Colleges work in silos when it comes to addressing the challenge of student success. The purpose of this study is to identify the gap in understanding of the definitions of student success between Instruction and Student Services in California Community Colleges. Furthermore, the study will demonstrate the need for alignment between the Instruction and Student Services in order to achieve student success and meet the mandates of the California state legislation.

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In memory of my mother,
Dalva da Costa Leao Topham

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Earning a postsecondary degree or certificate is no longer just a pathway to opportunity for a gifted few; it is a requirement for the growing jobs of the new economy. Over this decade, employment in jobs requiring education beyond a high school diploma will grow more rapidly than employment in jobs that do not; of the 30 fastest growing occupations, more than half require postsecondary education. (The White House, n.d., para. 1)

With the average earnings of college graduates at a level that is twice as high as that of workers with only a high school diploma, higher education is now the clearest pathway into the middle class (Cooper, 2013).

In higher education, the United States has been overtaken internationally. In 1990, the United States ranked first in the world in 4-year degree attainment among 25- to 34-year-olds; today, the United States ranks 12th (Williams, 2014). The United States also experiences a college attainment gap. High school graduates from the wealthiest families in the United States are almost certain to continue on to higher education; just over half of high school graduates in the poorest quarter of families attend college (The White House, n.d.). The completion rate for low-income students is around 25% and more than half of college students' graduate within 6 years.

Community colleges are a medium for educational opportunity. Beginning nearly 100 years ago with Joliet Junior College, community colleges are publicly funded higher education at close-to-home facilities. Since then, community colleges have been inclusive institutions that welcome all who desire to learn, regardless of wealth, culture, or previous academic experience (Vaughan, 2006). The process of making higher

education available to the maximum number of people continues to evolve in the United States at 1,167 public and independent communities. The community college's mission is the source from which all of its activities emerge. In plain terms, the mission of the community college is to provide education for individuals, many of whom are adults, in its service region.

Community colleges hold a prominent place in American higher education. In California each year, community colleges provide instruction to approximately 2.6 million students, representing nearly 25% of the nation's community college student population (Little Hoover Commission, 2012). Across the state, 113 community colleges and 72 off-campus centers enroll students of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of academic preparation. It is a system that takes pride in serving the most diverse student population in the nation and values that diversity as its greatest asset. Most of its students are seeking enhanced skills, certificates, or college degrees that will prepare them for well-paying jobs. Community colleges also offer, though in fewer numbers than in the past, enrichment courses that serve students who seek personal growth and life-long learning.

According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges have a strong record of advancing the students and the communities it serves:

- The California Community Colleges are the state's largest workforce provider, offering associate degrees and short-term job training certificates in more than 175 different fields.
- The California Community Colleges train 70 percent of California nurses.

- The California Community Colleges train 80 percent of firefighters, law enforcement personnel, and emergency medical technicians.
- Twenty-eight percent of University of California graduates and 54 percent of California State University graduates transfer from a community college.
- Students who earn a California Community College degree or certificate nearly double their earnings within three years. (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011, p. 5)

However, there is another set of statistics that is a cause of concern. These figures relate to the large numbers of students who never make it to the finish line:

- Only 53.6 percent of the degree-seeking students ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. For African-American and Latino students, the rate is much lower (42 percent and 43 percent respectively).
- Of the students who enter our colleges at one level below transfer level in Math, only 46.2 percent ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. Of those students entering four levels below, only 25.5 percent ever achieve those outcomes.
- Of our students who seek to transfer to a four-year institution, only 41 percent are successful. For African Americans, only 34 percent succeed. For Latinos, the figure is 31 percent. (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011, pp. 6-7)

While these statistics reflect the challenges many students face, they also clearly demonstrate the need for the system to pledge to find new and better ways to serve the students of California (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011).

The challenges created between access, retention, economic pressures, and changing demographics have caused a shift in the research. Over the previous four decades, research focused on the student condition and the student characteristics, such as motivation, ability, and academic preparedness (Tinto, 2003). However, the more recent trend in research has shifted in focus to the relationship of student success and the institution. The community college system in California faces many challenges creating tension between student success and access. This tension leads to a distinct need for management best practices that support student success, in this case degree attainment and transfer, as well as institutional practices leading to improved student success (Alt, 2012).

Background

Improving college degree completion is important to the United States, as it continues to be economically competitive in a globalized marketplace. As the economy continues to evolve and become increasingly more complex, it is critical that the education system provides the American youth with the skill and critical thinking abilities that can strengthen and maintain the economy. Understanding this need, President Obama has identified education as a key component of his administration's agenda. In the President's February 24, 2009 address to a Joint Session of Congress, he announced his goal for the United States to become once again the nation with the largest percentage of college-educated citizens in the world (Pell Institute, 2011). This goal will require raising the percentage of Americans ages 25 to 64 with a college degree from 41.2% to nearly 60.0% (Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development [OECD], 2010). However, at the current rate, projections using the U.S. Census Bureau's Current

Population Survey indicates that only 46.4% of Americans in the target age group will have earned a college degree by 2020, leaving the nation nearly 24 million degrees shy of the 60% target rate.

In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate degree are projected to grow twice as fast as those requiring no college experience. And over the next decade, nearly 8 in 10 new jobs will require higher education and workforce training. To meet this need, President Obama set two national goals: by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, and community colleges will produce an additional 5 million graduates (Rath, Rock, & Laferriere, 2013).

As the largest part of the nation's higher education system, community colleges enroll more than 8 million students and are growing rapidly. They offer affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations, and they are particularly important for students who are older, working, or need remedial classes. Community colleges also partner with businesses, industry, and government to create custom-made training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs (The White House, 2011).

The base for community colleges is founded on open-door access policies. These policies, along with the low cost and relative flexibility of the community college curricula, provide the entrance point for many students described as at risk (Engle & Tinto, 2008), low-income, first-generation, English-as a-second-language (ESL) learners, and the academically underprepared students. Community colleges are faced with many challenges. Their vast mission and increased enrollment demand, coupled with the trend

of decreasing funding, comes at a time when a shift toward a student population requiring high-cost, intensive services is existent. Institutional best practices in the area of student success and institutional effectiveness are emerging to address the many challenges of the open-access institution. Together access, changing demographics, and management best practices in student success come together to provide the backdrop for community colleges, the challenges facing student success initiatives, and effective institutional practices methods for improving student success (College Board Advocacy & Policy Center, 2012).

The California Community Colleges are the largest of California's three segments of public higher education, which also include the University of California and the California State University Systems. With 2.6 million students, the California Community Colleges are the largest system of community college education in the United States. Operating through 113 colleges and 72 off-campus centers, California's 2-year institutions provide primary programs of study and courses, in both credit and noncredit categories, which address its three primary areas of mission: education for university transfer; career technical education; and basic skills (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). The community colleges also offer a wide range of programs and courses to support economic development, specialized populations, leadership development, and proficiency in co-curricular activities. The student population served by all of the community college programs is characterized by enormous diversity in age, in ethnicity and cultural heritage, in walks of life, in their economic situations, in academic preparation, and in their purposes and goals.

The impact community colleges may have relative to addressing degree attainment and building skilled labor is best summarized by Engle and Tinto (2008). Given the pressure to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy, it is in the shared national interest to act now to increase the number of students who not only enter college, but also more importantly earn their degrees, particularly bachelor's degrees. Lumina's work suggested that talent is the key, and higher education is the lever for developing it (Lumina Foundation, 2010). Further supporting White House policy and Lumina research findings, Johnson (2010) asserted economic projections show over 40% of jobs in California will require a minimum of a Bachelor's degree. Degree attainment and transfer through 4-year institutions is reaching the goals of student success (Chen et al., 2013).

The trend, seen in national data, is even more pronounced in California. Projections from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) demonstrate that California is at risk of losing its economic competitiveness due to an insufficient supply of highly skilled workers. Specifically, NCHEMS found that California's changing demographics, combined with low educational attainment levels among the state's fastest-growing populations, will translate into substantial declines in per capita personal income between now and 2020 (Jones & Ewell, 2009). It will place California last among the 50 states in terms of change in per capita personal income (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). In addition to the workforce data, other relevant data pertaining to persistence and completion is alarming. Only 53.6% of degree-seeking students ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. For African-American and Latino students, the rate is much lower (42% and

43%, respectively). Of the students who enter California Community Colleges at one level below transfer level in Math, only 46.2% ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. Of those students entering four levels below, only 25.5% ever achieve those outcomes. Of the students who seek to transfer to a 4-year institution, only 41% are successful. For African Americans, only 34% succeed in transferring to a 4-year institution. For Latinos, the figure is 31% transfer rate (California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), 2012).

The different missions and purposes of the California Community Colleges, the University of California, and the California State University system were clearly outlined in the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education. The community colleges were designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower division, undergraduate instruction. The community college mission was further revised in 1988 with the passage of Assembly Bill 1725, which called for comprehensive reforms in every aspect of community college education and organization (Johnson, 2010). Other legislation established a support framework, including the Matriculation Program, the Disabled Students Programs & Services, and the Equal Opportunity Programs & Services, to provide categorical funding and special services to help meet the needs of the diverse range of students in the California Community Colleges. Although many of these categorical programs have been seriously underfunded as a result of the state's fiscal crisis, they still afford an outline for addressing such needs as assessment, placement, counseling, adaptive education, and other approaches designed to promote student learning and student success.

President Obama's 2010 White House Summit and "Call for Action" in which he highlighted the community colleges as the key to closing the nation's skills gap. This message resonated with employers, economists, and educators in California. In response to President Obama's call to action, in 2010, California Senate Bill 1143 called on the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges to convene a task force to make recommendations on how to improve student success. This legislation was in response to concerns about the large numbers of students who never reach their educational goals.

The 20-member Student Success Task Force was composed of faculty, students, administrators, researchers, staff, and external Instructional Services personnel and Student Services personnel throughout California. This group was tasked to identify best practices for promoting student success and to develop statewide strategies to take these approaches to scale, while ensuring that educational opportunity for historically underrepresented students would not just be maintained, but strengthened. The final product was a report that presented a vision for California Community Colleges in the next decade, focused on what is needed to grow the economy, meeting the demands of California's evolving workplace, and inspiring and realizing the aspirations of students and families (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). Two important areas of focus include a stronger statewide coordination and oversight to allow for the sharing and facilitation of new and creative ideas to help students succeed, including the ability for California to "take to scale" the many good practices already in place; and better alignment of local district and college goals with the education and workforce needs of the state.

Despite low degree completion and transfer rates, current philosophies in California Community Colleges place priority on access over student success. The open-access attitude of the community college, coupled with fiscal severity and a student demographic requiring more significant student support services to succeed, is a challenge facing leadership in the community colleges. Institutional practices established around open-door policies have created a focus on access over success, which has led to declining degree completion and transfer rates. In an age when the continuous economic strength of the nation is dependent on significant gains in skilled labor, institutional practices leading to increased student success is important (Alt, 2012).

The challenges related to student success highlight the need for institutional best practices and to bring the role of community college leadership into focus. In the face of these significant challenges, national and state initiatives have emerged evidencing institutional best practices in student success (Alt, 2012). According to Alfred (1992), three major factors contributing to student success emerged in research almost two decades ago but are only now getting widespread recognition. These factors are student goals and expectations, organizational culture, and student outcomes. Alfred drew his results from a survey including over 2,000 executives and administrators. He sought to understand the most critical dimensions of student success in community colleges. Alfred conducted his research based on what he described as a pressing need to understand student success and the ways community colleges could improve. He noted the organizational culture was one of the most critical determining factors of student success. Tinto (2003) agreed with Alfred, highlighting the need for the strong presence of

leadership and enculturation of 31 management practices leading to student success for sustainable change to occur.

Without such commitment, programs for student success may begin, but they rarely prosper over the long term (Tinto, 2003). Shulock, Moore, Offensteing, and Kirlim (2008) highlighted the possibilities for student success in California. They provided their perspective on best practices as they relate specifically to California Community Colleges. In their report, they noted that practitioners know what works but they do not do it. In their view, institutional culture and academic/support policies in each community college contribute to strategies for increasing student success. Those strategies are increased readiness, early success, effective enrollment patterns, clear goals/pathways, intensive student support, and using data to inform decisions. Shulock and colleagues' (2008) work aligns with that of Kuh (2005) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE, 2006) in that each of the reports focuses on the importance of institutional best practices. Such practices mean starting with leaders creating a culture of student success and leveraging that culture to implement tightly interconnected programs and services and then utilizing data to inform continuous improvement.

The CCSSE's (2006) findings indicated closely integrated programs and services improve student success. This research drew on the experiences of Sinclair Community College in Ohio. Sinclair Community College created programs and services using a case management approach to improve student success. Students receiving a coordinated effort of intensive counseling, testing, and advisement, as well as financial aid counseling, are more prone to success. Sinclair Community College's program links the

purpose and research questions related to this study, as it provides specific reference to institutional practices for student success and potential barriers to implementation.

A strong, committed and dedicated leadership is delineated by Mills (2009) in the example provided detailing the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) journey and its impact on student success. It demonstrated the need for committed, strong leadership, noting the change in their community college system was driven “by identifying strong leadership in the system office and building a state team of key decision makers” (Mills, 2009, p. 1). One of the solutions offered by the VCCS study is that committed leadership from the top drives student success as a culture in the organization. The importance of this research study is the connection between institutional decision-making and collaboration and the impact on student success initiatives. M. Miller, Lincoln, Goldberger, Kazis, and Rothkopf (2009) resonated the experience at VCCS documented by Mills (2009). In their research, they describe the successes and challenges of institutions aggressively addressing student success. They first outlined the economic drivers creating a need for improved student success. They asserted community colleges will play an important role in addressing economic challenges faced by the nation in the 21st century.

Similar to most literature about community colleges, M. Miller and colleagues (2009) spoke to the open-door policies and wide access community colleges provide. However, they went on to explain that many students from community colleges leave their higher education experience without getting the education they needed to move them along their career paths or to complete a 4-year degree. They used this statement as an opportunity to review successful change in community colleges throughout the nation.

They used examples from five different community colleges to provide success stories from institutions having courageous conversations and leading change in student success. In summary, M. Miller and colleagues utilized these success stories to put forth their framework for improving student success: leadership, a culture of evidence, broad engagement, and systemic institutional change.

Bradley and Blanco (2010) utilized research in the area of student success and examined 15 institutions with confirmed successful approaches to improving student success. This research was designed “to emphasize that institutions can increase degree completion and to give institutions and policy-makers recommendations for promoting greater student success” (Bradley & Blanco, 2010, p. 2). In this report, Bradley and Blanco charted the most common factors found in high-performing institutions in their research area. A significant factor within the institutions studied was a Graduation Oriented Culture.

Bradley and Blanco (2010) demonstrated that degree completion was a top priority of all the institutions in their research. To drive student success as a top priority of the 15 institutions, leadership took the initiative to ensure a culture of student success spread through the fiber of the organization. Along with ingraining a student success culture, the institutions researched targeted student programs that brought together important services such as tutoring centers, student retention and success centers, supplemental instruction, and orientation programs together. The 15 institutions implemented best practices in their institutions and, in the process, improved student success.

Community colleges face many challenges relating to student success. A convergence of factors creates circumstances in which student success is diminished. The research and study of best practices as it relates to the institutional collaboration in the delivery of services for the attainment of student success at California Community Colleges is important for the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012. Management practices striking a balance between access, funding, and the needs of the student population are key to improving student success.

Statement of the Research Problem

Leaders in community colleges are being challenged to graduate and transfer more students. Many national projects and initiatives are aimed at supporting this effort, including Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, Next Generation Learning Challenges, and Global Skills for College Completion. As a result, student success and completion are among the top priorities of institutional leaders.

Community colleges are a crucial point of access to higher education for low-income and minority students. Many of these students would not be in college if community colleges were not available (Alfonso, 2004). The community college access mission is built on low tuition, convenient location, flexible scheduling, an open-door admissions policy, and programs and services designed to support at-risk students with a variety of social and academic barriers to postsecondary success (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). While community colleges have played a crucial role in opening access to higher education to a wide variety of students, access alone is not sufficient. In recent years, policy makers, educators, accreditors, and scholars have increasingly turned their attention to student persistence and completion, but most of the research and attention has

focused on the educational outcomes of baccalaureate students and not those who begin at a community college (T. R. Bailey, Calcagno, Jenkins, Kienzl, & Leinback, 2005).

Engaging Instructional Services personnel and Student Services personnel is as important during the planning phase of an initiative as during implementation. Engaging faculty and staff, the student body, community leaders and the broader public you serve as you plan to improve outcomes for underserved students can help your efforts in critical ways (Friedman, 2007). Engaging these groups early on makes it more likely that important actors will view your plan as legitimate and be willing to actively support it later, when you are putting it into effect.

Students' come to California Community Colleges with a wide variety of goals; measuring their success requires multiple measures. Despite this diversity of objectives, most students come to community colleges with the intention of earning a degree or certificate and then getting a job. For some, entering the workforce is a longer-term goal, with success defined as transferring to, and subsequently graduating from, a 4-year college (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). For others, the academic goal is earning an associate degree. Still other community college students are looking to acquire a discrete set of job skills to help them enter or advance in the workforce in a shorter timeframe. This could be accomplished by either completing a vocational certificate program or through any number of skill oriented courses.

Well-designed input by critical Instructional Services personnel and Student Services personnel, such as students and faculty (and not just a single volunteer on a committee, but truly representative groups) can help one significantly improve plans. This is because the people closest to the action—students, faculty, and those who can

immediately affect their performance—have a hands-on, in-the-trenches expertise that is invaluable. Because the goal is to increase student success, particularly for those in groups that have been historically underserved by higher education, bringing these students and the faculty into the planning process is liable to pay off in a more fine-tuned and effective set of initiatives (Friedman, 2007).

It is important for these participants in the planning and implementation process to have a common understanding and definition of student success. At present, Student Services and Instructional Services Departments in California Community Colleges do not operate using a common definition or common terms to describe and identify student success. As a result, efforts are, at times, not aligned between the departments, resulting in duplicated or conflicting efforts. The research literature does not provide a consistent and common definition of success for California Community College students at present. This study addressed that gap in the literature.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study also examined the degree of impact and the importance the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Finally, the similarities and differences between the responses of experts in student services and instructional services were compared.

Research Questions

1. What are the key components for accurately describing student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services?
2. What degree of impact will the identified descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
3. How do experts in student services and instructional services perceive the importance of the descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
4. What are the similarities and differences between experts in student services and instructional services when comparing results for research questions 1-3?

Significance of the Problem

Lumina Foundation (2010) research noted, “The U.S. has fallen from first in the world in the proportion of adults that hold two- or four-year college degrees to fourth” (p. 73). While the United States continues to fall in world comparisons for degree attainment, conversely the need for skilled labor increases; fully 60% of jobs in the United States will require postsecondary education by 2018 (Lumina Foundation, 2010).

Student success, translated to degree attainment and transfer to a 4-year institution, has a significant moral and economic impact. Gains in student success have the potential to close attainment and earning gaps, provide for healthier societies and fuel the U.S. economic engine. Institutional practices improving degree completion and

transfer will provide the economy with the necessary skilled labor force necessary to help keep California and the United States competitive (Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance [ACSFA], 2012). The community college system in California faces many challenges creating tension between student success and access. This tension leads to a distinct need for management best practices that support student success, in this case degree attainment and transfer (Pusser & Levin, 2009).

While there is extensive research on the determinants of educational outcomes for K-12 education (Hanushek, 1986, 2003), and a growing literature on this topic for baccalaureate institutions, few researchers have attempted to address the student success issue for community colleges.

Definitions

The following terms are used throughout this study and defined in the context of their use.

Delphi technique—was defined as a methodology that utilized the expertise of current community college Instructional and Student Services personnel. This methodology was used to reach levels of agreement and consensus on principles and components. The purpose was to derive a common definition of work-related education at community colleges within the realm of higher education in the 21st century. The methodology is based on a series of questionnaires or surveys, with each being more structured and requiring more focused reflection on the part of the participating experts. This technique is a preferred methodology in the measurement of subjective judgments when the problem or study does not lend itself to other precise analytical methodologies. The Delphi technique is an iterative process that is recognized as an inductive-based

approach to examining multiple issues and extracting specific answers to questions in a variety of disciplines.

Expert—An expert was defined as those individuals who were selected to participate in the Delphi technique study. The panel of experts was chosen based on the participants' knowledge, familiarity with the problem, and skill with written communication

Student success—According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office (2012), student success is defined by workforce preparation, remediation, transfer to 4-year colleges and universities, and degree and certificate completion to help students achieve their educational goals.

Education goal—Education goal is the student's stated intent to earn a degree or career technical education certificate, prepare for transfer to a 4-year college or university, improve math or English basic skills or English language proficiency, or pursue career advancement or occupational training or retraining, or other educational interest. The education goal is initially identified during the application process and updated throughout the student's academic career at the college during subsequent course registration or education planning processes.

Student Success and Support Programs—According to Title 5: Education, Division 6. California Community Colleges, Chapter 6. Curriculum and Instruction, Subchapter 6. Matriculation Programs, Article 1. Scope and Definitions, Student Success and Support Programs are programs designed to increase California Community College student access and success through the provision of core matriculation services, including orientation, assessment and placement, counseling, advising, and other education

planning services, with the goal of providing students with the support services necessary to assist them in achieving their education goal and identified course of study.

Instructional administrators—Instructional administrator is defined as an administrator who is employed in an academic position designated by the governing board of the district as having direct responsibility for supervising the operation of or formulating policy regarding the instructional program of the college or district.

Educational administrators include, but are not limited to, chancellors, presidents, and other supervisory or management employees designated by the governing board as educational administrators.

Instructional faculty—Faculty or faculty member is defined as those employees of a district who are employed in academic positions that are not designated as supervisory or management for the purposes of Article 5 (commencing with § 3540) of Chapter 10.7 of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code and for which minimum qualifications for service are specified in §§ 53410-53414 or other provisions of this division.

Matriculation—Matriculation is a process that brings a college and a student into an agreement for the purpose of achieving the student's education goals and completing the student's course of study.

Student Services administrator—Student Services administrator is defined as an administrator who is employed in an academic position designated by the governing board of the district as having direct responsibility for supervising the operation of or formulating policy regarding the student services program of the college or district.

Educational administrators include, but are not limited to, chancellors, presidents, and

other supervisory or management employees designated by the governing board as educational administrators.

Student Services faculty—Faculty or faculty member is defined as those employees of a district who are employed in academic positions that are not designated as supervisory or management for the purposes of Article 5 (commencing with § 3540) of Chapter 10.7 of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code and for which minimum qualifications for service are specified in §§ 53410-53414 or other provisions of this division. Faculty include, but are not limited to, instructors, librarians, counselors, community college health service professionals, disabled student programs and services professionals, extended opportunity programs and services professionals, and individuals employed to perform a service that, before July 1, 1990, required nonsupervisory, nonmanagement community college certification qualifications.

Delimitations

The study was delimited to selected community college instructional faculty and administrators and selected community college student services faculty and administrators throughout the state of California.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation follows a traditional five-chapter model to guide readers through the problem, research, and study conclusions. Chapter 2 examines research studies and regulations relevant to California Community Colleges, considers the effectiveness of student success at these colleges, and the relationship between Instruction and Student Services as it pertains to student success. Chapter 3 outlines research methodologies, data collection strategies, the research questions, and the protocol used. Chapter 4 reports

the survey findings. Last, Chapter 5 presents the findings and discussion, recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The primary purpose of this study was to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study also examined the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges will have on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Chapter 2 provides a review of the literature that establishes an appropriate framework for achieving the purpose of this study, with three overarching sections (Appendix A).

First, this chapter explores the literature on the state of higher education in the United States with particular focus on the dramatic changes over the past 50 years and the challenge today of the emergence of a global and highly competitive new knowledge based economy, which requires enormous numbers of workers and with education and training beyond high school. This challenge is compounded because this new demand is growing just as the baby-boomer generation, the largest and best educated in America's history, is on the verge of retirement (Hunt & Tierney, 2006).

Second, this chapter will provide a review of the role and importance of community colleges to American higher education, and California Community Colleges, in particular, will also be examined. Community colleges are complex institutions serving a multitude of constituencies with dozens of programs and activities. Community colleges were initiated a century ago with the focused purpose of providing the first 2 years of a 4-year college education. The third and final section of this chapter will

include a review of the relationship of instructional services and student services and the impact on services to students and student success.

Background

Earning a postsecondary degree or certificate is no longer just a pathway to opportunity for a gifted few; it is a requirement for the growing jobs of the new economy (The White House, n.d.). “Over this decade, employment in jobs requiring education beyond a high school diploma will grow more rapidly than employment in jobs that do not; of the 30 fastest growing occupations, more than half require postsecondary education” (The White House, n.d., para. 1). Improving college degree completion is important to the United States, as it continues to be economically competitive in a globalized marketplace. As the economy continues to evolve and become increasingly more complex, it is critical that the education system provides the American youth with the skill and critical thinking abilities that can strengthen and maintain the economy. In higher education, the United States has been overtaken internationally. In 1990, the United States ranked first in the world in 4-year degree attainment among 25- to 34-year-olds; today, the United States ranks 12th (Williams, 2014).

Community colleges are a medium for educational opportunity. Community colleges hold a prominent place in American higher education. In California each year, community colleges provide instruction to approximately 2.6 million students, representing nearly 25% of the nation’s community college student population (Little Hoover Commission, 2012). Across the state, 113 community colleges and 72 off-campus centers enroll students of all ages, backgrounds, and levels of academic

preparation. It is a system that takes pride in serving the most diverse student population in the nation, and values that diversity as its greatest asset.

Community colleges face many challenges relating to student success. A convergence of factors creates circumstances in which student success is diminished. The research and study of best practices as it relates to the institutional collaboration in the delivery of services for the attainment of student success at California Community Colleges is important for the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012. Management practices striking a balance between access, funding, and the needs of the student population is key to improving student success.

The State of Higher Education in the United States

In higher education, the United States has been overtaken internationally. In 1990, the United States ranked first in the world in 4-year degree attainment among 25- to 34 year olds; today, the U.S. ranks 12th (Williams, 2014). The United States also experiences a college attainment gap. High school graduates from the wealthiest families in the United States are almost certain to continue on to higher education; just over half of high school graduates in the poorest quarter of families attend college (White House, n.d.). The completion rate for low-income students is around 25%, and more than half of college students' graduate within 6 years.

Improving college degree completion is important to the United States as it continues to pursue to be economically competitive in a globalized marketplace. As the economy continues to evolve and become increasingly more complex, it is critical that the education system provides the American youth with the skill and critical thinking abilities that can strengthen and maintain the economy. Understanding this need,

President Obama has identified education as a key component of his administration's agenda. "In the President's February 24, 2009 address to a Joint Session of Congress, he announced his goal for the United States to become once again the nation with the largest percentage of college-educated citizens in the world" (Pell Institute, 2011, p. 1). This goal will require raising the percentage of Americans ages 25 to 64 with a college degree from 41.2% to nearly 60.0% (OECD, 2010). However, at the current rate, projections using the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey indicate that only 46.4% of Americans in the target age group will have earned a college degree by 2020, leaving the nation nearly 24 million degrees shy of the 60% target rate.

In the coming years, jobs requiring at least an associate degree are projected to grow twice as fast as those requiring no college experience. And over the next decade, nearly 8 in 10 new jobs will require higher education and workforce training. "To meet this need, President Obama set two national goals: by 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world, and community colleges will produce an additional 5 million graduates" (The White House, n.d., para. 1).

The challenges related to student success highlight the need for institutional best practices and to bring the role of community college leadership into focus. In the face of these significant challenges, national and state initiatives have emerged evidencing institutional best practices in student success (Alt, 2012). According to Alfred (1992), three major factors contributing to student success emerged in research almost two decades ago but are only now getting widespread recognition. These factors are student goals and expectations, organizational culture, and student outcomes. Alfred drew his results from a survey including over 2,000 executives and administrators. He sought to

understand the most critical dimensions of student success in community colleges.

Alfred conducted his research based on what he described as a pressing need to understand student success and the ways community colleges could improve. He noted the organizational culture was one of the most critical determining factors of student success. Tinto (2003) agreed with Alfred, highlighting the need for the strong presence of leadership and enculturation of 31 management practices leading to student success for sustainable change to occur. “Without such commitment, programs for student success may begin, but they rarely prosper over the long term” (Tinto, 2003, p. 6).

California is faced with serious issues regarding access to, and progress through, its system of higher education. The overarching problem is one of student success. Put simply, too few students are achieving the baccalaureate degree in California; the infamous California Master Plan for Higher Education, the national model when it was created in the early 1960s, is no longer yielding the desired results. California ranks 36th of the 50 states in the ratio of baccalaureate degrees awarded compared to high school graduates 6 years earlier, and 46th in the number of baccalaureate degrees awarded per 100 undergraduates. In an environment in which California can no longer be assured of obtaining all the educated talent it needs by importing it from elsewhere, this level of performance poses a potentially serious problem for the state (Hayward, Jones, & McGuinness, 2004).

As the largest part of the nation’s higher education system, community colleges enroll more than 10 million students and are growing rapidly. This represents nearly half of the nation’s undergraduates. Fewer than 40% of students complete an undergraduate degree within 6 years (T. R. Bailey, Jaggars, & Jenkins, 2015). They offer affordable

tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations, and they are particularly important for students who are older, working, or need remedial classes. Community colleges also partner with businesses, industry, and government to create custom-made training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs (The White House, 2011). Community colleges are a demonstration of the American society's commitment to educational opportunities; they represent an understanding of postsecondary education as the foundation for economic growth and upward mobility (T. R. Bailey et al., 2015).

The foundation for community college is having an open-door access policies. These policies along with the low cost and relative flexibility of the community college curricula provide the entrance point for many students, described as at risk (Engle & Tinto, 2008), low-income, first-generation, English-as a-second-language (ESL) learners, and the academically underprepared students. Community colleges are faced with many challenges. Their vast mission and increased enrollment demand, coupled with the trend of decreasing funding, comes at a time when a shift toward a student population requiring high-cost, intensive services is existent. Institutional best practices in the area of student success and institutional effectiveness are emerging to address the many challenges of the open-access institution. Together, access, changing demographics, and management best practices in student success come together to provide the backdrop for community colleges, the challenges facing student success initiatives, and effective institutional practices methods for improving student success (College Board Advocacy & Policy Center, 2012).

The impact community colleges may have relative to addressing degree attainment and building skilled labor is best summarized by Engle and Tinto (2008). Given the pressure to remain competitive in the global knowledge economy, it is in the shared national interest to act now to increase the number of students who not only enter college, but also more importantly earn their degrees, particularly bachelor's degrees. The Lumina Foundation's (2010) work suggested that talent is the key, and higher education is the lever for developing it. Further supporting White House policy and Lumina research findings, Johnson (2010) asserted economic projections show over 40% of jobs in California will require a minimum of a Bachelor's degree. Degree attainment and transfer through 4-year institutions is reaching the goals of student success (Chen et al., 2013).

Most of the students who enter community college never finish, fewer than 4 of every 10 complete any type of degree or certificate within 6 years (Radford, Berkner, Wheelless, & Shepherd, 2010). The failure of students to complete college represents a loss to the overall economy, which prompted calls from the federal government, major foundations, and public figures for significant increase in the number of individuals with postsecondary degrees.

National Call to Action

Improving college degree completion is important to the United States as it continues to pursue to be economically competitive in a globalized marketplace. In January 2014, the Executive Office of the President released a report *Increasing College Opportunity for Low-Income Students: Promising Models and a Call to Action*. Under the President and First Lady's leadership, the Administration and the Department of

Education engaged with leading experts to identify the barriers to increasing college opportunity. Based on the existing evidence, four key areas were identified where the United States could be doing more to promote college opportunity.

According to the report released by the White House, social mobility is highest for those who get a college education; educational attainment itself is greatly influenced by the economic circumstances of one's birth. Children from low-income families are not only less likely to complete high school (Chapman, Laird, & Remani, 2011), but also much less likely to enroll in postsecondary education among those who do graduate from high school. In 2012, only 52% of children from families in the bottom fifth of the income distribution enrolled in postsecondary education right after graduating from high school, compared to 82% of graduating students from families in the top fifth of the income distribution, despite considerable gains in low-income college enrollment over the past 30 years. Much of this gap persists even for low-income students who do well in school. Data from the National Center for Education Statistics show that low-income students who performed in the top third of students in 8th grade math were just as likely to graduate college as their high-income peers who performed in the bottom third in math (The White House, 2014).

Moreover, inequality in college attainment due to income has grown in recent decades. Comparing birth cohorts from 1961-1964 and 1979-1982—students who would have graduated from high school in the early 1980s and the late 1990s—economists Martha Bailey and Susan Dynarski (2011) found that the college attainment gap between the highest income quartile and the lowest quartile increased considerably. Over this period, many more high-income women began attending college, contributing to the

considerable gains that accrued to high-income students. In the earlier cohort, just over one-third of high-income students earned a bachelor's degree by age 25; less than 20 years later, more than half of the students from high-income families did. In stark contrast, bachelor's attainment for low-income students remained remarkably low, increasing from just 5% of students in the earlier cohort to a mere 9% of students in the later cohort. Thus, among the later cohort more than 1 in 2 young adults from high-income families had a bachelor's degree by age 25, versus little more than 1 in 10 young adults from low-income families. M. J. Bailey and Dynarski observed that the growing gap in college attainment cannot be explained by student ability: "Even among those who had the same measured cognitive skills as teenagers, inequality in college entry and completion across income groups is greater today than it was two decades ago" (M. J. Bailey & Dynarski, 2011, p. 12).

Students also face more competition when applying to colleges and universities than any time in the recent past, putting low-income students at a disadvantage compared to their peers who can afford to spend additional resources to improve their chances of admission. Economists John Bound, Brad Hershbein, and Bridget Terry Long (2009) observed that the supply of college admissions has not kept up with demand. While the number of applicants to 4-year colleges and universities has doubled since the early 1970s, available slots have changed little. Between 1992 and 2004, the number of applications to 4-year colleges and universities grew 44%, while undergraduate enrollment grew far less. Between 1986 and 2003, average undergraduate enrollment at public 4-year institutions grew between 10-15%, and the top private and liberal arts colleges increased their enrollment by less than 1%. Encouragingly, transfers from 2-year

colleges helped drive the growth in undergraduate enrollment at top public 4-year colleges and universities (Bound et al., 2009). However, institutions must increase their overall enrollment, including transfers and freshman admissions, in order to substantially increase college access.

The Administration has taken significant steps to address these challenges through strengthening financial aid, making student loans more affordable, and taking new steps to reduce college costs and improve value—including doubling Federal investments in Pell Grants and college tax credits. President Obama expanded access to Pell Grants—the largest need based grant program for low- and moderate-income students—to more than 3 million additional students, and we’ve increased the maximum Pell Grant by more than \$900 between the 2008-09 and 2013-14 academic years. Likewise, the Administration expanded its “Pay as You Earn” income-based loan repayment option to help more borrowers manage their loan payments by capping them at 10 percent of monthly income. The Administration’s College Scorecard was developed to help empower students and families with more transparent information about college costs and outcomes, so that they can choose a school that is affordable, best-suited to meet their needs, and consistent with their educational and career goals. While the President continues to push for changes that keep college affordable for all students and families, we can and must be doing more to help more low-income students prepare for college, enroll in quality institutions, and ultimately graduate. (The White House, 2014, p. 15)

In January 2015, President Obama unveiled America's College Promise Proposal: Tuition-Free Community College for Responsible Students. This proposal entailed making two years of community college free for responsible students, letting students earn the first half of a bachelor's degree and earn skills needed in the workforce at no cost.

This proposal will require everyone to do their part: community colleges must strengthen their programs and increase the number of students who graduate, states must invest more in higher education and training, and students must take responsibility for their education, earn good grades, and stay on track to graduate.

The program would be undertaken in partnership with states and is inspired by new programs in Tennessee and Chicago. If all states participate, an estimated 9 million students could benefit. A full-time community college student could save an average of \$3,800 in tuition per year. (The White House, 2015, para. 2)

The America's College Promise proposal would create a new partnership with states to help them waive tuition in high-quality programs for responsible students, while promoting key reforms to help more students complete at least 2 years of college.

Restructuring the community college experience, coupled with free tuition, can lead to gains in student enrollment, persistence, and completion transfer, and employment. The intent is to ensure shared responsibility with the states. Federal funding will cover three-quarters of the average cost of community college. States that choose to participate will be expected to contribute the remaining funds necessary to eliminate community college tuition for eligible students. States that already invest more and charge students less can make smaller contributions, though all participating states will be required to put

up some matching funds. States must also commit to continue existing investments in higher education; coordinate high schools, community colleges, and 4-year institutions to reduce the need for remediation and repeated courses; and allocate a significant portion of funding based on performance, not enrollment alone.

The College Completion Agenda

In 2014, higher education held a prominent place on America's policy agenda, as the public became more aware that most people need at least some college education in order to attain a well paying, family supporting job (T. R. Bailey et al., 2015). There were growing concerns that the quality of the education is questionable and the cost is beyond the means of a middle-class individual.

To achieve significant institutional reforms and improvements in student success, a thorough reorganization needed to occur. Achieving the Dream and other related reforms have made important contributions to the community college movement in the United States. It called for broader institutional change and stakeholder engagement.

The Role of Community Colleges

Role Nationally

As the largest part of the nation's higher education system, community colleges enroll more than 8 million students and are growing rapidly. They offer affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations, and they are particularly important for students who are older, working, or need remedial classes. Community colleges also partner with businesses, industry, and government to create custom-made training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health

information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs (The White House, 2011).

Role in California

Each year, California Community Colleges provide instruction to approximately 2.6 million students; this number represents nearly 25% percent of the nation's community college student population. According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), California Community Colleges have a strong record of advancing the students and the communities it serves:

- The California Community Colleges are the state's largest workforce provider, offering associate degrees and short-term job training certificates in more than 175 different fields.
- The California Community Colleges train 70 percent of California nurses.
- The California Community Colleges train 80 percent of firefighters, law enforcement personnel, and emergency medical technicians.
- Twenty-eight percent of University of California graduates and 54 percent of California State University graduates transfer from a community college.
- Students who earn a California Community College degree or certificate nearly double their earnings within three years. (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011, p. 5)

However, there is another set of statistics that is a cause of concern. These figures relate to the large numbers of our students who never make it to the finish line:

- Only 53.6 percent of the degree-seeking students ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. For African-American and Latino students, the rate is much lower (42 percent and 43 percent respectively).
- Of the students who enter our colleges at one level below transfer level in Math, only 46.2 percent ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. Of those students entering four levels below, only 25.5 percent ever achieve those outcomes.
- Of our students who seek to transfer to a four-year institution, only 41 percent are successful. For African Americans, only 34 percent succeed. For Latinos, the figure is 31 percent. (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011, pp. 6-7)

While these statistics reflect the challenges many students face, they also clearly demonstrate the need for the system to pledge to find new and better ways to serve the students of California (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011).

The challenges created between access, retention, economic pressures, and changing demographics have caused a shift in the research. Over the previous four decades, research focused on the student condition and the student characteristics, such as motivation, ability, and academic preparedness (Tinto, 2003). However, the more recent trend in research has shifted in focus to the relationship of student success and the institution. The community college system in California faces many challenges creating tension between student success and access. This tension leads to a distinct need for management best practices that support student success, in this case degree attainment

and transfer, as well as institutional practices leading to improved student success (Alt, 2012).

The trend, seen in national data, is even more pronounced in California. Projections from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) demonstrate that California is at risk of losing its economic competitiveness due to an insufficient supply of highly skilled workers. Specifically, NCHEMS found that California's changing demographics, combined with low educational attainment levels among the state's fastest-growing populations, will translate into substantial declines in per capita personal income between now and 2020 (Jones & Ewell, 2009). It will place California last among the 50 states in terms of change in per capita personal income (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). In addition to the workforce data, other relevant data pertaining to persistence and completion is alarming. Only 53.6% of degree-seeking students ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. For African-American and Latino students, the rate is much lower (42% and 43%, respectively). Of the students who enter California Community Colleges at one level below transfer level in Math, only 46.2% ever achieve a certificate, degree, or transfer preparation. Of those students entering four levels below, only 25.5% ever achieve those outcomes. Of the students who seek to transfer to a 4-year institution, only 41% are successful. For African Americans, only 34% succeed. For Latinos, the figure is 31% (CCCCO, 2012).

The different missions and purposes of the California Community Colleges, the University of California, and the California State University system were clearly outlined in the 1960 California Master Plan for Higher Education. The community colleges were

designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower division, undergraduate instruction. The community college mission was further revised in 1988 with the passage of Assembly Bill 1725, which called for comprehensive reforms in every aspect of community college education and organization (Johnson, 2010). Other legislation established a support framework, including the Matriculation Program, the Disabled Students Programs & Services, and the Equal Opportunity Programs & Services, to provide categorical funding and special services to help meet the needs of the diverse range of students in the California Community Colleges. Although many of these categorical programs have been seriously underfunded as a result of the state's fiscal crisis, they still afford an outline for addressing such needs as assessment, placement, counseling, adaptive education, and other approaches designed to promote student learning and student success.

Despite low degree completion and transfer rates, current philosophies in California Community Colleges place priority on access over student success. The open-access attitude of the community college, coupled with fiscal severity and a student demographic requiring more significant student support services to succeed, is a challenge facing leadership in the community colleges. Institutional practices established around open-door policies have created a focus on access over success, which has led to declining degree completion and transfer rates. In an age when the continuous economic strength of the nation is dependent on significant gains in skilled labor, institutional practices leading to increased student success is important (Alt, 2012).

Shulock, Moore, Offensteing, and Kirlim (2008) highlighted the possibilities for student success in California. They provided their perspective on best practices as they

relate specifically to California Community Colleges. In their report, they noted that practitioners know what works but they do not do it. In their view, institutional culture and academic/support policies in each community college contribute to strategies for increasing student success. Those strategies are increased readiness, early success, effective enrollment patterns, clear goals/pathways, intensive student support, and using data to inform decisions. Shulock and colleagues' work aligns with that of Kuh (2005) and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE, 2006) in that each of the reports focuses on the importance of institutional best practices. Such practices mean starting with leaders creating a culture of student success and leveraging that culture to implement tightly interconnected programs and services and then utilizing data to inform continuous improvement.

California Student Success Act of 2012

President Obama's 2010 White House Summit and "Call for Action" in which he highlighted the community colleges as the key to closing the nation's skills gap. This message resonated with employers, economists, and educators in California. In response to President Obama's call to action, in 2010, California Senate Bill 1143 called on the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges to convene a task force to make recommendations on how to improve student success. This legislation was in response to concerns about the large numbers of students who never reach their educational goals.

In January 2011, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors embarked on a 12-month strategic planning process to improve student success. According to Senate Bill 1143, the Board of Governors created the Student Success Task

Force. The Task Force was composed of a group of community college leaders, faculty, students, researchers, staff and external stakeholders. The group investigated multifaceted college and system-level policies and practices. It worked to identify best practices for promoting student success and to develop statewide strategies to take these practices to scale, while ensuring that the educational opportunity for historically underrepresented students would not just be maintained but enhanced (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). The Task Force recommendations presented the California Community Colleges with an opportunity for transformative change that will refocus the system's efforts and resources to enable a greater number of students to succeed. The final product was a report that presented a vision for California Community Colleges in the next decade, focused on what is needed to grow the economy, meeting the demands of California's evolving workplace, and inspiring and realizing the aspirations of students and families (California Community Colleges Student Task Force, 2011). Two important areas of focus include a stronger statewide coordination and oversight to allow for the sharing and facilitation of new and creative ideas to help students succeed, including the ability for California to "take to scale" the many good practices already in place; and better alignment of local district and college goals with the education and workforce needs of the state.

The Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012 (California Education Code, §§ 78210-78219) established the Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) "to increase California Community College student access and success by providing effective core matriculation services, and academic interventions" or follow-up services for at-risk students. The Act emphasized support for "entering students' transition into college in

order to provide a foundation for student achievement and successful completion of students' educational goals, with priority placed on serving students who enroll to earn degrees, career technical certificates, transfer preparation, or career advancement. These services must be coordinated and evidence based to foster academic success" (Title 5, § 55500). The act renamed the Matriculation Program to Student Success and Support Program (SSSP) and refocused funding and resources on services to entering students while emphasizing the responsibility of the institution as a whole for student success.

The purpose of the SSSP is to ensure that all students rapidly define their educational and career goals, complete their courses, persist to the next academic term, and achieve their educational objectives in a timely manner (CCCCO, 2014). The goal is that the student will benefit from a comprehensive delivery of services, which will ultimately increase retention and provide students with the foundation to support success. The mission of SSSP is as follows:

The mission of the SSSP is to increase community college student access and success by providing effective core services, including orientation, assessment and placement, counseling, academic advising, and early intervention. SSSP supports student equity in assessment, student services, and access to college resources and provides a foundation for student to achieve their educational goal. (CCCCO, 2014, p. 1.2)

To accomplish this goal, the SSSP offers a variety of services that enhance student access to the colleges and promotes student success. The SSSP guides students with information and assistance to define educational goals, which are consistent with district and college academic programs and students services. It also provides colleges with

information to shape services to meet students' needs. The program is designed so that colleges can provide and coordinate the services described to all students except those exempted under criteria established by the Board of Governors (BOG) (Title 5, § 55532).

Per the Act, student success is a joint responsibility of the student and the institution as a whole and works best when student services, instruction, and institutional research work in partnership (CCCCO, 2014). Student success requires that colleges assist students with course placement and other educational options, highlighting the use of multiple measures and targeted support services. Colleges must pledge to interfacing with students to strengthen student motivation, provide feedback regarding academic progress, and guide students in meeting their educational goals.

Relationship Between Instructional Services and Student Services in California Community Colleges

Community colleges are a crucial point of access to higher education for low-income and minority students. Many of these students would not be in college if community colleges were not available (Alfonso, 2004). The community college access mission is built on low tuition, convenient location, flexible scheduling, an open-door admissions policy, and programs and services designed to support at-risk students with a variety of social and academic barriers to postsecondary success (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). While community colleges have played a crucial role in opening access to higher education to a wide variety of students, access alone is not sufficient. In recent years, policymakers, educators, accreditors, and scholars have increasingly turned their attention to student persistence and completion, but most of the research and attention has focused

on the educational outcomes of baccalaureate students and not those who begin at a community college (T. R. Bailey et al., 2005).

Engaging Instructional Services personnel and Student Services personnel is as important during the planning phase of an initiative as during implementation. Engaging faculty and staff, the student body, community leaders, and the broader public you serve as you plan to improve outcomes for underserved students can help your efforts in critical ways (Friedman, 2007). Engaging these groups early on makes it more likely that important actors will view your plan as legitimate and be willing to actively support it later, when you are putting it into effect.

Well-designed input by critical Instructional Services personnel and Student Services personnel such as students and faculty (and not just a single volunteer on a committee, but truly representative groups) can help you significantly improve your plans. This is because the people closest to the action, the students, faculty, and those who can immediately affect their performance, have a hands-on, in-the-trenches expertise that is invaluable.

Definition and Role of Instructional Services

Research has shown that student engagement is related to persistence and success in postsecondary education. Little attention, however, has been placed on how instruction engages students. The relationship between student-instruction interactions and positive student outcomes has been well documented in research. To begin, findings in the Thompson's (2001) research reinforce Chickering's and Gamson's (1987) findings that such interactions have significant influence on student success. Thompson's research also revealed that community college students who have perceived higher levels of

student-faculty interaction also perceive higher college outcomes in math and science (Thompson, 2001).

Additionally, research showed that faculty support and encouragement correlated significantly with students' grade point average (GPA) and academic success. Students who felt that they had more opportunities for such interaction were more likely to have a stronger GPA (Cole, 2008). In a study by Cejda and Rhodes (2004), they focused on three factors that contributed to student persistence at the community college level. One of those factors is the student-faculty interaction. Student-faculty interaction was also found to be statistically significant predictor of student success (Rugutt & Chemosit, 2009). Instruction often does not realize that the key to student success also rests in their hands. The influence of student-faculty interaction should not be underestimated.

Instructional administrators. Instructional administrator is defined as an administrator who is employed in an academic position designated by the governing board of the district as having direct responsibility for supervising the operation of or formulating policy regarding the instructional program of the college or district. Educational administrators include, but are not limited to, chancellors, presidents, and other supervisory or management employees designated by the governing board as educational administrators.

Instructional faculty. Faculty or faculty member is defined as those employees of a district who are employed in academic positions that are not designated as supervisory or management for the purposes of Article 5 (commencing with § 3540) of Chapter 10.7 of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code and for which minimum

qualifications for service are specified in §§ 53410-53414 or other provisions of this division.

Institutions face many obstacles in engaging instruction in student success. These include, but are not limited to the following (Jenkins, 2011):

- Heavy workloads: Administrative duties demand a large share of faculty time (especially among full-time faculty), and the requirements of new promising practices are often labor-intensive. Heavy workloads also make it more difficult to solicit faculty participation in professional development activities.
- Initiative overload undermines engagement: Adjunct and full-time faculty are more likely to engage with reform that they think is operationally feasible and that has long-term commitment from leadership.
- Lack of intellectual connection and “goal congruence”: Adjunct and full-time faculty may not readily see the connection between a new initiative and their personal/professional goals and commitments. Researchers observe that many of the best-engaged faculty have highly personal motivations for engagement, while many successful engagement efforts have found ways to help faculty relate new practices to their own values and beliefs.
- Resistance to mandates from above: Adjunct and full-time faculty often mistrust initiatives that they see as completely “top-down” efforts; this gives an impression that central leadership is insensitive or indifferent to the opinions of faculty and/or the needs of the school at “ground level.”
- External, rather than internal focus: Adjunct and full-time faculty are often, and increasingly, overwhelmed by a high volume of underprepared students or

students who face a multitude of pressures, and therefore tend to naturally look to the failings of the K-12 system or other external challenges as the source of the problems and solutions. Refocusing faculty on institutional change can be a challenge.

Definition and Role of Student Services

For years, researchers and practitioners have demonstrated that student support services are critical to students' academic success in college; however, the vast majority of this work focuses on 4-year institutions. More recently, several well-designed research studies have provided insight on the benefit of student support services and the key elements of a system meant at success for all students. Effective support services have an integrated network of academic, social, and financial supports (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2009). When implemented in a coordinated, targeted, and comprehensive structure, these initiatives have been shown to improve student success.

Regardless of how academically prepared students are for college, even well-constructed educational plans can be significantly altered by both unexpected life events and ongoing personal problems.

Given that much of the attendance and academic patterns of community college students is “more dependent on their personal lives, their jobs, [and] the outside world,” campus leaders committed to helping these students succeed must ensure that supports, such as counseling, mentoring, and peer networks, are available to help them cope and manage everyday pressures of work, family, and school. Personal guidance and counseling can help community college students confront academic as well as nonacademic challenges. Although most institutions offer

these services, students may be reluctant or unable—due to time constraints—to take the initiative and seek out assistance on their own. (Cooper, 2010, p. 24)

“Because nearly 30 percent of community college students are parents, some institutions have begun to involve the family network in counseling and other support programs” (Cooper, 2010, p. 3). Although these institutions all use different family support strategies, they each ensure that student-service practitioners work with families to mobilize formal and informal resources to support family development and institute retention programs that are flexible and responsive to emerging family and community issues. Additionally, some community colleges offer childcare services as a means of addressing familial needs.

Because so many community college students spend limited time on campus, they have fewer opportunities to make use of all of these services.

In a study of effective strategies for student service programs at community colleges, it was recommended that institutions offer more “enhanced student services.” Such programs would then be linked to other services, but also integrated into existing campus-wide reform strategies, thereby allowing student services to be offered, in a coordinated fashion and over an extended period of time. Since many students encounter ongoing challenges throughout their academic career—related to academic, social, and financial needs—it is imperative to offer students linked and sustained services in all areas of the college. (Cooper, 2010, p. 25)

Student Services administrator. Student Services administrator is defined as an administrator who is employed in an academic position designated by the governing

board of the district as having direct responsibility for supervising the operation of or formulating policy regarding the student services program of the college or district. Educational administrators include, but are not limited to, chancellors, presidents, and other supervisory or management employees designated by the governing board as educational administrators.

Student Services faculty. Faculty or faculty member is defined as those employees of a district who are employed in academic positions that are not designated as supervisory or management for the purposes of Article 5 (commencing with § 3540) of Chapter 10.7 of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code and for which minimum qualifications for service are specified in §§ 53410-53414 or other provisions of this division. Faculty include, but are not limited to, instructors, librarians, counselors, community college health service professionals, disabled student programs and services professionals, extended opportunity programs and services professionals, and individuals employed to perform a service that, before July 1, 1990, required nonsupervisory, nonmanagement community college certification qualifications

Present Relationship Between Instructional Services and Student Services

Students' academic success and personal development depends not only on the quality of the curriculum and classroom instruction, but also on another major educational division of the college: Student Services. When instructional faculty interface and collaborate with this key division, collaboration and cooperation effects are likely to occur on student learning and development, thereby increasing and enhancing the impact and quality of the college education (Cuseo, n.d.). The recurring theme in scholarly research is that there is a division between curriculum and co-curriculum,

denoted by a compartmentalization of professional responsibilities and political territoriality, which has resulted in a break of the holistic student development. These broken components need to be reconstructed if institutions of higher education intend to promote meaningful and productive partnerships and build a strong campus community.

Student development professionals at the 4-year level institutions have long been aware of the fact that the success of a colleges' student development program is contingent upon collaborative relations between student services staff and faculty (American College Personnel Association, 1975). In an influential and highly formative text outlining future directions for the profession of student services, T. K. Miller and Prince (1976) firmly conclude that, "an institution's commitment to student development is directly proportional to the number of collaborative links between the student affairs staff and the faculty" (p. 155). The Joint Task Force on Student Learning—a collaborative initiative created by the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE), the American College Personnel Association (ACPA), and the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA)—was created to promote approaches to student learning that reflect connection or integration between educational experiences occurring inside and outside the classroom. The joint task force states:

It takes a whole college to educate a whole student. Administrative leaders can rethink the conventional organization of colleges and universities to create more inventive structures and processes that integrate academic and student affairs; [and] offer professional-development opportunities for people to cooperate across institutional boundaries. (Engelkemeyer & Brown, 1998, p. 12)

More recently, colleges, systems, and states are experimenting with new and better ways to support student success in community colleges, often with scarce resources and limited staff. Supports offered include academic advising, orientation, assessments, education and career planning, and academic tutoring. These services can increase students' chances of earning a credential or transferring by providing them additional help to succeed in courses and in navigating college policies and procedures (Bahr, 2008), but evidence is growing that the services work best when integrated with what students are learning in the classroom. Based on field research at colleges participating in Completion by Design (CBD), a community college initiative funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, college efforts to integrate support services with instruction appear to have two overall aims: (a) to expand student access by making services an extension of the classroom and (b) to increase the quality of support services and instruction.

There is growing evidence that integrating those services serves students better. When services are optional and are not offered as part of students' day-to-day college experiences, many students, especially low-income and first-generation students who tend to need the services the most, do not access them (Cox, 2009; Karp, Hughes, & O'Gara, 2008). Extensive interviews with community college students have shown that even with support services open to all students, it is the students with pre-existing college know-how who tend to take advantage of them (Karp et al., 2008). In addition, students have indicated that they would like to see greater connections between support services and classroom content (Nodine, Jaeger, Venezia, & Bracco, 2012).

The integration of student support services and instruction takes many forms and might best be considered as a process along a continuum. At one end of the continuum is

a highly integrated model, where student services functions are embedded in the academic classroom. At the other end of the continuum are initial efforts at integration, such as professional development for faculty members to learn about the various student services supports offered by the college and how to encourage their students to take advantage of the support services.

Colleges are using student success centers as a model to provide all students, not just a small subset, with a coordinated range of supports. The services provided by the centers are integrated with classroom instruction, are often jointly developed by instructional faculty and success center staff, and can be required of all students in a class. The centers, which are sometimes linked to specific fields (such as humanities or STEM), can house dedicated academic and career counseling, leadership development programs, and student organizations. They can support service learning and community engagement. They can also provide a place where faculty and staff interact informally and formally with students (Collins, 2004).

Students need to experience integration of curriculum in order to maximize their development in college, and Instruction and Student Services need each other to accomplish their respective educational goals and objectives (Cuseo, n.d., p. 5).

Research Gap

Much of the research in these areas is focused on 4-year colleges and universities. While research is limited in the community colleges, and even more so in California Community Colleges, this chapter provides some focused attention to this segment of postsecondary education. A majority of the research in education revolves around the traditional student in a 4-year university setting. The traditional student is between

18 and 22 years old, White, middle class, and attending college full time. The community college sector has been largely overlooked in this area of research. Community colleges have an open access policy for students and offer higher education at lower cost. This allows individuals access to higher education that typically would not have the opportunity to attend college. With that said, the nontraditional student population, especially at the community colleges, is growing and needs attention. Research focused on their necessities needs to come to the forefront of the research agenda (Giancola, Grawitch, & Brochert, 2009).

Even more so there is a lack of studies that address student success in California Community Colleges, its definition of student success and the relationship between Instruction and Student Services in addressing the issue at the colleges.

Summary

Community colleges face many challenges relating to student success. A convergence of factors creates circumstances in which student success is diminished. The research and study of best practices as it relates to the institutional collaboration in the delivery of services for the attainment of student success at California Community Colleges is important for the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012. Management practices striking a balance between access, funding, and the needs of the student population are key to improving student success.

Overall, this literature review serves two main purposes. The first is that the research summary exposes room for an expanded definition of students' success, growing from the traditional measures towards a broader concept. Second, this summary highlights the limited research available. The methodologies of the studies reviewed

above relied primarily on research of 4-year institutions. There is also limited research on the relationship between Instruction and Student Services in California Community Colleges. As this study works to expand the existing concept of student success, a goal will be to solicit direct community college personnel's opinions and insight in order to develop a more comprehensive definition of success.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

The purpose of this study was to ascertain levels of agreement and consensus on what principles and components could be identified to derive a common definition for student success amongst California Community Colleges Instructional and Student Services Personnel. The Delphi technique was well suited as a means and method for consensus building by using a series of questionnaires to collect data from a panel of selected subjects (Hsu & Sandford, 2007). A mixed methods research design using quantitative and qualitative approaches was employed, with the qualitative research design as the primary methodology. This mixed methods study formulated an effective design that examined two distinct groups, Instructional personnel and Student Services personnel and their description of student success in California Community Colleges.

This study would determine if, in total, qualitative principles and components could be identified, categorized, and ranked to derive a common terminology and definition for student success at California Community Colleges. The use of qualitative data in educational research was recognized as important to the study for an understanding of educational phenomena. Qualitative data also provided a natural basis for interpretation with explanations emerging from intensive examination of the data (Tuckman, 1999). Linstone and Turoff (1975) summarized that the “Delphi may be characterized as a method for structuring a group communication process, so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with complex problems” (p. 3). By participating in this study, the California Community College

personnel acted as a panel of experts assisting in the research to derive a common definition for student success at California Community Colleges.

This chapter begins with a restatement of the purpose of the study and research questions. It goes on to include a description of the research design, methodology, the subjects in the study and the instrumentation used. The procedures used for data collection and the approach to the data analyses are discussed. Finally, Chapter 3 concludes with a discussion of the methodological limitations of the study.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study also examined the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Finally, the similarities and differences between the responses of experts in student services and instructional services were compared.

Research Questions

1. What are the key components for accurately describing student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services?
2. What degree of impact will the identified descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?

3. How do experts in student services and instructional services perceive the importance of the descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
4. How do experts in student services and instructional services adjust the collective descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?

Research Design

This study was a mixed methods design using both qualitative and quantitative measures. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), mixed methods is a study that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques and/or data analysis within different phases of the research process. Qualitative data were obtained in the form of open-ended narrative responses for research questions one and three. Quantitative data were obtained for research question two in response to “the degree to which” identified descriptors have an impact using a Likert scale to measure impact. Quantitative measures were used to determine significant differences for research question four. Mixed methods allow data triangulation and, since the purpose of this study was to triangulate data to reach consensus, the mixed methods approach was appropriate for this study.

Methodology

A Delphi research method was chosen for this study. The Delphi method is a communication structure intended to produce a detailed critical examination and discussion (Green, 2014). The Delphi technique is a widely used and accepted method

for gathering data from respondents within their area of expertise, which in this study were Instructional personnel and Student Services personnel. The Delphi technique is well suited as a means and method for consensus building by using a series of questionnaires to collect data from a panel of selected subjects. In contrast to other data gathering and analysis methods, it employs multiple analyses designed to develop a consensus of opinion concerning a specific topic, which in this study is the definition of student success. More specifically, the feedback process allows and promotes that the selected Delphi participants reassess their initial perceptions about the information provided in previous iterations (Ludwig, 1994). Thus, in a Delphi study, the results of previous versions regarding specific statements and/or items can change or be modified by individual panel members in later iterations based on their ability to review and assess the comments and feedback provided by the other Delphi experts. Delphi can be used for achieving the following objectives:

1. To determine or develop a range of possible program alternatives;
2. To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to different judgments;
3. To seek out information, which may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group;
4. To correlate informed judgments on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines, and;
5. To educate the respondent group as to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic. (Hsu & Sandford, 2007, p. 1)

Other important characteristics with using the Delphi methodology are the ability to provide anonymity to respondents, a controlled feedback process, and the appropriateness of a variety of statistical analysis techniques to interpret the data (Ludlow, 1975). These characteristics are designed to balance the deficiencies of conventional means of pooling opinions obtained from a group interaction, such as influences of dominant individuals and group pressure for conformity (Dalkey, 1972). Additionally, the issue of confidentiality is facilitated by geographic distribution of the subjects, as well as the use of electronic communication, such as e-mail, to solicit and exchange information. As such, certain downsides associated with group dynamics, such as manipulation or coercion to conform or adopt a certain viewpoint, can be minimized.

Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which one intends to generalize results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This group can also be identified as the target population. In this study, the target population is the Instructional and Student Services personnel in the California Community College system.

In a Delphi study, choosing the appropriate subjects is the most important step in the entire process because it directly relates to the quality of the results generated. Since the Delphi technique focuses on obtaining expert opinions over a short period of time, the selection of Delphi subjects is generally dependent upon the disciplinary areas of expertise required by the specific issue (Hsu & Sandford, 2007).

For this research study, it is important to note that the California Community College is a system made up of 72 districts and 113 community colleges within those

districts. The districts are broken down into Regions, which are determined by geographical locations and the colleges' proximity to each other. According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, Data Mart in the fall of 2014, there were approximately 17,000 Academic Tenured/Tenure track faculty and 1,947 Educational Administrators.

The target population for this research study was expert Instructional faculty, expert Instructional administrators, expert Student Services faculty, and expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.
2. Currently employed as a full-time personnel at a California Community College.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

The potential participants' contact information was identified through the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) Association, the Chief Student Services Officers (CSSOs) Association, and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). From the lists received from these organizations, potential participants that meet the participation criteria for the target population will be identified. This method of identifying participants is most common in educational research. Subjects will be used since they are accessible and represent certain

characteristics that the study requires to attain meaningful data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The target population is representative of Instructional and Student Services personnel in California; therefore, the results of the study were generalizable to California. The convenience approach was utilized to develop the target population. Convenience samples are used in both quantitative and qualitative studies. In this research, it is being used to better understand the perception of the definition of student success between Instruction and Student Services.

Sample

The group of subjects from whom the data regarding student success will be gathered will be representative of the Instructional and Student Services personnel within the California Community College system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The sample for this research study was five expert Instructional faculty, five expert Instructional administrators, five expert Student Services faculty, and five expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.
2. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

This sample will aid in the identification of the gap in perception of student success and to the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012 in some manner. The sampling frame was 20 individuals, selected according to the criteria identified for participation. The ability to determine the appropriate sample size for the research comprised of two main factors. The factors are degree of confidence and appropriate sample size (Creswell, 2005).

Once responses were received that indicated interest and met the selection criteria, random sampling approach was used to ultimately identify the sample for the study.

Following is the process used:

1. Obtain list of possible participants from identified organizations
(Appendix B).
2. Identify individuals that meet the participation criteria.
3. Send an invitation to participate to individuals meeting the criteria and consent form (Appendices C and D).
4. Create lists of faculty and administrators for Instructional Services and Student Services from those who indicate they are willing to participate.
5. From each of the four lists, select five participants at random.

Instrumentation

The study employed Internet-based survey research to examine if and how California Community College leaders could reach agreement using a series of surveys to collect their knowledge, views, and opinions as a panel of experts. The panel of experts was comprised of community college Instructional and Student Services faculty and administrators responsible for developing and implementing student success initiatives

and how to define student success. The panel of experts communicated their knowledge and experience through a three-round iterative process. They used the Delphi technique to reach agreement on which principles, components, and other aspects could be identified, prioritized, and applied to a common terminology and definition for students. The design included the total score, the principles' score, and the components' score factors whereby the participants (Instructional and Student Services faculty and administrators) responded to the research statements. They then reached levels of agreement through the iterative process of the Delphi technique.

Round One

The Round One survey was an open-ended qualitative question asking each respondent to identify the key components for describing student success in California Community Colleges. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey (Appendix E).

Round Two

The researcher compiled a list of all of the components identified in Round One. The list of components from Round One was placed into a survey that asked the participants to rate the importance of each component on the impact it will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. A Likert scale was used for the rating process with a rating scale of from 1 (Not At All Unimportant) to 6 (Very Important). The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey (Appendix F).

Round Three

Using the most important components identified in Round 2, the researcher compiled a list of the four most important components as identified by the expert panelists' ratings. This list was turned into a survey that asked the respondents to identify and describe the impact of each of the most important components on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey (Appendix G).

Validity

Validity refers to the appropriateness of use and the proposed interpretation of the scores for a given purpose under a prescribed set of conditions. Validity is the most fundamental consideration in developing and evaluating the extent to which an instrument is doing what it is supposed to do. Crocker and Algina (1986) refer to Cronbach's description of "validation as the process by which a test developer or test user collects evidence to support the types of inferences that are to be drawn from test scores" (p. 217). Validation begins with a clear statement about the proposed interpretation of the scores. There is no single all-inclusive form of validity. Validity is instead a matter of degree with types of evidence adding weight to validity, described as content, criterion-related, or construct validity. These three types of evidence are only conceptually independent, and rarely is just one of them important in a particular situation.

The types of evidence describe the extent to which the data obtained are systematically representative of the true state of the matter, and they describe if the

assessment items give information about what the items were intended to provide (Penfield, 2003). Content validity describes how well the content of the scale matches the content domain intended to be measured by the scale. In other words, it makes human judgments about whether or not the content of the items covers the major facets related to the knowledge areas. Content validity addresses features of the test, not the scores. In fact, content validation often occurs before scores are even obtained. Crocker and Algina (1986) outlined the following steps for content validation:

1. Defining the performance domain of interest;
2. Selecting a panel of qualified experts in the content domain;
3. Providing a structured framework for the process of matching items to the performance domain; and
4. Collecting and summarizing the data from the matching process. (p. 218)

Content validity was essentially “built-in” with the juried “expert review” survey and also with each round of the Delphi technique. Also, this content validity was ensured through the development of the instrument and the content of the scale matching the content domain, as conveyed by the experts’ responses and what they considered to be the constructs of interest.

Criterion-related validity pertains to the accuracy of decisions linked to the validity of the scores. Construct validity was used to determine whether or not the items of the scale measure the constructs they are supposed to measure. Construct validity addresses the degree to which scores represent the unobservable trait operationalized through the items. Internal validity claims were met by following established procedure for the Delphi technique to answer inferential questions about the scores and further

define and distill the data to well-founded conclusions. It would have been most difficult, if not impossible, to incorporate a comparison group into the Delphi research design to establish certainty of the instrument. External validity was dependent on the selection of the experts as a representative body, whose scores may or may not be generalized to all community colleges in a particular sample, group, or the population.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of such measurements when the testing procedure is repeated on a population of individuals or groups (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & National Council on Measurement in Education [APA, AERA, NCME], 1999). Reliability also refers to the extent to which the responses are free of measurement error. As such, the responses should be the same every time the measurement is repeated on the same group, sample, or population. To achieve reliable results, the scale and instrument were constructed so as to minimize random error in responses. The study focused on the proportion of the experts who responded to item stems (statements) according to the scale scores. That Rounds Two and Three of the Delphi afforded the experts an opportunity to change their initial ratings in light of the new information and further ensured that the results could be used for well-founded conclusions.

To establish reliability, a field test of the instruments and the process was conducted with nonparticipating individuals. One faculty and one administrator each from Instructional Services and Student Services were selected to participate for a total of four participants. The participants completed the instruments following the process for each of rounds one, two, and three. Following each round, participants gave feedback to

the research regarding structure of the instruments, clarity of instructions and questions, and general feedback regarding use of and completion of the instruments. The instruments were adjusted according to the feedback given by the participants.

Data Collection

Theoretically, the Delphi process can be continuously iterated until consensus is determined to have been achieved. However, Ludwig (1994) points out that three iterations are often sufficient to collect the needed information and to reach a consensus in most cases. In this study, three rounds were conducted to reach a consensus. No data were collected for this study until approval to conduct the study was received from Brandman University Institutional Review Board (BUIRB).

Round One

The Round One survey was an open ended qualitative question asking each respondent to identify the key components for describing student success in California Community Colleges. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Round Two

The researcher compiled a list of all of the components identified in Round One. The list of components from Round One was placed into a survey that asked the participants to rate the importance of each component on the impact it will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. A Likert scale was used for the rating process with a rating scale of from 1 (Not At All Unimportant) to 6 (Very Important). The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Round Three

Using the most important components identified in Round 2, the researcher compiled a list of the four most important components as identified by the expert panelists' ratings. This list was turned into a survey that asked the respondents to identify and describe the impact of each of the most important components on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Data Analysis

The data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher needed to deal with qualitative data, since open-ended questions were utilized to solicit subjects' opinions in the first round. The major statistics used in this Delphi studies measured the central tendency (means, median, and mode) and level of dispersion (standard deviation and inter-quartile range) in order to present information concerning the collective judgments of experts (Hasson, Keeney, & McKenna, 2000). Generally, the uses of median and mode are favored.

Round One

Following the administration of the Round One survey, the qualitative results were compiled into a list to be used in the preparation of the Round Two survey. The researcher took similar items provided by multiple participants and combined them for the sake of simplicity and clarity.

Round Two

Following the administration of the Round Two survey, the researcher identified the four components rated most important by the participants. Quantitative descriptive statistics were used in the form of mean scores to determine and identify the four most important components. The four most important components were used to prepare the Round Three survey.

Round Three

Following the administration of the Round Three survey, the researcher took the qualitative descriptions of the respondents' descriptions of the impact for each of the components and analyzed the collective responses to identify common themes and trends among the respondents' descriptions. Responses were placed into Data Matrices to identify themes and trends. The Data Matrix tool was determined to be the most efficient for this study, as the number of qualitative responses was limited to the number of participants. Based upon this analysis, the researcher developed an impact statement for each of the four most important components.

Limitations

The sizeable composition of the California Community Colleges, compared to the relatively limited selection of Instructional and Student Services personnel for this study, represents the most significant area of limitation for this study. With nearly three million students enrolled at 113 colleges across the California Community College system, there exists doubt that a sample size of 20 individuals can be fully generalized to the large population from which the relatively small sample was taken.

In addition to limitations regarding the size of the study and number of participants, there also exists limitation in the scope of the population from which the data were drawn. All selected colleges represent medium to large institutions in populated areas—these characteristics vary from schools in more rural regions, of which the study includes none. This impacts their levels of knowledge, engagement, and participation. Also, research results obtained with participants from one geographic region or setting may contain selection bias and, hence, may not generalize to people in other regions or settings throughout California.

Further limitation of the study involves the participants. All research subjects volunteered for the study, and thus represent personnel who are more willing and available to participate than the average peers at their institutions. Although this study did not conclude that any particular group of personnel was more likely to volunteer for participation in an academic study, and the study participants did yield significant diversity, there still may exist some bias in personnel's willingness to volunteer.

Despite limitations in study size and population, the findings of this research are significant and the in-depth data generated can be used to both identify the gap in definition of student success and to lay the groundwork for future studies on the topic.

Summary

This chapter outlines methodology for this mixed methods research. The design of the survey instruments was designed in consultation with a California Community College Institutional Researcher. Collection methods ensured the anonymity and voluntary participation of respondents during data collection and analysis processes. A

systematic approach to data collection and analysis was used to ensure quality and trustworthiness.

Chapter 4 will present the findings of the research questions, the analysis of the data compiled and ultimately framing of construct definition in alignment with descriptors in common use by practitioners, which will contribute towards the consistency in understanding of student success within the California Community College system.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter begins with the study's purpose statement and research questions. It goes on to include a description of the research method, the subjects in the study, and the instruments used. Next, the procedures for data collection and the approach to data analyses are discussed. Finally, a presentation of the data and findings is made. The presentation of data is done by research question.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study also examined the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Finally, the similarities and differences between the responses of experts in student services and instructional services were compared.

Research Questions

1. What are the key components for accurately describing student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services?
2. What degree of impact will the identified descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?

3. How do experts in student services and instructional services perceive the importance of the descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
4. How do experts in student services and instructional services adjust the collective descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

This study was a mixed methods design using both qualitative and quantitative measures. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), mixed methods is a study that combines qualitative and quantitative techniques and/or data analysis within different phases of the research process. Qualitative data were obtained in the form of open-ended narrative responses for research questions one and three. Quantitative data were obtained for research question two in response to “the degree to which” identified descriptors have an impact using a Likert scale to measure impact. Quantitative measures were used to determine significant differences for research question four. Mixed methods allow data triangulation and, since the purpose of this study was to triangulate data to reach consensus, the mixed methods approach was appropriate for this study.

Methodology

A Delphi research method was chosen for this study. The Delphi method is a communication structure intended to produce a detailed critical examination and discussion (Green, 2014). The Delphi technique is a widely used and accepted method

for gathering data from respondents within their area of expertise, which in this study were Instructional personnel and Student Services personnel. The Delphi technique is well suited as a means and method for consensus building by using a series of questionnaires to collect data from a panel of selected subjects. In contrast to other data gathering and analysis methods, it employs multiple analyses designed to develop a consensus of opinion concerning a specific topic, which in this study is the definition of student success. More specifically, the feedback process allows and promotes that the selected Delphi participants reassess their initial perceptions about the information provided in previous iterations (Ludwig, 1994). Thus, in a Delphi study, the results of previous versions regarding specific statements and/or items can change or be modified by individual panel members in later iterations based on their ability to review and assess the comments and feedback provided by the other Delphi experts. Delphi can be used for achieving the following objectives:

1. To determine or develop a range of possible program alternatives;
2. To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to different judgments;
3. To seek out information, which may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group;
4. To correlate informed judgments on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines; and
5. To educate the respondent group as to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic. (Hsu & Sandford, 2007, p. 1)

Other important characteristics with using the Delphi methodology are the ability to provide anonymity to respondents, a controlled feedback process, and the appropriateness of a variety of statistical analysis techniques to interpret the data (Ludlow, 1975). These characteristics are designed to balance the deficiencies of conventional means of pooling opinions obtained from a group interaction, such as influences of dominant individuals and group pressure for conformity (Dalkey, 1972). Additionally, the issue of confidentiality is facilitated by geographic distribution of the subjects, as well as the use of electronic communication, such as email, to solicit and exchange information. As such, certain downsides associated with group dynamics, such as manipulation or coercion to conform or adopt a certain viewpoint, can be minimized.

Data Collection

Theoretically, the Delphi process can be continuously iterated until consensus is determined to have been achieved. However, Ludwig (1994) points out that three iterations are often sufficient to collect the needed information and to reach a consensus in most cases. In this study, three rounds were conducted to reach a consensus.

Round One. The Round One survey was an open-ended qualitative question asking each respondent to identify the key components for describing student success in California Community Colleges. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Round Two. The researcher compiled a list of all of the components identified in Round One. The list of components from Round One was placed into a survey that asked the participants to rate the importance of each component on the impact it will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. A

Likert scale was used for the rating process with a rating scale of from 1 (Not At All Unimportant) to 5 (Very Important). The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Round Three. Using the most important components identified in Round Two, the researcher compiled a list of the four most important components as identified by the expert panelists' ratings. This list was turned into a survey that asked the respondents to identify and describe the impact of each of the most important components on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey, and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Participants were assured that all data and information collected would remain confidential. Hard data were stored in a locked file cabinet, and electronic data were stored in a password protected electronic file to which the researcher had sole access. Following defense of the dissertation study, all data were destroyed.

Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects, or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which one intends to generalize results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This group can also be identified as the target population. In this study, the target population is the Instructional and Student Services personnel in the California Community College system.

In a Delphi study, choosing the appropriate subjects is the most important step in the entire process because it directly relates to the quality of the results generated. Since the Delphi technique focuses on obtaining expert opinions over a short period of time, the

selection of Delphi subjects is generally dependent upon the disciplinary areas of expertise required by the specific issue (Hsu & Sandford, 2007).

For this research study, it is important to note that the California Community College is a system made up of 72 districts and 113 community colleges within those districts. The districts are broken down into regions, which are determined by geographical locations and the colleges' proximity to each other. According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, Data Mart in the fall of 2015, there were approximately 16,000 Academic Tenured/Tenure track faculty and 1,800 Educational Administrators (Table 1).

Table 1

Faculty and Staff Demographics Report

	Fall 2015 employee count	Fall 2015 employee count (%)
State of California total	79,960	100.00
Educational Administrator	1,815	2.27
Academic, Tenured/Tenure Track	15,834	19.80
Academic, Temporary	38,301	49.90
Classified	24,010	30.03

Note. Adapted from *Datamart*, by the California Community College Chancellor's Office (CCCCO), 2011, retrieved from <http://datamart.cccco.edu/datamart.aspx>

The target population for this research study was expert Instructional faculty, expert Instructional administrators, expert Student Services faculty, and expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.
2. Currently employed as a full-time personnel at a California Community College.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

The potential participants' contact information was identified through the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) Association, the Chief Student Services Officers (CSSOs) Association, and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). From the lists received from these organizations, potential participants that meet the participation criteria for the target population will be identified. This method of identifying participants is most common in educational research. Subjects will be used since they are accessible and represent certain characteristics that the study requires to attain meaningful data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The target population is representative of Instructional and Student Services personnel in California; therefore, the results of the study were generalizable to California. The convenience approach was utilized to develop the target population. Convenience samples are used in both quantitative and qualitative studies. In this research, it is being used to better understand the perception of the definition of student success between Instruction and Student Services.

Sample

The group of subjects from whom the data regarding student success will be gathered will be representative of the Instructional and Student Services personnel within the California Community College system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The sample for this research study was five expert Instructional faculty, five expert Instructional administrators, five expert Student Services faculty, and five expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.
2. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

This sample will aid in the identification of the gap in perception of student success and to the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012 in some manner. The sampling frame was 20 individuals, selected according to the criteria identified for participation. The ability to determine the appropriate sample size for the research comprised of two main factors. The factors are degree of confidence and appropriate sample size (Creswell, 2005).

Once responses were received that indicated interest and met the selection criteria, random sampling approach was used to ultimately identify the sample for the study.

Following is the process used:

1. Obtain list of possible participants from identified organizations.
2. Identify individuals that meet the participation criteria.
3. Send an invitation to participate to individuals meeting the criteria.
4. Create lists of faculty and administrators for Instructional Services and Student Services from those who indicate they are willing to participate.
5. From each of the four lists, select five participants at random.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Data were collected from a panel of Instruction and Student Services experts through surveys administered electronically. Aspects of the research traits were addressed throughout the surveys to reach the results outlined in each of the rounds.

Research Question One

What are the key components for accurately describing student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts Instructional Services and Student Services?

Round One. In Round One the Instructional and Student Services panel of experts were asked to respond to two questions:

Question 1: How would you describe student success in the context of the California Community Colleges?

Instructional experts responses included the following descriptors:

1. Prior to the emphasis on the student success initiative in our system, there really was not a definition of student success that our system could really agree on, nor was there much discussion on how to really help students succeed. Since this initiative was put forward, the discussion on this topic has grown exponentially and has allowed the instructional side of the house and the student service side of the house to really look at what does it take to help students succeed. Today, I would define student success as a partnership between the campus community in actively seeking out ways to help students succeed on our campus. The law outlines specific guidelines of how student success funds can be used, but I see student success being more broad than how we spend money but rather how we partner together to help students succeed.
2. Student success is a slippery thing in the California Community Colleges often without an absolute universal definition. For some students “success” might be coming back and taking one class to brush up on particular skills. For others, it might involve a completion of some sort: a certificate or degree. Others might define success as transferring to a CSU, UC, or Private 4-year institution. Still others may never complete a program because they find themselves fully employed.
3. California Community College students are successful if they are able to achieve their intended goal. This includes completing classes for transfer to a 4-year institution, completing a degree or certificate, completing coursework

to advance skill level in their current field, and completing coursework for a new field or new career.

4. Problematic. No single definition exists, which makes me wonder whether or not we are trying to define something undefinable. At least, not with the metrics we currently use on things like the “scorecard”—basic skills unit completion, and so forth. I would turn the question over to the students: what is success? Is transfer a success? Is certification success? Is being able to multiply fractions success? I would wager that we could, with some hard work, come up with a definition of success created by students that has more relevance to the student life than the definitions imposed by institutions. Can you imagine how something as fundamental as assessment and placement would change if students created the definition of success in a community college?
5. Student success at California Community Colleges can be broadly described as students reaching their unique educational goals whether those goals be quantifiable (graduation, transfer, certificate) or slightly more abstract (general interest, skill improvement, community involvement).
6. Student success should be defined by the student. Many are interested in transfer, some degrees, and some just want one class. As we are an open access institution, we have students with an array of goals. Frankly, therefore, success should be defined by the student, and if they attain their goal, then they are successful.

7. Student Success in the context of Community Colleges is when a student can successfully complete educational, career, and life goals with student support services that allow this to take place in an equitable manner.
8. Student success is a student's successful achievement of their educational goal. This goal can be completion of a course, basic skills or ESL competency, completion of a certificate, degree, or transfer. It can also be the completion of CTE training that leads to job advancement.

Student Services experts responses included the following descriptors:

1. Student success in the realm of California Community College is typically the achievement of the educational goal/objective of the student that leads towards transfer to a 4-year institution, or obtainment of a degree, certificate, or job placement/career advancement.
2. Student success is now being defined as tangible evidence of completion of transfer, a degree, and/or certificate of completion.
3. Success is not so easily measured since students enroll at CCC for all sorts of reasons. Open access has been promoted in our communities since the inception of the Higher Education Master Plan developed in the 1960s. Consequently, some students enroll to learn job skills, earn certificates or associate degrees, transfer, ESL, or lifelong learning. I think as practitioners, we are being charged with redefining success, and ensuring students have the tools they need to establish a well-defined goal and stay on track to complete that goal. Goals like lifelong learning have been de-emphasized through the implementation of statewide enrollment priorities.

4. At the system level, success is C or better grades in courses, GPA above 2.0, degree/certificate completions, transfer rates, retention, and persistence.
5. Community colleges are unique in that they are open to welcome students who have varying needs and goals, which makes success hard to measure and often individualized. However, I believe that CA community colleges can focus on student learning as a means to define success, that institutionally we have provided students with the skills to be contributing members of society, no matter what their reason why they are taking classes at our colleges.
6. The State defines student success as degree completion and/or transfer. However, those who actually help students define it as any outcome whereby the student attains the necessary skills that ends in fulfillment of his/her goal. For example, a student may attend a community college for only one semester, but completes his/her goal, for example, get a job, a promotion, or personal fulfillment.
7. Student success in the context of the CCC is comprised of completion of assessment, orientation, and education planning and the focus on success and completion. It is about restructuring the way services are delivered to students with focus on the entry point. There is a focus on helping students progress through the curriculum, closing the achievement gap, and helping students with degree completion by providing key services and education planning.
8. Huge. It Is the latest new big thing. We have got SB1456 all over the place and the task force recommendations, and so forth. The dust is starting to settle, versus a few years ago. Now, plans are in place and colleges are

shifting to looking at the data being collected rather than implementation. At the system level, students are numbers.

9. Completion of transfer, AA, Certificate of Achievement.

Question 2: What descriptors characterize student success at the student level?

Instructional Services experts responses included the following descriptors:

1. Welcoming environment, easy access to get their questions answered, solutions to common problems, access to support systems, a course schedule that allows them access to needed courses, as well as works into their work/ outside activities schedule and support for their unique and individual needs.
2. Progression through levels of programs or through levels of remediation.
3. Ability to meet a particular goal (transfer, career progression, etc.).
4. Course completion, certificate/degree completion, goal achievement.
5. As suggested above, this will vary from student to student. Of course, a number of them will say that transfer or certification are measures of success, but there are many other factors to be considered. Does completing English 43 or mathematics 46 have any meaningful value to a student who still faces two or more semesters of basic skills coursework? Where is the measure of success placed in that scenario?
6. Successful students would be described as those who have acquired knowledge and skills that help them in their personal and/or professional lives (such as critical thinking and communication skills) and helps them attain their goals.

7. Student success should be defined by the student. Many are interested in transfer, some degrees, and some just want one class. As we are an open access institution, we have students with an array of goals. Frankly, therefore, success should be defined by the student and, if they attain their goal, then they are successful.
8. Resilience Grit Discipline.
9. Completion of a course, program, degree, or transfer; passing a class, successfully completing a semester, being engaged in college.

Student Services experts responses included the following descriptors:

1. Transfer, graduation (degree/certificate), obtaining a job or promotion. It may also include going to and staying in college, obtaining a level of proficiency in a certain area of study or soft-skills (e.g., foreign language, computer programming, accounting).
2. I think for students, success can be as simple as figuring out what they want to do with their lives by defining an educational goal. Success may not be tangible or consist of a structured program of study. It could be passing a class and realizing that you can make your way through college. It can be finishing a couple of classes that lead to a job or a promotion.
3. Their ability to enroll in classes, pass those classes and not take extra units that do not help them achieve their goal.
4. Student defined on a wide spectrum—from attending the first day of a college class to obtaining a degree and/or transfer to reaching career goals.

5. Passing a class; completing a certificate/degree/transferring; gaining a new skill; gaining a transferable skill for employment; utilizing resources on campus for support.
6. Often, students feel successful if he/she knows what their goal is and how to obtain it. Passing a class often defines success at the student level, the ability to achieve that goal in a timely manner, getting the classes he/she needs to move forward toward their goal, and getting the financial aid in a timely manner.
7. At the student level, descriptors that characterize student success includes being assessed, oriented, and receiving education planning services reflective of the students' goals. It's about helping students progress through the basic skills curriculum to transfer level courses and by helping students accomplish their education goals, whether it be completion of a certificate, 2-year degree, or transfer. In addition, at the student level, student success entails successful course completion, in addition to successful completion of basic skills competencies, completion of college level English and math courses, and completion of 15 and 30 units in college.
8. It is hard to define it at the student level. For some students completing one class is success. Others will go on all the way to a terminal degree. Need to emphasize that success is going to look different for each student. Guiding students toward that goal (whatever it is) is success on the college's side.
9. Completing a class, completion of a series of classes, employment and graduation.

Twenty experts agreed to participate in the study. In Round One, 19 experts completed the survey, as well as 9 Instructional Services experts, and 10 Student Services experts.

Emerging themes on Research Question One. Based on the responses and frequency of descriptors gathered in Round One, one can observe that the following themes tend to be more dominant. Table 2 shows the themes that emerged.

Table 2

Themes From Round One Survey

Degree completion	Job attainment
Transfer to 4-year institution Completion of Associate’s Degree	Job attainment/employment
Persistence and retention	Campus/community engagement
Basic Skills unit completion Access Ability to enroll in classes GPA above 2.0 Completion of college level math & English Grade of C or better in courses	Lifelong learning Utilizing campus resources Community involvement
Matriculation	Closing the achievement gap
Completion of assessment, orientation, and education planning Defining student's educational goal	Resilience Acquisition of critical thinking skills Skill attainment

The data demonstrate that the instructional and student services experts have a varied perception of student success descriptors, which contradicts what the California Community College Chancellors Office (CCCCO) has defined student success to be. The definition according to the CCCCCO (2011) is:

- Percentage of community college students completing their educational goals
- Percentage of community college students earning a certificate or degree, transferring, or achieving transfer-readiness
- Number of students transferring to a four-year institution
- Number of degrees and certificates earned. (p. 6)

Research Question Two

What degree of impact will the descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?

Round Two. A survey instrument was utilized in Round Two that asked experts to rate the importance of the descriptors/characteristics that emerged in Round One. A 5-point Likert scale was used to allow the experts to express how important a particular descriptor/characteristic is.

Tables 3-6 show several descriptors of student success that were provided by participants in the first round of this study. In Round Two, 18 experts completed the survey, as well as 8 Instructional Services experts and 10 Student Services experts.

Round 2 gathered all the descriptors identified in Round 1 and asked the experts to rate the importance of each characteristic on the impact it will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. It should be noted that a 5-point likert scale was used. It can be noted that there are distinct differences in the ratings between the Instructional experts and Student Services experts responses especially as it relates to:

Table 3

Degree Completion, Job Attainment, and Persistence and Retention Descriptors (5-Point Likert Scale)

	Completion of Associate degree	Defining student's educational goal	Job attainment/employment	Completion of college level math & English	Grade of C or better in courses
Instruction	4.13	4.57	3.88	4.25	3.75
Student Services	3.56	4.67	3.78	3.78	3.89
Overall	3.84	4.62	3.83	4.01	3.82

Table 4

Persistence and Retention, Matriculation, and Closing of the Achievement Gap Descriptors (5-Point Likert Scale)

	GPA above 2.0	Persistence and retention in a course	Skill attainment	Completion of assessment, orientation, and education planning	Lifelong learning
Instruction	3.88	4.38	4.13	4.50	3.50
Student Services	4.00	4.22	4.25	4.56	3.11
Overall	3.94	4.30	4.18	4.53	3.31

Table 5

Persistence and Retention and Closing of the Achievement Gap Descriptors (5-Point Likert Scale)

	Access	Utilizing campus resources	Ability to enroll in classes	Acquisition of critical thinking skills	Acquisition of communication skills
Instruction	3.75	3.63	4.13	3.63	3.50
Student Services	4.44	4.22	4.00	4.00	3.89
Overall	4.10	3.92	4.06	3.81	3.69

Table 6

Closing of the Achievement Gap and Campus/Community Engagement (5-Point Likert Scale)

	Resilience	Closing the achievement gap	Community involvement	Basic skills unit completion
Instruction	3.71	4.38	3.13	4.00
Student Services	3.78	3.78	3.11	3.89
Overall	3.82	4.08	3.12	3.94

- Completion of an Associate’s degree
- Completion of college level math and English
- Access
- Utilizing campus resources
- Acquisition of skills
- Closing the achievement gap.

The experts’ responses clearly establish the priorities for each of these groups, consequently, demonstrating the gap that exists in how student success is approached by Instruction and by Student Services groups.

Round Three. Using the most important components identified in Round Three, the researcher compiled a list of the five most important components as identified by the expert panelists’ ratings. Those components included: (a) Defining Student’s Educational Goal; (b) Completion of Assessment, Orientation, and Educational Planning; (c) Persistence and Retention in a Course; (d) Skill Attainment; and (e) Access. This list was converted into a survey that asked the respondents in Instructional Services and Student Services to identify and describe the impact of each of the most important components on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of

2012. The survey was delivered electronically via Survey Monkey and respondents sent the results back electronically via Survey Monkey.

Twelve of the 20 experts responded to survey Round Three. The researcher reviewed the responses and categorized the panel members’ responses. Tables 7-11 represent the themes gathered through the data collection of the survey.

The data gathered through the Round Three survey continued to solidify the outcomes from Round One and Round Two, where it demonstrated the complexity of student success and made it evident the need for further dialogue at all levels of the California Community College system. There were inconsistencies in the views and descriptors within the Instruction and Student Services groups and across the areas. Even though the five descriptors were derived from results from the previous rounds, there were no common themes identified in the responses to each of the areas being questioned. In some cases the experts noted that they did not know or were not aware of the impact of the descriptors.

Table 7

Defining Student’s Educational Goal

Instruction	Student services
Goal provides a direction that can increase retention and successful course completion	Goal drives the matriculation status, which in turn affects the priority registration time
Students are able to enroll before students that have not fully matriculated	Goal helps create an education plan that focuses on long term goals
The data gathered should have a big influence in how we do the school schedule	Motivation to complete their goals
Depends, the impact can be significant if the students come in unprepared to frankly self-assess goals or if the institution attempts to carefully prescribe a course	Impacts student retention and persistence

Table 8

Completion of Assessment, Orientation, and Education Planning

Instruction	Student services
<p>It is important for students to have a general idea of what is possible in their first 2 years of college and how to plan for success</p>	<p>Not all services work for all students, nor are all needed. Colleges in some cases are presenting services in order to check the box, but not all services are beneficial to students.</p>
<p>These are the new components for full matriculation. Students need to complete all three of these components in order to receive an earlier registration date. Also, the college receives funding tied to these components.</p>	<p>Students are required to complete each of these components. However, colleges have been forced to critically examine how and when these services are delivered.</p>
<p>Assessment has not worked as well because the tool that we have used has not proven to be as accurate as we need to accurately place students</p>	<p>The completion of AOE, provides a map for students to follow towards successful completion of the educational goal. Additionally, it affords confidence by identifying needs and wants.</p>
<p>The most crucial step in the matriculation process is assessment. Relying almost solely on poor assessment instruments can set capable students back two or more semesters in English and mathematics. Sure, students can plan from this deficit, but why does the institution set these barriers before the students as a default?</p>	<p>Assessment is not as important as orientation and education planning. Community colleges should go the way of the CSU and use SAT/ACT, high school GPA, and specific courses taken in high school as a predictor of success in English and math. Orientation and education planning are extremely important as these activities help the student understand where they are going and how to get there.</p> <p>This characteristic impacts student success by providing the student a solid foundation to begin college by class selection that are appropriate for skill level, understanding college policies and support services, and establishing a clear plan and timeline to complete educational goals.</p>

Table 9

Persistence and Retention in a Course

Instruction	Student services
<p>Persistence and retention in a course is often a result of preparedness of the student, the expectations of the student, and the style/ efforts of the faculty member. If a student is struggling in a course, an engaged faculty member who reaches out—without judgment and with compassion—can make a difference as to whether or not that student makes the changes needed to stay and succeed in a course. One experience with a faculty member has the potential to affect that student’s future and their decision to reach their goals.</p>	<p>This is important, but no easier to complete than before the act. Students are at risk, but with so many variables, it is very hard to identify them, much less connect them with services. I can envision this being successful, but it really is a HUGE mind/service/ collaboration shift that will need to take place before we can begin to realize it.</p>
<p>Persistence and course retention play an important role in student completing their educational goals.</p>	<p>Too early to tell. At my college, a program called XXXXX was launched in fall 2014. In this program, freshmen who complete the SSSP steps by a given deadline are rewarded with a registration time right after priority groups and before continuing students. Students were encouraged to enroll in Math and English and full time. Early research supports that students are enrolling in more units, completing the gateway math and English classes, and persisting at higher rates than freshman who did not qualify for XXXX program.</p>
<p>I haven’t seen the impact of the data yet on this area but my guess is that with the increase of our tutoring efforts and the writing center these rates will go up.</p>	<p>Persistence and retention needs to be attained through emotional confidence, establishment of a team, establishing a relationship with other students. With a positive emotional demeanor and relationship, a student is more apt to stay and succeed in a class.</p>
<p>These are tough metrics. I have retained many unsuccessful students over the years, and I often wonder why they keep coming to class but don’t do the work required. What does coming to class mean to them? Is the class a safe space from a crazy home life? Is the class a place to go because that’s where you are expected to be at this point in your life? Persistence is even stranger, from a basic skills perspective.</p>	<p>Students who complete and continue their coursework are more likely to progress through their academic objectives. Persistence and retention is helpful when it comes to helping students progress.</p>

Table 10

Skill Attainment

Instruction	Student services
<p>There are times when a student may not have an over-arching educational goal or may be taking classes primarily for interest; however, a good course can provide a student with skills that can translate to other courses, to their work lives and personal lives. A student who learns critical thinking skills, one who learns time management skills, one who learns to explain and present their ideas—these students are succeeding.</p>	<p>Does not have a relationship that I can make.</p>
<p>The primary aspect for this area is the writing and language center, and I haven't yet seen any data to show the impact of these efforts on skill attainment.</p>	<p>Too early to tell. Furthermore, no research has been completed for this.</p>
<p>What skill are we talking about, and who defines the parameters of its attainment? Is the skill to learn how to graph Cartesian coordinates? To learn how to use a comma? To learn how to socialize oneself to an academic environment? This is an area that is really ready for aligned work between student services and instruction.</p>	<p>Description of the skill attainment impact is personal success. Every student needs to feel good about themselves. By attaining a skill such as critical thinking, completion of an argument or defining a formula can all be attributed to skill attainment and success.</p>
<p>Don't know.</p>	<p>Relates to skill attainment to Career and Technical Education (CTE). Offering robust CTE programs in the community college will move California forward and supply the workforce. CCC should be given more latitude in offering Bachelors degrees in CTE programs.</p>

Table 11

Access

Instruction	Student services
<p>Access to resources and courses is the most basic characteristic of student success. Resources that exist and are not used are a waste of time, money, and manpower. It is critical that students know that these resources are available to them and that they are welcomed. Course availability is equally important for all students. If a student sets an educational goal, and they are unable to reach that goal due to scheduling or lack of courses, the college is failing that student and hampering their success.</p>	<p>I'd like to have a rosy answer, but I don't. I don't believe this has increased access. We may not be hearing the good from students, but we hear a lot of bad. Students are upset that they are being told to do something other than simply get their classes. Access has not been noticeably moved in a good way. Students express themselves in relation to viewing new mandates as being more hurdles/barriers than the opening up of pathway.</p>
<p>Students must have access to the assessment, orientation, education plans, and registration in order to successfully complete their education goals.</p>	<p>No impact. Access has never been a problem. Students have been admitted, but as the research supports, they have been expected to independently navigate the cafeteria of support services.</p>
<p>Access is the easy part. Authentic retention and authentic persistence (measured using student momentum) is the real measure of how effective open access is. If you allow everyone in, but you have poor success rates in basic skills mathematics and English, what good have you done anyone? So, it's the part AFTER access that needs to be carefully reviewed.</p>	<p>Access to various tools and support is very important, as it affords the student a means to complete large or small goals.</p>
	<p>Access is important. My concern is that students are all trying to get into the universities rather than recognizing that many CTE programs will provide them with a career that offers a good salary. Again, I am in favor of open access, but I also am concerned that students attending CCC are serious about their goals. Too many continue to be lost in the system without goals, and eventually are dismissed and/or lose their financial aid.</p> <p>All students having equal access to available resources on campus will be stronger in areas of self-advocacy and self-efficacy.</p>

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the gap in understanding of the definitions of student success between Instruction and Student Services in California Community Colleges. It is important for the participants in the planning and implementation process at community colleges to have a common understanding and definition of student success. Furthermore, the study demonstrated the need for alignment between the Instruction and Student Services in order to achieve student success and meet the mandates of the California state legislation.

In an environment, such as that of the California Community Colleges, where shared governance is pursued, this environment creates a culture where consensus is difficult to achieve. The study demonstrated that there continues to be a misalignment between these two sides and that it is critical that at this point all stakeholders come together for the success of the California Community College and ultimately the students and citizens of the state.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

With the signing of Senate Bill 1456, the Student Success Act of 2012, California state legislation has mandated that California Community Colleges deliver services that will increase the probability of student persistence and completion. There is a need for the Instruction and Student Services sides of the house to come together in a collaborative manner to address and resolve this challenge and therefore bridge the gap between these two divisions.

Research has demonstrated that Instructional Services and Student Services in California Community Colleges work in silos when it comes to addressing the challenge of student success (Alt, 2012). The purpose of this study is to identify the gap in understanding of the definitions of student success between Instruction and Student Services in California Community Colleges. Furthermore, the study will demonstrate the need for alignment between the Instruction and Student Services in order to achieve student success and meet the mandates of the California state legislation.

A Delphi research method was chosen for this study. The Delphi technique is a widely used and accepted method for gathering data from respondents within their area of expertise, which in this study were Instructional personnel and Student Services personnel. The Delphi technique is well suited as a means and method for consensus building by using a series of questionnaires to collect data from a panel of selected subjects. More specifically, the feedback process allows and promotes that the selected Delphi participants reassess their initial perceptions about the information provided in previous iterations (Ludwig, 1994). Thus, in a Delphi study, the results of previous versions regarding specific statements and/or items can change or be modified by

individual panel members in later iterations based on their ability to review and assess the comments and feedback provided by the other Delphi experts.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Delphi study was to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in Student Services and Instructional Services. The study also examined the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges will have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. Finally, the similarities and differences between the responses of experts in student services and instructional services were compared.

Research Questions

1. What are the key components for accurately describing student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services?
2. What degree of impact will the identified descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges have on the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
3. How do experts in student services and instructional services perceive the importance of the descriptors for student success in California Community Colleges for the future implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012?
4. What are the similarities and differences between experts in student services and instructional services when comparing results for research questions 1-3?

Methodology

A Delphi research method was chosen for this study. The Delphi method is a communication structure intended to produce a detailed critical examination and discussion (Green, 2014). The Delphi technique is a widely used and accepted method for gathering data from respondents within their area of expertise, which in this study were Instructional personnel and Student Services personnel. The Delphi technique is well suited as a means and method for consensus building by using a series of questionnaires to collect data from a panel of selected subjects. In contrast to other data gathering and analysis methods, it employs multiple analyses designed to develop a consensus of opinion concerning a specific topic, which in this study is the definition of student success. More specifically, the feedback process allows and promotes that the selected Delphi participants reassess their initial perceptions about the information provided in previous iterations (Ludwig, 1994). Thus, in a Delphi study, the results of previous versions regarding specific statements and/or items can change or be modified by individual panel members in later iterations based on their ability to review and assess the comments and feedback provided by the other Delphi experts. Delphi can be used for achieving the following objectives:

1. To determine or develop a range of possible program alternatives;
2. To explore or expose underlying assumptions or information leading to different judgments;
3. To seek out information, which may generate a consensus on the part of the respondent group;

4. To correlate informed judgments on a topic spanning a wide range of disciplines; and
5. To educate the respondent group as to the diverse and interrelated aspects of the topic. (Hsu & Sandford, 2007, p. 1)

Other important characteristics with using the Delphi methodology are the ability to provide anonymity to respondents, a controlled feedback process, and the appropriateness of a variety of statistical analysis techniques to interpret the data (Ludlow, 1975). These characteristics are designed to balance the deficiencies of conventional means of pooling opinions obtained from a group interaction, such as influences of dominant individuals and group pressure for conformity (Dalkey, 1972). Additionally, the issue of confidentiality is facilitated by geographic distribution of the subjects, as well as the use of electronic communication, such as email to solicit and exchange information. As such, certain down sides associated with group dynamics such as manipulation or coercion to conform or adopt a certain viewpoint can be minimized.

Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which one intends to generalize results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This group can also be identified as the target population. In this study, the target population are the Instructional and Student Services personnel in the California Community College system.

In a Delphi study, choosing the appropriate subjects is the most important step in the entire process because it directly relates to the quality of the results generated. Since the Delphi technique focuses on obtaining expert opinions over a short period of time, the

selection of Delphi subjects is generally dependent upon the disciplinary areas of expertise required by the specific issue (Hsu & Sandford, 2007).

For this research study, it is important to note that the California Community College is a system is made up of 72 districts and 113 community colleges within those districts. The districts are broken down into Regions, which are determined by geographical locations and the colleges' proximity to each other. According to the California Community College Chancellor's Office, Data Mart in the fall of 2014 there were approximately 17,000 Academic Tenured/Tenure track faculty and 1,947 Educational Administrators.

Target Population

The target population for this research study was expert Instructional faculty, expert Instructional administrators, expert Student Services faculty, and expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.
2. Currently employed as a full-time personnel at a California Community College.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

The potential participants' contact information was identified through the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCCA) Association, the

Chief Student Services Officers (CSSOs) Association, and the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC). From the lists received from these organizations, potential participants that met the participation criteria for the target population were identified. This method of identifying participants is most common in educational research. Subjects were used since they were accessible and represented certain characteristics that the study required to attain meaningful data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The target population is representative of Instructional and Student Services personnel in California; therefore the results of the study were generalizable to California. The convenience approach was utilized to develop the target population. Convenience samples are used in both quantitative and qualitative studies. In this research, it was used to better understand the perception of the definition of student success between Instruction and Student Services.

Sample

The group of subjects from whom the data regarding student success were gathered were representative of the Instructional and Student Services personnel within the California Community College system (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The sample for this research study was five expert Instructional faculty, five expert Instructional administrators, five expert Student Services faculty, and five expert Student Services administrators from throughout California. To qualify as an expert for the purposes of this study, individuals had to meet the following criteria:

1. A minimum of 5 years of service in the Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges.

2. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
3. Participation in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas.
4. Knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

This sample will aid in the identification of the gap in perception of student success and to the implementation of the Student Success Act of 2012 in some manner. The sampling frame was 20 individuals, selected according to the criteria identified for participation. The ability to determine the appropriate sample size for the research comprised two main factors. The factors were degree of confidence and appropriate sample size (Creswell, 2005).

Major Findings

As noted in Chapter 4, six findings emerged from the analysis in no particular order based on their occurrence, as reflected in Table 2. These findings provide the basis for addressing the problem statement for this study: Despite concerted efforts from the California Community College State Chancellor's Office and California state legislature to institutionalize activities that lead to student success, little alignment in descriptors exist between Instruction and Student Services. In summary, the lack of focus in the definition of student success has left the system continuing to work towards a goal that is not jointly supported by Instruction and Students services at California Community Colleges. The findings of this study establish that practices within the student services and instruction offices in the California Community Colleges conflict with best practices noted in the literature and with the mandates required by Senate Bill 1456, also known as

the Student Success Act of 2012. Research has also demonstrated that students' academic success and personal development depends not only on the quality of the curriculum and classroom instruction, but also in the educational unit of the college, Student Services. When instructional faculty interface and collaborate with Student Services, the collaborative effects are likely to be exerted on student learning and development therefore maximizing the impact and quality of the college experience (Cuseo, n.d.).

The thematic consistencies appear within the following descriptors: (a) degree completion, (b) persistence and retention, (c) matriculation, (d) campus and community engagement, (e) job attainment, and (f) closing of the achievement gap. This study's themes and findings were listed in Table 2 in no particular order since no single theme was prominent during data collection. For purposes of interpretation, these findings are reorganized in Table 3 and listed in their order of impact on student success.

The data collected during Round 1 demonstrated that Instructional experts had more wide-ranging descriptors as it related to their description of student success in the context of the California Community College. Instructional experts' answers were broader. They see it as how constituents partner together to help student succeed. It is more than how the dollars are allocated than how they are spent. Other experts seemed to agree that there is no absolute definition of student success, and defining the term is problematic and even indescribable. Data gathered from the Student Services experts seemed to be more succinct and at times aligned with the definition set forth by the California Community College Chancellor's Office. In general, the experts agreed that it related to degree completion, transfer to a 4-year institution and/or career placement and

professional advancement. The few variations included completion of a course with a C or better and a grade point average above 2.0, persistence and retention, and closing the achievement gap.

Round Two had the experts rank the descriptors that emerged in Round One. Once again, there were nominal parallels in the responses by the two groups. Instructional experts viewed the following in order of occurrence: (a) defining student's educational goal, (b) completion of matriculation, (c) persistence and retention, (d) closing the achievement gap, and (e) completion of college level math and English. Student Services experts perceived the following descriptors in level of importance: (a) defining student's educational goal, (b) completion of matriculation, (c) access, (d) skill attainment, and (e) persistence and completion and utilizing campus resources receiving equal value. These findings are not consistent with the state's definition, and measurement of success demonstrates the conflicted views that are pervasive in the system.

Through the data collected in Round Three, it became more evident that Instruction and Student Services experts had very distinct ideas and understanding regarding the six components identified in the previous rounds. Experts were asked to identify and describe the impact of each of the important components on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012. No consistent themes or patterns were identified in Round Three, even though the descriptors were derived from the responses from expert replies as demonstrated in Tables 3-6 in Chapter 4.

Finally, the lack of shared descriptors suggests that there is a barrier to establishing a tight integration of the services. The absence of a road map around which the divisions and programs integrate cause services to remain in functional silos and serves only the needs of the program and not necessarily serving student success effectively. In addition, the findings illustrate the difference existing between Instruction and Student Services, which are in contrast to what the literature recommends. The findings suggest the lack of direction and definition of student success has created a situation whereby student success is unattainable and not measurable.

Conclusions

This research study explored the perception of Instructional and Student Services experts as it related to the definition of student success in California Community Colleges. In order to meet the new mandates of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012, there is a need for the Instruction and Student Services sides of the house to come together in a collaborative manner to address and resolve this challenge and therefore bridge the gap between these two divisions.

This study demonstrated that Instructional Services and Student Services in California Community Colleges work in silos when it comes to addressing the challenge of student success. It identified the gap in understanding of the definitions of student success between Instruction and Student Services in California Community Colleges. Furthermore, it also demonstrated the need for alignment between the Instruction and Student Services in order to achieve student success and meet the mandates of the California state legislation.

Based on the research presented in this study, existing efforts of the California Community College Chancellor's Office defining student success have left a gap amongst field experts' perceptions. Both Instructional and Student Services experts have a much broader definition base for the term, which includes descriptors such as course level retention and persistence, achievement gap, and community engagement. Measuring the success of the community college students in California is certainly a complicated, and yet essential, charge, which was clearly demonstrated in the research presented. It is concluded that the goals of all students need to be acknowledged and measured, and in order to effectively provide services to students so that they can achieve success, careful individual attention must be paid to the whole student.

Findings from this research exhibited that characterizing and measuring these current markers of success is challenging and complex. It can be noted that, as a system, according to the experts, we are not measuring the correct indicators of success. As such, educators have a complex task in educating the wide variety of students, with varying goals in California Community Colleges. It is concluded that this complex set of tasks cannot be represented by the narrow descriptor the system now uses. Richer, more diverse, goals and measures aligned with the current and future needs of the diverse student population needs must be developed to truly capture and respond to today's community college students. This must be accomplished through collaboration amongst all sectors and levels of the community college system.

Implications

There are several implications that arise from the research findings and conclusions of this study. First, the California Community College systems needs to

develop an integrated, robust, and proactive program of academic and social support that engages students at entry and teaches them how to become active partners in their own quest for educational success. Continuing to operate in silos will never allow the system to achieve the immense goals set by the legislature. All stakeholders must realize that this is a shared responsibility.

Second, on-going programs on college campuses must capture student interest early. Colleges must draw from Instructional Services, Research and Institutional Effectiveness, Career and Transfer Services, and both counseling and instructional faculty. Colleges must create environments that foster collaboration amongst cross-divisional teams, which in turn creates experience in classroom teaching, curriculum development, research, planning, student support services, and the development of measurable and meaningful learning outcomes. Several experts described the importance of partnerships in addressing the challenge of student success attainment. The dynamics of the faculty and staff provide the necessary knowledge and understanding of the campus and its processes to give students with varied educational goals and backgrounds a single source of information needed to successfully navigate a complex educational system of higher education.

Lastly, effective programming involves cooperative partnerships between and among different organizational units of the college, encouraging them to work interdependently in a coordinated, complementary, and cohesive fashion to support the student as a whole person. These conversations are a critical step toward making the institution-wide change needed to improve college completion rates. This implies that a

coordinated, comprehensive effort across all stakeholders must be enacted to create common understanding and definition for student success.

Recommendations for Future Practice

One of the most important outcomes from a qualitative research study is a call for action (Creswell, 2005). The purpose of this particular research was to identify descriptors in student success, compare them, identify any potential barriers to implementing best practices, and identify areas for improvement in student success in California Community Colleges. To that end, six specific recommendations are made as a call for action.

Recommendation 1

Develop a system-wide definition of student success through collaboration and stakeholder discussions and incorporate into governance structure within the community college system.

From this definition, criteria for the evaluation of decisions and programs should then be developed. The California Community College system under the umbrella of the Chancellor's Office should develop a framework to incorporate the state's vision and student success actions in the numerous assessment models within the organization, such as the program review documents and integrated planning activities at the colleges.

Recommendation 2

Develop a framework for leadership decision-making consistent with the California Community College Chancellors Office student success vision statement.

A framework for evaluating leadership decisions as they relate to the vision statement for student success needs to be established. This framework should be known,

understood, and utilized both for system-wide and college-level decisions to support the vision, and it should be regularly monitored and reported to all constituents.

Recommendation 3

Develop a multi-year plan which includes bench marks for achieving student success goals. A plan for actionable stages over several years should be developed, monitored, and evaluated.

This sustained effort should lead to identifiable actions for improvement in key performance indicators of student success. These indicators should include short-term and long-term measurable goals. Achievement of stated goals should be assessed and improvement efforts woven into the multi-year plan.

Recommendation 4

Develop full integration of student services programs across the community colleges, as well as integration across academic and student services programs.

The colleges will be best served by strengthening the links between the services and making them more significantly known across stakeholder groups, such as faculty and staff. Professional development activities locally and statewide that engage all in best practices robust dialogue are critical to the alignment of student success goals in Instruction and Student Services. There are many statewide meetings led by the California Community College Chancellors office that can be utilized for such conversations. Creating opportunities for Chief Instructional Officers (CIO) and Chief Student Services Officers to collaborate and lead discussions amongst their peers that delve into student success in more focused and purposeful fashion. These conversations

then must be taken back to their regions and colleges and shared with all in order to ensure transparency and engagement at all levels.

Recommendation 5

Creation of a resource guide for student success that is best practices and data driven, meant to unify colleges' approaches to success and serve as an avenue for sharing resources.

The California Community College system often operates in a reactive manner, where students are referred to services after they struggle in or fail a class. This is demonstrated in high course failure rates and low graduation rates. Student service offerings such as advising, counseling, and peer-based or student-led programs play an important role, and can potentially play a more significant role in students' success. A resource guide that serves as a repository of best practices can aid colleges to shift from a reactive stance to a more proactive approach to understanding students' needs and goals.

Potential ideas to support success may include:

- Gathering more information on student goals at the time of enrollment and sharing information with Instruction to assist in schedule development
- Offering preenrollment information sessions in collaboration with Instruction so students develop an understanding of the college process and are aware of their likelihood of success in particular classes/programs, and
- Activities that aid colleges in the planning, coordination, and implementation of student success activities.

Recommendation 6

Include all employees, faculty, staff and administrators in a CCC Professional Development Program which informs practitioners on student success best practices.

The role of leadership is important and cannot be underestimated. Leadership is a basic function of management which helps to maximize efficiency and to achieve organizational goals. The Chancellor's Office must assume a role of leadership in the implementation of the CCC Professional Development Program. The current Flexible Calendar Program focuses on faculty, while providing limited opportunities for classified and administrative staff who also contribute to the success of students through improved student support services; well-maintained facilities and infrastructure; contributing to increased opportunity; and a safe, secure, and healthy learning environment. Classified and administrative employees do the essential work that keeps colleges up and running. They keep campuses safe, clean, and efficient. Most importantly, they strive to improve the lives of our students every day. This recommendation would establish policy to include faculty, classified, and administrative staff in the CCC Professional Development Program. It must be a primary stakeholder and should revisit its roles, structures, and positions related to professional development. It needs to identify full-time staff assigned to this purpose. It will be important for the Chancellor's Office staff to work with the Foundation for California Community Colleges to create system-wide partnerships with private and public sectors to secure resources and grants to support professional development activities in the CCC System. The Chancellor's Office staff will also acknowledge that professional development for faculty falls under the purview of the academic senate per Title 5 Section 53200(b) and will therefore consult directly with the

Academic Senate for California Community Colleges prior to making any decision that relates to or impacts faculty professional development. While there is a statewide vision for professional development, the Chancellor's Office should provide regional coordination that will be used to connect people on shared local agendas and to institutionalize professional development on each campus.

Through the ever-changing demographics of students in California, and supported by the recommendations presented in this study, the state of California will soon need to respond to the goals of the continually growing and changing study body population enrolled at the community colleges throughout the state. An expanded vision of student success, explicitly including the goals of all students, holds hope for the future of the largest educational system in the world. Such a shift in how the state defines and measures success has the potential to change how community college students are viewed in society and, ultimately, has the potential to produce a more intelligent, productive, and inspired workforce and society.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study allowed for an in-depth exploration into the topic of student success at California Community Colleges. Although this study is limited by a relatively small sample size, and thus is limited in an ability to generalize the findings to all California Community Colleges, the study does lay the groundwork for future studies on related matters. A primary suggestion would be to conduct a similar study of larger size in order to validate if the findings are consistent with a larger population of community college experts. Additionally, conducting further studies on student success by focusing the sample to a particular group or population is suggested. Studies could be conducted

specifically on single or multi-district colleges, urban or rural college, small, medium, or large sized colleges, and so forth. Adding focus groups to the study including but not limited to part-time faculty and students can allow the researcher to further delve into the responses provided by the experts. This, in turn, can facilitate the ability to identify common themes within and amongst the different expert groups. Further, by interviewing experts from different geographical regions or from specific demographic backgrounds, including groups focused on age, gender, race, ethnicity, and/or others factors, more specific data may be gathered on the particular goals and perceptions of student success of these narrowed groups. An additional recommendation for further study is a study exploring the cultural impact of the shared governance system on policy and decision-making in the California Community College System.

In addition to suggesting that general research focused on gathering more data on student success, this study uncovered a number of particular areas of concern that should be examined in future research, as well. The data for this study revealed a gap between existing Instruction and Student Services and how success is measured. There seemed to be a disconnect on the understanding of the definitions of terms, such as persistence and retention. Providing a glossary with definitions would have allowed the participants to answer the questions and rate them more succinctly.

Through such research, the results of this study can be confirmed or denied, and more valuable data on the alignment of student and state goals can be gathered.

Additionally, further research on what defines student success will provide support and valuable data to educators as they work to develop a system in which the goals of all community college students are identified and measured in a meaningful way. Without

an effective instrument for measurement of success in place, the California Community Colleges are not equipped to determine if their services are meeting the needs of students. Equally, the overall mission and goals of community colleges should be explored in future research. An understanding of both student goals and college priorities are correspondingly important in successfully defining and measuring students' success. With millions of students, thousands of employees, and millions of dollars at stake—not researching and improving this misalignment will prove a great detriment to the system as a whole. Thus, detailed research into student success with a larger sample size is recommended.

Student success, understanding how success is measured, the role of funding related to these key areas should be examined in future studies, as well. This will allow all stakeholders to understand their role in how they impact student success. Currently, faculty and staff at the colleges lack the knowledge of how they are impacting the overall mission of community colleges. An additional proposal for the methodology of future research would be to continue to organize studies including methodology with expert interviews and focus groups. This methodology did prove challenging, due to coordination among experts and the declined response rates toward the end of the study; however, direct expert interviews could yield in-depth data that would most likely not be captured in a quantitative study.

Overall, the topic of student success is an area with much room for exploration and need for research, and is also an area that will undoubtedly receive more attention in coming years. Although limited in size and scope, this study addresses a timely concern at the California Community Colleges, and provides insight and recommendations on a

topic that can be addressed immediately in a relatively low-cost manner. If student success is not addressed in a timely and appropriate fashion, the implications for students and for overall degree completion rates are potentially detrimental to the current and future students of the California Community Colleges.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

The study sought to explore the definition of student success as perceived by experts in Instruction and Student Services in the California Community College and its impact on practice. This topic was selected because this is a key issue under discussion in community colleges nationally. Overall, the topic of student success is an area with much room for exploration and need for research and is also an area that will undoubtedly continue to receive attention. Although limited in size and scope, this study addresses a timely concern at the California Community Colleges, and provides insight and recommendations on a topic that can be addressed immediately in a relatively straightforward way. If student success is not addressed in the very near future, the implications for students and for overall degree completion rates will continue to be problematic to the current and future students of the California Community Colleges.

Currently, student success is at the forefront of colleges' mission as enrollment continues to grow, student demographics radically change, community colleges receive negative media attention, school performance remains a constant discussion, and more schools are placed on warning for accreditation. Each of these important topics is closely related to the discussion of student success, what success truly means for our students, and how educators can both measure and promote success. Future research on the

important area of student success is highly suggested, and expected, in the future education in California and beyond.

In this study, I found this research has not commonly been conducted within the system and amongst the colleges in California. Student success goes to the core of what community colleges are and to what they are expected to do—produce graduates prepared to fulfill the skilled labor demand.

On a personal level, this research study was a thoughtful and reflective experience. I am a member of the leadership at a California Community College, and I found both advantages and disadvantages to doing a study relating directly to my workplace. In the end, I found the advantages far outweighed the disadvantages. At times, I was asking participants to reflect on decisions similar to those I had been part of developing and implementing. The experts handled this with grace and honesty, which I respect immensely. It is their thoughts and actions that guided the recommendations made in this study. It caused me to delve deeper into my own understanding of student success and reflect on my own past decisions, some made without consideration of their impact upon student success. In functioning in my role at my college, there were moments when I believed it was critical to make significant decisions in a timely fashion during the economic chaos and therefore compromising the quality of service provided to students. This study taught me that I was operating through a financial lens and in response to the chaos seemingly being shoved on colleges, rather than viewing these decisions with a focus on their impact to student success. I was busy achieving the college goals without the clear end in mind, which led to the internal struggle I experienced during this research. I know I have the best intentions for the students I

serve. I feel a strong sense of loyalty to the students and to the community college system and hope to always represent it in the best possible manner. I have always been encouraged by my father to work hard and do whatever it takes to serve my place of work and students. I learned, however well intended, the decisions of which I was a part did not always serve student success in the manner expected. While going through the data analysis and writing of this study, I was able to develop a new internal metric against which to compare future decisions, one that is comprised of placing student's first and meeting them where they are. Once I recognized this, I am able to make decisions that benefit student goals and offer opportunities to support their journey. Moving forward, I plan to evaluate decisions with this new lens. I hope my experience will help influence decisions at my college and within the California Community College system. I hope that my research may help influence decision-making within other community colleges, as well. I am certain my experience will change the decisions I make as an administrator for the remainder of my career. I realize that if I want or expect change in how community colleges operate, I must first represent that change myself as a leader.

On a final note, as I started my research project, the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012 had just passed and was being implemented. The system and the college have made significant strides towards student success. The system has recognized the silos that exist and that cooperation between Instruction and Student Services must occur in order to attain student success. With the new focus on student success that is developing throughout the system, I am hopeful that steps will be taken to address the silos, and colleges will approach student success in a uniform manner that is founded in the principle of best practices and is data informed. This research study

supports the need for a systemic view of what the community colleges are to accomplish and how we as leaders and colleagues can lead this change. It is the responsibility of leaders to make institutional decisions with a student success end in mind.

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APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Document	U.S. higher education	California higher education	Community Colleges	Student success models	Retention/ completion models	Student engagement	Academic/ student affairs collaboration	Research
Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance (2012), <i>Pathways to success: Integrating learning with life and work to increase college completion</i>	X	X		X		X		
Alfonso (1992), <i>Educational attainment of Hispanics in sub-baccalaureate education</i>	X			X	X			
Alfred (1992), <i>Making Community Colleges more effective: Leading through student success</i>			X	X	X	X		
Alt (2012), <i>The impact of management decision-making on student success: A case study</i>	X	X	X	X			X	
Amey (2010), <i>Leadership partnerships: Competencies for collaboration</i>				X	X		X	
Bailey et al. (2005), <i>Community College student success: What institutional characteristics make a difference</i>			X	X	X	X	X	
Baldassare, Bonner, Pauch, & Petek (2010a), <i>PPIC statewide survey: Californians and education</i>		X						
Baldassare, Bonner, Pauch, & Petek, N. (2010b), <i>PPIC statewide survey: Californians and higher education</i>		X						
Bradley & Blanco, (2010), <i>Promoting a culture of student success. How colleges and universities are improving degree completion</i>	X			X	X	X		

Document	U.S. higher education	California higher education	Community Colleges	Student success models	Retention/completion models	Student engagement	Academic/student affairs collaboration	Research
Engle & Tinto (2008), <i>Moving beyond access: College success for low-income, first generation students</i>				X	X	X	X	
Friedman (2007), <i>Strengthening achieving the dream planning through stakeholder engagement.</i>	X		X	X				
Frost, Strom, Downey, Schultz, & Holland (2010), <i>Enhancing student learning with academic and student affairs collaboration</i>				X			X	
Green (2014), <i>The Delphi technique in educational research</i>								X
Gulley & Mullendore (2014), <i>Student affairs and academic affairs collaboration in the community college setting</i>			X				X	
Hanushek (1986), <i>The economics of schooling: Production and efficiency in public schools</i>	X							
Hanushek (2003), <i>Rating American education: The need for reform</i>	X							
Hsu & Sandford (2007), <i>The Delphi technique: Making sense of consensus</i>								X
Johnson (2010), <i>Higher education in California: New goals for the master plan</i>		X	X					
Jones & Ewell (2009), <i>Utilizing college access and completion innovation funds to improve postsecondary attainment in California</i>		X	X		X			

Document	U.S. higher education	California higher education	Community Colleges	Student success models	Retention/completion models	Student engagement	Academic/student affairs collaboration	Research
Kezar & Lester (2009), <i>Organizing higher education for collaboration: A guide for campus leaders</i>				X	X		X	
Kuh (2005), <i>Promoting student success: What campus leaders can do</i>				X			X	
Little Hoover Commission (2012), <i>Serving students, serving California: Updating the California Community Colleges to meet evolving demands</i>			X	X	X	X		
Ludlow (1975), <i>Delphi inquiries and knowledge utilization</i>								X
Ludwig (1994), <i>Internationalizing extension: An exploration of the characteristics evident in a state university extension system that achieves internationalization</i>	X							
Ludwig (1997), <i>Predicting the future: have you considered using the Delphi methodology?</i>								X
Lumina Foundation (2010), <i>A stronger nation through higher education</i>	X			X				
McMillan & Schumacher (2010), <i>Research in education</i>								X
Miller, Lincoln, Goldberger, Kazis, & Rothkopf (2009), <i>Courageous conversations: ACHIEVING THE DREAM and the importance of student success</i>	X		X	X		X		

Document	U.S. higher education	California higher education	Community Colleges	Student success models	Retention/completion models	Student engagement	Academic/student affairs collaboration	Research
Mills (2009), <i>Altered state: How the Virginia community college system has used Achieving The Dream to improve student success</i>	X		X	X				
Pell Institute (2011), <i>Developing 20/20 vision on the 2020 degree attainment goal: The threat of income-based inequality in education.</i>	X		X	X	X			
Pusser & Levin (2009), <i>Re-imagining community colleges in the 21st century: A student-centered approach to higher education</i>	X		X	X				
Rath, Rock, & Laferriere (2013), <i>Pathways through college: Strategies for improving community college student success</i>	X		X	X				
Shulock, Moore, Offensteing, & Kirlim (2008), <i>It could happen: Unleashing the potential of California's community colleges.</i>		X	X	X				
Tinto (2003), <i>Learning better together: The impact of learning communities on student success</i>			X	X			X	
The White House (2011), <i>The White House summit on community colleges</i>	X		X	X	X			
Williams (2014), <i>Low-income kids really want to go to college: Here's why it's not happening</i>	X		X	X				

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Letter

Initial Introduction Email Identify Potential Participants in Research

Subject Line: Seeking Instructional Faculty, Instructional Administrators, Student Services Faculty and Student Services Administrators

Dear (Insert Name),

Greetings! My name is Susan Topham and I am a doctoral candidate in the Organizational Leadership program at Brandman University. The research for my dissertation focuses faculty and administrators in Instructional and Student Services division in the California Community College system and the definition of student success. Specifically, I am interested in seeking participants who:

- Have a minimum of 5 years of service in Instructional or Student Services areas in California Community Colleges;
- currently employed as a full-time personnel at a California Community College;
- have participated in recognized leadership activities in the Instructional or Student Services areas, and
- have knowledge of the Seymour-Campbell Student Success Act of 2012.

Participants of the study will be asked to participate in a three-round electronic survey, known as a Delphi Study.

The four rounds will span over the time period of five to eight weeks, and participation in all four rounds is imperative to the survey process. Round one will consist of two questions, round two will not exceed ten questions, round three and four will not exceed five questions.

For more information, please contact Susan Topham at stopham@mail.brandman.edu or 858.414.0149. If you would like to participate in this project, please complete the interest form survey at this link. All participant information will be anonymous and aggregate findings of the study will be shared with participants.

Your assistance in spreading the word regarding this research is much appreciated. Please forward this email to individuals at a California Community College you believe would want to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Susan Topham
Doctoral Candidate
Ed.D. in Organizational Leadership, Brandman University

APPENDIX C

Electronic Informed Consent

INFORMATION ABOUT: A Delphi Study of the Understanding of the Definition of Student Success in California Community Colleges and Its Impact on Practice

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Susan Topham

THE FOLLOWING WILL BE INCLUDED IN THE ELECTRONIC SURVEY:

The primary purpose of this study is to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study will also examine the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges has on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Services Act of 2012.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this electronic survey, you can withdraw at any time.

The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be confidential. The survey questions will pertain to your perceptions regarding student success in California Community Colleges.

Each participant will use a three-digit code for identification purposes. The researcher will keep the identifying codes safe-guarded in a locked file drawer to which the researcher will have sole access. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only.

No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained. I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

If you have any questions about completing this survey or any aspects of this research, please contact Susan Topham at stopham@mail.brandman.edu or by telephone at 858.414.0149; or Dr. Phil Pendley, Chair, at pendley@brandman.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT:

Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the “agree” button indicates that you have read the informed consent form and the information in this document and that you voluntarily agree to participate.

If you do not wish to participate in this electronic survey, you may decline participation by clicking on the “disagree” button.

The survey will not open for responses unless you agree to participate.

AGREE: I acknowledge receipt of the complete Informed Consent packet and “Bill of Rights.” I have read the materials and give my consent to participate in the study.

DISAGREE: I do not wish to participate in this electronic survey.

APPENDIX D

Round One Notification

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research project. If you have any questions please feel free to email me at stopham@mail.brandman.edu.

A Delphi Study of the Understanding of the Definitions of Student Success in
California Community Colleges and Its Impact on Practice

If you have any questions, contact the researcher directly.

Susan Topham

stopham@mail.brandman.edu

858.414.0149

You are invited to complete the form **Round One Delphi Study**. Please visit:

<https://surveymonkey.com>

APPENDIX E

Round One Survey

Defining Student Success Survey - Part 1

The present study consists of a Delphi Study of the Understanding of the Definition of Student Success in California Community Colleges and Its Impact on Practice.

The primary purpose of this study is to identify a consensus description for student success in California Community Colleges as perceived by a field of experts in student services and instructional services. The study will also examine the degree of impact and the importance of the identified description for student success in California Community Colleges has on the implementation of the Seymour-Campbell Student Services Act of 2012.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this electronic survey, you can withdraw at any time.

The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Your responses will be confidential.

The survey questions will pertain to your perceptions regarding student success in California Community Colleges. Each participant will use a three-digit code for identification purposes. The researcher will keep the identifying codes safe-guarded in a locked file drawer to which the researcher will have sole access. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only. No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained.

I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, at 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, (949) 341-7641.

If you have any questions about completing this survey or any aspects of this research, please contact Susan Topham at stopham@mail.brandman.edu or by telephone at 858.414.0149; or Dr. Phil Pendley, Chair, at pendley@brandman.edu.

By clicking “Next,” you are acknowledging that you have read the Informed Consent and are consenting to participate in this study.

Next

Defining Student Success Survey - Part 1

1. How would you describe student success in the context of the California Community Colleges?

2. What descriptors characterize student success at the student level?

3. The following question is asked for comparison purposes only.

Please select the position type that best describes your current role at your institution.

- Faculty
- Administrator
- Other (please specify)

4. Do you work primarily in an instructional setting or student services setting?

- Instructional
- Student Services

APPENDIX F

Round Two Survey

Defining Student Success Survey - Part 2

Thank you for participating in the Defining Student Success study, conducted by Susan Topham. This is a Delphi Study, in which there are three rounds of participation. In the first round, participants were asked to define “student success” and provide descriptors for “student success.” In this second round, you, as a participant, will be asked to rate the importance of a number of descriptors to student success. To proceed with this second round of the study, please click “Next.”

	Not at all importa nt	Mildly importa nt	Moderat ely importa nt	Importa nt	Very importa nt
	1	2	3	4	5
Transfer to four-year institution	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completion of Associate's Degree	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Defining student's educational goal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job attainment/employment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Basic Skills unit completion	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completion of college level math and English	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade of C or better in courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
GPA above 2.0	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Persistence and retention in a course	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skill attainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completion of assessment, orientation, and education planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lifelong learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Not at all importa nt	Mildly importa nt	Moderat ely importa nt	Importa nt	Very importa nt
Access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Utilizing campus resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to enroll in classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquisition of critical thinking skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Acquisition of communication skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resilience	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Closing the achievement gap	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Community involvement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Defining Student Success Survey - Part 2

2. Please select the position type that best describes your current role at your institution.

- Faculty
- Administrator
- Other (please specify)

3. Do you work primarily in an instructional setting or student services setting?

- Instructional
- Student Services

Done

APPENDIX G

Round Three Survey

Defining Student Success Survey - Part 3

1. Please describe the impact of the following characteristic of student success in relation to the implementation of the Student Success Act: **DEFINING STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL GOAL.**

2. Please describe the impact of the following characteristic of student success in relation to the implementation of the Student Success Act: **COMPLETION OF ASSESSMENT, ORIENTATION, AND EDUCATION PLANNING.**

3. Please describe the impact of the following characteristic of student success in relation to the implementation of the Student Success Act: **PERSISTENCE AND RETENTION IN A COURSE.**

4. Please describe the impact of the following characteristic of student success in relation to the implementation of the Student Success Act: **SKILL ATTAINMENT.**

5. Please describe the impact of the following characteristic of student success in relation to the implementation of the Student Success Act: **ACCESS.**

6. Please select the position type that best describes your current role at your institution.

- Faculty
- Administrator
- Other (please specify)

7. Do you work primarily in an instructional setting or student services setting?

- Instruction
- Student Services