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# Criteria for Initial Appointment in Rank and Subsequent Promotion for Faculty in Two-Year Public Colleges

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Criteria for Initial Appointment in Rank and Subsequent Promotion for Faculty in Two-Year  
Public Colleges

Criteria for Initial Appointment in Rank and Subsequent Promotion for Faculty in Two-Year  
Public Colleges

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Higher Education

By

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This dissertation is approved for recommendation to the Graduate Council.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The growth of community colleges over the last five decades has not been met with a commensurate expansion of knowledge about policy development. In order to address this gap in knowledge, this study aimed to determine the prevalence of rank among two-year colleges in the United States; to identify the criteria used to determine rank upon hire for transfer and vocational faculty; to identify the criteria used to determine promotion for transfer and vocational faculty; and to determine if there are differences in criteria between transfer faculty and vocational faculty at initial appointment and subsequent promotion. Additionally, the study sought to determine the prevalence of collective bargaining and tenure among colleges with faculty rank and the currency of the policies about faculty promotion.

To collect the needed information for the study, an email requesting policies on faculty rank and promotion was sent to chief academic officers of all public two-year colleges identified as having a system of faculty rank. Additionally, questions about collective bargaining, faculty tenure, and currency of promotion policies were asked. One hundred thirty four replies (38%) were received.

Results indicated that 38% of public two-year colleges currently offer faculty rank. Furthermore, 47% of colleges had collective bargaining, 67% of colleges had faculty tenure, and 79.7% of colleges had updated their rank and promotion policies within the last five years. The most common criteria used to determine rank at the time of hire and subsequent promotion were educational credentials and teaching excellence. There were differences between transfer and vocational faculty in the criteria used to determine academic rank.

This study provides a better understanding of the prevalence of faculty rank among two-year colleges and the criteria used to determine initial rank at the time of hire and for subsequent promotion for both transfer and vocational faculty.

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## **DEDICATIONS**

This dissertation is dedicated to my two grandmothers. To my grandmother Juanita Marchant. You died when I was twelve years old, but the impact you had on my life has been tremendous. Thank you for encouraging my love of knowledge by allowing me to walk to the library in the summer and check out several books at a time. Most importantly thank you for being my friend. Even in death, you have inspired me. I think you would be proud.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

Founded in 1901, Joliet Junior College was the first public community college in the United States. Between 1901 and 1968, the number of public two-year colleges grew to 773 (Cohen and Brawer, 2008). Today, there are approximately 1700 two-year colleges in the United States (Carnegie Foundation, 2013). As the number of colleges has increased, the number of full-time faculty has increased as well. In 1953, there were 12,473 full-time faculty teaching in two-year colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). In the fall of 2011, community colleges employed 113,328 full time faculty (Knapp, L.G., Kelly-Reid, J.E., and Ginder, S.A., 2012).

Though the numbers of community colleges created and the number of faculty working there have grown tremendously over the last century, there has not been proportional growth in our knowledge and understanding of some polices. In particular, published literature concerning rank and promotion policies at two-year institutions has been very limited. In fact, at present, no one knows what percentage of colleges have (or have had) academic rank.

In 2006, Schuster and Finkelstein released *The American Faculty: The Restructuring of Academic Work and Careers*. Although the title suggests a review about all faculty in higher education, the book devoted little attention to the discussion of two-year faculty, except for a few comparisons to their four-year counterparts. In the section on faculty rank and promotion, community college faculty were not addressed as a separate group, although they teach in colleges with a different mission.

Even in community college journals, there are relatively few articles on community college faculty. In 2001, Townsend, Bragg, and Kinnick reviewed topics covered in the six major community college publications between 1990 and 2000. Out of 807 articles, they found only

157, or 19%, related to community college faculty. The relatively small amount of literature makes it difficult to provide an accurate representation of what it is like to work as a faculty member in a community college. Additionally, in one of the most widely cited books on community colleges, *The American Community College* by Cohen and Brawer (2008), no mention is made of faculty rank.

A search of EBSCO Host using the key words “academic rank or tenure,” “two year colleges or community colleges,” and “status or promotion or criteria” produced only 30 usable articles or book chapters that contained information related to the topic.

Although there is no definitive explanation for the lack of articles about community college faculty rank and promotion, Twombly and Townsend (2008) provided two possible reasons for the lack of published knowledge about two-year colleges. The first was that most individuals in higher education who conduct the majority of the research in higher education work in four-year institutions and focus on researching what they know. The second explanation was that while research on two-year colleges might appear as part of a larger publication concerning all of higher education, such as *The American Faculty* (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006), research focused solely on community college faculty was quite scarce.

### **Statement of the Problem**

During the late 1950s to mid-1960s, there was an abundance of research investigating rank and promotion in two-year colleges (Blocker & Wolfe, 1964; Frieberger & Crawford, 1962; Harrington, 1966; Hendrix, 1965; Kilpatrick, 1965; Medsker, 1960; Wright, 1956). Since then, the published research regarding rank and promotion policies has been virtually nonexistent. In the ASHE report, *Community College Faculty: Overlooked and Undervalued* (2007), Townsend and Twombly noted, “little is known about the tenure and promotion process in community

colleges” (p.74). They also stated, “It was not until the 1960s that many community colleges began to have a system of academic ranks [...] The current percentage is unknown” (p. 74). Much of the current research on two-year college faculty focuses on job satisfaction, occupational stress, teaching methods, and the use of technology in the classroom (Cejda, 2010; Jackowski & Akroyd, 2010; Linville, Antony & Hayden, 2011). This is of little help to individuals considering employment in a community college who are interested in the criteria used to determine rank at initial employment and subsequent promotion.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for several reasons. First, this study provided needed information about academic rank and promotion in two-year colleges. Second, faculty and administrators at colleges with faculty rank will now be able to compare their own policies against those of other two-year colleges. Third, the study provided colleges planning to add a system of rank and promotion valuable information about what other colleges are doing. Fourth, individuals applying for jobs at community colleges that have rank will now have a better understanding of the criteria used to determine rank at the time of hire and the criteria needed for subsequent promotion at these institutions. Finally, universities preparing individuals to teach at two-year colleges will now be better able to prepare aspiring community college teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful in obtaining a position and advancing in rank.

### **Purpose of the Study**

There were two main purposes for this study. The first was to determine the prevalence of rank in public two-year colleges. The second was to identify the criteria used to determine rank at the time of hire and subsequent promotion for both vocational and transfer faculty.

## **Definition of Terms**

To ensure understanding, a number of frequently used terms were given specific definitions for the purposes of this study. These are:

1. Two-Year College – any institution regionally accredited to award the Associate of Arts or the Associate of Science as its highest degree (Cohen & Brawer, p. 5, 2008). The terms “two-year college,” “community college,” and “college” are used interchangeably in this study.
2. Promotion – an elevation in academic rank, either from instructor to assistant professor, assistant professor to associate professor, or associate professor to full professor.
3. Criteria – the specific factors used to determine initial rank and subsequent promotion.
4. Academic Rank – the titles given to various faculty classifications at a college, traditionally instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor.
5. Transfer Faculty – faculty members whose primary responsibilities are to teach courses whose credits are designed to transfer to a four-year institution.
6. Vocational Faculty – faculty members whose primary responsibilities are to teach courses needed for a particular type of employment. In this study, “vocational,” “technical,” and “occupational” are used interchangeably.

## **Research Questions**

To achieve the purposes of the study, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What percentage of two-year colleges has a system of academic rank for faculty?
2. For community colleges with rank, when were these policies established?
3. For community colleges with rank, what percentage has collective bargaining?
4. For community colleges with rank, what percentage has tenure for faculty?

5. What are the criteria for initial appointment in rank for transfer faculty?
6. What are the criteria for initial appointment in rank for vocational faculty?
7. What are the criteria for promotion to a higher academic rank for transfer faculty?
8. What are the criteria for promotion to a higher academic rank for vocational faculty?
9. Are there differences in criteria used to determine rank between transfer faculty and vocational faculty at the time of hire?
10. Are there differences in criteria used to determine promotion in rank between transfer faculty and vocational faculty?

### **Delimitations of the Study**

The study had two major delimitations. First, the population of two-year colleges studied was limited to public, non-affiliated institutions of higher education. Institutions affiliated with four-year institutions were excluded since they are often not independent entities and thus do not have full control over their policies. In addition, private two-year colleges were excluded since churches, other non-profit organizations, and proprietary entities often control these institutions, which can result in a mission different from that of public two-year colleges.

Second, the study population excluded any two-year college that grants four-year degrees. Independent two-year colleges in several states are now granting bachelor's degrees (Lewin, 2009). This delimitation was necessary since these "hybrid" institutions do not fit the definition of a two-year college as defined by Cohen and Brawer (2008).

While not a delimitation, it is important to note that institutions that were part of a statewide community college system were treated as separate institutions. Additionally, if one college within a statewide system responded, then all colleges were reported as responding since

all institutions within a system are assumed to have to adhere to the same policies on faculty rank and promotion.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study had two limitations. The first was the use of a college's catalog to identify colleges with faculty rank. The major limitation of this study was the use of college catalogs to identify colleges with faculty rank. Catalogs typically include listings of faculty and their rank if the college has faculty rank. When colleges did not list their catalog on their website, they were contacted via email to determine whether they had a system of faculty rank and promotion. The second was the dependence on chief academic officers to provide the policies on faculty rank and promotion and not reviewing a college's website.

### **Summary**

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study and a statement of the problem. It also outlined the study's significance. Research questions were identified and the terms used in the study were defined. This chapter also explained the limitations and delimitations of the study and demonstrated how the study contributed to the current gap in the literature concerning the prevalence of rank in two-year colleges and the criteria used for determining rank at initial hire and promotion.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

Chapter Two provides a review of the literature concerning community college faculty and systems of initial rank and promotion in two-year colleges. The literature reviewed in this chapter consists of studies, literature reviews, opinion pieces, college documents, and surveys. The first part of the chapter summarizes the literature concerning faculty in two-year colleges. The second part reviews research related to academic rank and promotion in these colleges, including reasons for and against implementation of a system of faculty rank, the prevalence of rank in two-year colleges, inclusion of effective teaching as a criterion for promotion, and examples of faculty rank and promotion policies in two-year colleges.

### **Faculty in Two Year Colleges**

In the fall of 2011, community college faculty accounted for 31% of all faculty in higher education (Knapp, L.G., Kelly-Reid, J.E., and Ginder, S.A., 2012). This represented a large group of faculty about whom little information is available, particularly about criteria used to determine initial rank and promotion. Before examining the existing literature on college practices in determining initial rank and promotion for two-year college faculty, it is important to know more about this group, including their academic credentials, work experience, teaching load, and compensation.

### **Faculty Credentials**

As two-year colleges evolved from an extension of the local high school to comprehensive community colleges, the educational credentials of faculty changed to accommodate the expanding mission of the college. Rather than continuing to recruit faculty from the local high schools where a bachelor's degree was more common, community colleges



began recruiting faculty from other community colleges or graduate schools, where master's degree level faculty were more available (Cohen & Brawer, 2008). Table 1 summarizes these changes.

Table 1

*Educational Credentials of Community College Faculty*

Year	Bachelor's Degree or less	Master's Degree	Doctorate
1927	53%	40%	7%
1957	31%	64%	6%
1972	16%	75%	9%
2003	18%	63%	19%
2011	14%	73%	13%

*Sources:* Proctor, 1927, p. 47; Monroe, 1972, p. 248; Thornton, 1972, p.135; Cataldi, Bradburn, and Fahimi (cited in Cohen and Brawer, 2008), p.87; Knapp, Kelly-Reid, and Ginder, 2011).

As shown in Table 1, the proportion of faculty with doctorates, although not often a requirement to teach at most community colleges, more than doubled between 1927 and 2003 while faculty with a bachelor's degree or less declined by more than 50%. Possible explanations for this could be more pressure to obtain a master's degree or increased market demand for master's level faculty (even for faculty teaching in occupational programs); a decline in occupational programs due to a renewed emphasis on transfer programs and developmental education; or a rising number of older faculty who decided to pursue a doctorate.

However, the percentage of faculty in two-year colleges with doctoral degrees declined between 2003 and 2011. The most plausible explanation for this trend was the change in the age of faculty. In the fall of 1992, 24% of faculty were over the age of 55 while another 42% were between the ages of 45 and 54. Those over the age of 45 accounted for 76.7% of doctorates among community college faculty (Palmer & Zimbler, 2000). In a study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education in 1999, public two-year college faculty reported that they expected to

retire, on average, at age 64. Only 9% said they expected to retire after age 70 (Zimbler, L. J., & National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). It is very likely that the mass retirement of this age group accounted for much of the decline in the percentage of faculty with doctorates.

### **Secondary Teaching Experience**

Initially, many two-year college teachers came from high schools (Proctor, 1927). In 1931, Eells (as cited in Cohen and Brawer, 2008) reported that 80% of two-year college instructors had previous experience teaching in high schools. Proctor (1927) believed that community college faculty were recruited from high schools because they had at least some training in teaching as opposed to recent university trained graduates who usually had no preparation in teaching.

However, by 1960, the percentage of faculty with previous secondary experience had decreased to 64% (Medsker, 1960), and by 1967, the number had further declined to 40% (Monroe, 1972). Thornton observed that as the distinction between two-year colleges and high schools grew and the number of occupational programs increased, faculty increasingly came either from the workplace or straight out of graduate school (as cited in Kelly & Connolly, 1970). Another possible explanation was that as the numbers of new community colleges increased, individuals with master's degrees and high school experience could make more money teaching at the high school level and elected to remain there.

More recently, Schuster and Finkelstein (2006) reported a growth in two-year college faculty recruited from outside academia. They believed this was a result of the increased need for vocational expertise, especially in fast growing fields such as nursing and allied health. In short, as the mission of the community college has expanded, faculty education and experience have continued to change to meet new demands and needs.

## **Faculty Teaching Load**

Faculty teaching load in a community college is typically expressed in terms of either the number of hours taught per week or the number of courses taught per semester. When expressing teaching load as the number of hours taught per week, the normal teaching load for most disciplines has been 13 to 15 hours (Cohen & Brawer, 2008; Mupinga & Maughan, 2008). However, disciplines with laboratory hours typically have teaching loads between 18 and 20 hours (Zimbler, L. J., & National Center for Education Statistics, 2001).

Some institutions express faculty load as the number of courses taught in a semester. In these instances, a typical teaching load is five courses. Multiple institutions, articles, and surveys reinforced this definition of a teaching load (Grubb et al, 1999; Jenkins, 2012; Smith, 2007). A 1998 study of 12 community colleges throughout the United States found that institutions on a semester calendar required 30 hours of instruction per year while those on a quarter system required 45 hours of instruction per year (Silvers, Attinasi, & McGregor, 1999). Both of these are equivalent to five courses per term.

## **Faculty Compensation**

Since most two-year faculty need only a master's degree, some might assume that compensation for faculty has always been less than that of other groups of faculty in higher education. In fact, two-year college faculty compensation compared favorably with the national average in 1970. However, a widening gap in compensation between two-year faculty and the national average for all faculty has developed. Table 2 illustrates the trend for the last four decades.

Table 2

*Two-Year Faculty Salaries Compared to National Average for all Faculty*

Year	Salary	National Average for all Faculty
1970-71	\$12,644	\$12,710
1980-81	\$22,177	\$23,302
1990-91	\$37,055	\$40,133
2000-01	\$48,240	\$55,888
2010-11	\$62,301	\$75,472

*Note.* Adapted from U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Higher Education General Information Survey (HEGIS), "Faculty Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits" surveys, 1970-71 through 1985-86; Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), "Salaries, Tenure, and Fringe Benefits of Full-Time Instructional Faculty Survey" (IPEDS-SA:87-99); and IPEDS Winter 2001-02 through Winter 2010-11, Human Resources component, Salaries section.

Several things could account for the current differences in salaries. Community colleges are competing for faculty in a regional market rather than a national market and do not have to pay as much when setting salary levels (Twombly, 2005). Further, some colleges may compare their salaries with local public school districts or other community colleges in the region (Townsend and Twombly, 2007). In addition, in colleges with rank, salary is typically tied to academic rank, thus faculty in two-year colleges would earn less than faculty in four-year institutions since rank is not as prevalent in two-year institutions. (Schuster & Finkelstein, 2006).

**Research on Academic Rank and Promotion in Two-Year Colleges**

In the 1950s and 1960s, multiple research studies, articles, and book chapters were published on the topic of faculty rank and promotion practices in two-year colleges (Blocker & Wolfe, 1964; Frieberger, & Crawford, 1962; Garrison, 1967; Harrington, Kilpatrick, 1965; Medsker, 1960; Thornton, 1960, 1966; Wright, 1956). Prior to this period, little published research existed, possibly because higher education scholars and researchers viewed the two-year college as an extension of the local high school. After the 1960s, the number of relevant articles and books on this topic decreased. This is especially interesting given the growth in community

colleges in the 1960s and 1970s. The following is a summary of the available literature about faculty rank and promotion in community colleges, beginning with reasons why two-year colleges implemented systems of rank and promotion.

### **Reasons for Implementing a System of Rank and Promotion**

The impetus behind implementing rank and promotion systems in community colleges is multi-faceted. The two most frequently mentioned reasons found in the literature are prestige and strengthening ties to higher education.

According to the literature, an overwhelming reason for establishing rank and promotion was the desire for increased prestige, both for the institution and the faculty (Brown, 1977; Kinnick, 1969; Wright, 1956). Rank and promotion helped distinguish community colleges from high schools, a distinction that many thought would increase prestige and establish a new position in the educational hierarchy. Additionally, since many two-year college faculty initially came from secondary schools and because of the close ties between secondary schools and early community colleges, several authors saw the introduction of rank for faculty as an additional way to increase the prestige of faculty by distinguishing community college faculty from the local high school faculty (Brown, 1977; Kinnick, 1969; Wright, 1956). Others believed administrators favored adopting a system of rank as a way to increase the prestige of their institution (Kilpatrick, 1965).

Another reason given for the adoption of rank in community colleges was that it would strengthen ties to higher education. Kinnick (1969) believed faculty rank would increase the visibility and prestige of faculty and their employers in the eyes of four-year institutions and accrediting agencies. While no research in the literature exists to support this, others believed instituting such a system would create more similarity between four-year and two-year faculty

and result in increased opportunities for publication, summer employment, and other faculty benefits associated with holding academic rank, such as higher salary (Brown, 1977; Frieberger & Crawford, 1962; Garrison, 1967; Wright, 1956).

### **Reasons against Implementing a System of Rank for Two-Year Faculty**

The notion of rank and promotion at two-year colleges was not without criticism. Not everyone saw the implementation of a system of faculty rank and promotion as beneficial. Both researchers and faculty alike had their doubts about the need for faculty rank in two-year colleges.

Some community college researchers were concerned about implementing a faculty rank system that would resemble those of four-year institutions, whose faculty rank and promotion policies focused on research and publication (Hendrix, 1964; Medsker, 1960). An additional fear was that such a system would attract faculty more interested in scholarship. If faculty began to emphasize scholarship, then they would focus on their discipline areas instead of the interdisciplinary focus on curriculum believed to be more appropriate for community colleges (Hendrix, 1964).

Other opponents of faculty rank and promotion in two-year colleges simply did not view it as necessary for faculty or as something of little interest to the faculty. A 1960 national study of 76 two-year colleges across 15 states found that 43% of faculty opposed a system of faculty rank and promotion (Medsker, 1960). Medsker believed that this opposition possibly stemmed from the fact that the majority of community college faculty had no familiarity or experience with such a system. Other results of his study indicated that 64% of community college faculty had previous teaching experience but only in secondary and elementary schools, which typically do not have faculty rank (Medsker, 1960). Two other possible reasons faculty opposed rank were

that some faculty saw rank as being exclusive to four-year colleges while other faculty responded that it was not something they had given much thought to (Harrington, 1965).

In his 1967 study, Garrison summarized faculty misgivings concerning a faculty rank system. Garrison interviewed over 600 two-year college faculty trying to determine the issues most important to the faculty. Information that he discovered relevant to this study were the arguments against instituting faculty rank. Some faculty wondered who would establish the criteria used to evaluate them and then conduct the evaluation. Some even argued that to call themselves an associate professor or professor of some occupational or vocational program sounded “a bit ridiculous” (Garrison, 1967).

### **Prevalence of Rank in Two-Year Colleges**

The prevalence of two-year colleges that currently have policies of rank and promotion is unknown. The numbers of research studies are few, and no national studies have been conducted since Carter & Ottinger’s study in 1992. However, the available literature does indicate that the percent of colleges using rank has increased since the publication of Wright’s study in 1956.

Wright (1956) sought to determine the prevalence of rank in institutions of higher education. He sampled college catalogs and bulletins and examined the ranks and titles given to faculty in these college publications. His sample consisted of 155 four-year institutions, 106 teachers’ colleges, and 72 junior colleges. Wright found that over 70% of 4-year institutions and over 50% of teachers’ colleges had some kind of system of faculty rank in place, compared to only 6% of junior colleges.

After a nearly ten-year gap, Blocker and Wolfe conducted a 1964 study that revealed several trends occurring at the two-year college level, including a growth in rank and promotion policies. Using information obtained from the National Education Association registry and the

American Association of University Professors registry of junior colleges, they developed a list of two-year colleges that had rank. They then mailed questionnaires to 125 public (57%) and private (43%) junior colleges. One hundred twelve institutions responded. Of the questionnaires returned, 53 public colleges and 35 private colleges had rank. Of the 88 responding institutions, 27 had introduced rank between 1920 and 1957, while another 61 had introduced rank between 1958 and 1964 (Blocker and Wolfe, 1964). This represented a substantial increase compared to the previous 37 years in the number of junior colleges adopting a system of academic rank. The reason most often given for the adoption of a system of rank was to conform to university standards (Blocker and Wolfe, 1964).

Another indication of the growth of faculty rank was the three editions of Thornton's *The Community Junior College*, the first authored in 1960. In his initial edition, no mention was made of faculty rank (1960). In the second edition (1966), Thornton *noted* that 100 colleges awarded rank to faculty. Even though Thornton did not provide the exact number of colleges with rank in his 1972 edition he did point out that there appeared to be a growing trend in the number of two-year colleges that had faculty rank and promotion policies.

Between 1964 and 1992, no national studies were published. There was one statewide study in 1979 that investigated the prevalence of rank in Florida's community and junior colleges (Karn, 1979). Karn found that eight colleges had a system of faculty rank (an increase of two from 1974). It was not until the 1990s that rank and promotion in community colleges was again mentioned in the literature.

During the 1990s and 2000s, two research articles and several surveys were published on the topic. All were national studies and each provided updates on the status of faculty rank and promotion policies in two-year colleges.



The first of these, entitled, *Community College Faculty: Attitudes and Trends, 1997*, sought information about the status and working conditions of faculty in two-year colleges. Huber (1998) sought to compare the characteristics of faculty in two-year colleges with characteristics of faculty working in other higher education institutions. Almost 10,000 faculty in more than 300 institutions participated in the survey. Huber's findings that relate to this study were that a smaller percentage of two-year college faculty held the rank of professor, associate professor, or assistant professor than at any other institution. In addition, only 46% of faculty working in community colleges held rank compared to over 80% of faculty at other institutions.

In 2009, Leist sought to determine the relationship between academic rank and faculty salary in rural, public community colleges (2009). Using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to identify rural, public institutions, he separated these institutions into those offering rank and those without academic rank. Findings that relate to this study were that 294 of 488 (60%) public, rural community colleges reported using academic rank.

Surveys conducted by the College and University Professional Association of Human Resources between 2008 and 2011 sought to determine the characteristics of full time faculty, including the use of academic rank. Participating institutions were from each region of the country and represented both union and non-union faculty groups. Results of the surveys varied between 50.3% and 61.2% of colleges having policies for faculty rank and promotion. Table 3 shows the number of responding institutions by year and percentage with faculty rank.

Table 3

*Number of Responding Institutions by Year and Percentage with Faculty Rank*

Year	Number of Respondents	Percentage with Faculty Rank
2008	192	50.3%
2009	183	61.2%
2010	174	53.0%
2011	168	52.0%

*Note.* Adapted from College and University Professional Association for Human Resources, “Community College Faculty Salary Survey” surveys for 2008 through 2011.

**Evaluation of Effective Teaching as a Criterion for Promotion**

The mission of the community college is different from four-year institutions. While most public four-year colleges place great emphasis on research and scholarship, the focus of faculty working in two-year colleges has always been effective teaching (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Several reports identify effective teaching as the most important factor in student success (Bradley, P., 2010; Perez, A.M., McShannon, J., & Hynes, P., 2012). Teaching effectiveness is typically evaluated through several means including classroom observations by peers and administrators, student course evaluations, teaching portfolios, and self-evaluation (Redmon, 2009). The following case study and national survey results are indicative of the recognition for the community college’s unique mission and evidence of the support for promotion criteria that support this mission (Harding & Laanan, 2006; Walker & Poythress, 1986).

An example of the commitment to teaching and the establishment of promotion criteria that reflect that commitment is DeKalb Community College. Walker and Poythress (1986) described the process of establishing a system of rank and promotion for faculty at that institution. It was agreed that the criteria used in determining promotion should consist of superior teaching, outstanding service to the institution, degree obtained, professional growth and development, and outstanding service to the community. To support their eligibility for

promotion, the faculty had to demonstrate excellence in three of the five areas and submit a resume detailing their evidence of support for promotion (Walker & Poythress, 1986).

In a subsequent study, Hardy and Laanan's (2006) study demonstrated the importance that two-year faculty place on effective teaching. Using data from the 1999 National Study of Postsecondary Faculty, the authors described the characteristics of full time two-year college faculty and the differences in age groups. A review of 90,000 faculty responses to a survey question on what were the most important criteria in determining promotion indicated that 93% either agreed or strongly agreed that teaching should be the primary criterion.

### **Examples of Policies for Rank and Promotion in Two-Year Colleges**

In addition to the lack of available research on community college policies regarding faculty rank and promotion, there is also a lack of published college policies. Using several databases including Ebsco and ProQuest, only 11 institutional policies were found. The earliest policies published were in 1972. Institutions varied on what criteria they used for determining promotion. Table 4 provides a list of the 11 institutions and the criteria used for determining promotion.

Table 4

*Common Criteria for Promotion in Rank at Selected Community College*

College	Effective Teaching	Years of Experience	Academic Credentials	Professional Growth	College Service	Professional Activity
Community College of Beaver County	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bergen Community College	X	X	X			
Bucks County Community College		X	X			
Central Oregon Community College	X	X		X	X	
Community College of Rhode Island	X	X	X	X		
Connecticut College System	X	X	X	X	X	X
Hudson Valley Community College	X	X	X	X		X
Jamestown Community College	X				X	X
Niagara County Community College	X			X	X	X
Saint Louis Community College		X	X			
Sauk Valley Community College	X	X		X	X	

*Sources:* Beaver County Community College, 1972; Bergen Community College, 1973; Bucks County Community College, 1973; Central Oregon Community College, 1997; Connecticut State Board of Trustees for Regional, Community Colleges, & American Association, o. U., 1987; Hudson Valley Community College, 1998; Jamestown Community College, 1973; Niagara County Community College, 1987; Rhode Island State Board of Governors for Higher Education, 1987; Saint Louis Community College, 1987; Sauk Valley Community College, 1972.

A review of Table 4 reveals some common criteria. Number of years of experience was the most commonly used criterion in promotion policies. Effective teaching was the second most common criterion. Professional activity was the most infrequently used criterion when determining promotion. This should come as no surprise since community colleges emphasize teaching more than professional activities. As pointed out earlier, researchers in the 1960s were concerned colleges would adopt criteria similar to those used in universities. Based on an examination of these institutional policies, it would appear that some two-year colleges adopted criteria suited to their mission and did not mimic the criteria used by four-year institutions.

It is worth noting that two of the institutions, Jamestown (1971) and Niagara (1972), did not require any specific length of service before promotion. As Jamestown Community College stated, “promotions, then, are not automatic, nor do they require a specific number of years of experience or credit hours” (p.1). In the same manner, Niagara’s policies stated, “no minimum length of service in an academic rank shall be required for eligibility for promotion. Promotions shall be solely on merit” (p.13).

Only four of the colleges made a distinction in their policies between transfer faculty and technical faculty (Beaver County Community College, 1972; Bergen Community College, 1973; Community College of Rhode Island, 1987; Saint Louis Community College, 1987). All four considered work experience along with educational credentials when determining eligibility for promotion. No mention was made of this in other institutional policies.

Designations of rank for technical faculty varied between institutions. Some gave the same designations for both transfer faculty and technical faculty while others used different titles for transfer faculty and for technical faculty.

A review of these policies revealed several similarities among the four institutions. First, all used years of experience and educational attainment during the hiring process to determine initial rank. Second, the criteria used for promotion varied by institution. While most institutions used teaching effectiveness and years of experience, not all did. Third, few colleges provided definitions of their criteria. By not providing definitions of criteria, individuals working at institutions or interested in working at a particular institution may be confused about the criteria needed to achieve promotion.

### **Summary**

This chapter outlined the available literature pertinent to the topic of rank and promotion in two-year colleges. The first section of the chapter provided an overview of community college faculty credentials, secondary teaching experience, faculty teaching load, and faculty compensation. As shown by the literature, community college faculty are different than their four-year counterparts. They typically have a master's degree as their highest educational credential and teach more courses per year for less pay. Their prior work experience also differentiates them from other groups of faculty as they often have secondary school teaching experience or experience in industry.

The middle section discussed previous research about faculty rank and promotion policies. As pointed out, the focus of much of the existing literature was on the advantages and disadvantages of introducing faculty rank in two-year colleges, the prevalence of rank in two-year colleges and the importance of using teaching effectiveness as a criterion for promotion.

The final section of Chapter 2 included examples of published guidelines for faculty rank and promotion. A review of these policies indicated commonalities and differences, which were outlined and discussed.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **Methodology**

There were two main purposes for the study. The first was to determine the prevalence of rank in public two-year colleges. The second was to identify the criteria used to determine initial rank and subsequent promotion for both vocational and transfer faculty. This chapter provides an overview of the research design selected for the study, identifies the target population, discusses the procedures used in data collection and analysis, and describes the pilot testing of the procedures for data collection and analysis.

#### **Research Design**

Given the purposes of the study, a cross-sectional survey research design was chosen. A cross-sectional research design is used to collect a large amount of information about a population at a single point in time and to do so in a short amount of time (Creswell, 2008). Since the purpose of the study was to collect current practices on faculty rank and promotion, this research design was the most appropriate.

Creswell (2008) identified four key characteristics of a good survey design: (1) collecting data from a sample and generalizing those results to the whole population, (2) collecting information directly from individuals rather than a researcher, (3) designing a good instrument for the collection of data, and (4) obtaining a high response rate so as to be able to generalize the results of the study (p.393). These principles guided the design of the study.

A request for participation in the study was sent via email to the chief academic officers of the colleges in the study's population. The email requested a copy of the policies concerning faculty rank and promotion. Furthermore, the chief academic officer was asked to answer three additional questions.

## **Target Population**

The target population for this study consisted of public, non-affiliated two-year colleges in the United States that had a system of rank and promotion for faculty. Colleges were identified using the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching website (<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org>).

According to the website, there were 1,714 community colleges. Of these, 944 fit the definition of a two-year college used in this study. Upon further review, several colleges were removed from the population for various reasons, including offering four-year degrees and having recently become a four-year college. Nine hundred twenty-eight two-year public institutions were identified and deemed as eligible for the study population.

Once colleges were determined to have met the initial criteria, a review of each college's catalog was conducted to determine if faculty rank was awarded. This method was selected since most colleges include a list of their faculty and credentials in their catalogs. Furthermore, this approach was consistent with Wright's 1956 study. In cases where the determination of faculty rank was not evident in the college catalog, an email was sent to the chief academic officer asking for clarification about the status of faculty rank. This process revealed a population of 356 colleges. Due to the small size of the population, the entire population in question constituted the study.

Using information obtained from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDs), institutions were grouped based on membership in six regional accrediting bodies and then further separated into three categories, based on total enrollment. The researcher used the following enrollment categories: fewer than 2,500 students; 2,501 to 5,000 students; and more than 5,000 students. These enrollment sizes were chosen based on two previous dissertations



(Kinney, 2008; Underwood, 1991). Table 5 illustrates the number of colleges with rank by accrediting region and institutional enrollment.

Table 5

*Numbers of Two-Year Colleges with Rank Stratified by Accreditation Body and Institutional Enrollment*

Accreditation Region	Less than 2,500	2,501 to 5,000	More than 5,000	Total
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools	10	15	51	76
New England Association of Schools and Colleges	9	8	18	35
North Central Association of Colleges and Schools	16	31	53	100
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities	2	4	4	10
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools	18	29	55	102
Western Association of Schools and Colleges	1	0	31	31
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>354</b>

**Testing**

A pilot test of the procedures was conducted to determine if any changes were needed. Two colleges, both in Arkansas, comprised the pilot study. The colleges were selected because the researcher had a relationship with the institutions. The purpose of the pilot was to determine if any modifications to the email sent to chief academic officers (CAO) were necessary and to

identify and address any concerns expressed by the pilot group. Using the results of the pilot study, modifications were made to the research questions, resulting in the addition of one question.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Using a list of email addresses obtained from institutional websites, an email was sent to all 354 institution's chief academic officer (CAO) in the population requesting their participation in the study. Using email to contact participants was done due to its low cost, manageable administrative burden and the ease of response for CAOs. Further support for this approach came from Creswell (2008), who recommended electronic communication because it provides a quick and easy way to collect data.

The email (a) described the study and the probable benefits, (b) requested access to policies for rank and promotion (c) asked when their current policies concerning rank and promotion were established, (d) asked whether faculty had collective bargaining, and (e) asked whether faculty can achieve tenure. (Appendix A). One hundred twelve initial replies were received after the first email. Of the 112 initial replies, two institutions responded to the email saying that they did not offer faculty rank. A second email (Appendix B) was sent one month later. Twenty-two replies were received after the second email. Of the 354 chief academic officers emailed, 136 replies were received, two of which were deemed invalid due to misidentification of them as offering faculty rank, for a response rate of 38% (134).

### **Data Analysis**

Once the requested information was received, policies were studied and responses to the questions were reviewed. For the three initial research questions, tables were constructed to answer the questions based on enrollment size and accrediting region. For policies on rank and

promotion criteria, tables were constructed for transfer and technical faculty at initial hire, for promotion in rank for transfer and technical faculty, and to compare criteria used between transfer and vocational faculty.

### **Summary**

In chapter 3, the methodology used in the study was described. The selection and rationale for the research design were discussed. Additionally, the chapter outlined how the population was determined, the processes for data collection and analysis, and details of the pilot testing.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Results**

As outlined in chapter three, the chief academic officers of selected colleges were sent a one-page email explaining the study and asking for their participation. The email introduced the researcher, identified the purposes of the research, and contained a request for institutional policies about faculty rank and promotion. Additionally, the chief academic officers were asked to respond to three questions: 1) the length of time since the last policy update; 2) whether or not faculty participated in collective bargaining; and 3) if faculty had the opportunity to earn tenure. The following chapter provides a descriptive analysis of the institutional resources on faculty promotion and the responses to questions addressing policy updates, collective bargaining, and faculty tenure. The findings are presented under the following headings:

1. The percentage of colleges that have a system of academic rank for faculty
2. Currency of the faculty rank and promotion policies
3. The percentage of colleges with rank who have collective bargaining
4. The percentage of colleges with rank who have tenure for faculty
5. The criteria used to determine initial appointment in rank for transfer faculty
6. The criteria used to determine initial appointment in rank for vocational faculty
7. The criteria used to determine promotion to a higher rank for transfer faculty
8. The criteria used to determine promotion to a higher rank for vocational faculty
9. Differences in criteria used to determine rank at the time of hire for transfer faculty and vocational faculty
10. Differences in criteria used to determine promotion for transfer faculty and vocational faculty

## **The Percentage of Colleges that have a System of Academic Rank for Faculty**

Chapter 3 explained the process used to identify the initial population of the study and to narrow that to only those colleges with rank. These procedures left a study population of 354 or 38% of two-year colleges that had faculty rank.

After the study population was determined to be 354 colleges, an initial email requesting participation in the study yielded 112 usable responses. A follow up email resulted in an additional 22 responses. The two emails combined produced a total response rate of 38%, or 134 colleges. Response rates varied significantly by accrediting region. The Southern accrediting region had the highest response rate (41.8%) while colleges in the Western and Northwestern accrediting regions had the lowest response rates, 3.0% and 1.5%, respectively. When institutions were grouped by size (enrollment), a sizable variation in response rates was noted. Small colleges, defined as colleges with enrollment of less than 2,500, had a response rate of 17.9%, medium-sized colleges enrolling between 2,501 and 5,000 students had a response rate of 26.1%, and the largest colleges, those with more than 5,000 students, had a response rate of 56.0%. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6

*Number and Percentage of Colleges Responding by Accrediting Region and Institutional Size*

Institutional Size		Accrediting Regions						Total
		New England	Middle States	Southern	North Central	Western	Northwestern	
Small	Count	9	1	7	7	0	0	24
	% of Total	(6.7%)	(0.7%)	(5.2%)	(5.2%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	(17.9%)
Medium	Count	9	2	17	6	0	1	35
	% of Total	(6.7%)	(1.5%)	(12.7%)	(4.5%)	(0.0%)	(0.7%)	(26.1%)
Large	Count	15	10	32	13	4	1	75
	% of Total	(11.2%)	(7.5%)	(23.9%)	(9.7%)	(3.0%)	(0.7%)	(56.0%)
Total	Count	33	13	56	26	4	2	134
	% of Total	(24.6%)	(9.7%)	(41.8%)	(19.4%)	(3.0%)	(1.5%)	(100%)

*Note.* n = 134

## Last Update to Faculty Rank and Promotion Policies

All but one of the 134 colleges responded to the question. One hundred six (79.7%) of the colleges had made changes to their policies within the last five years and all but ten of the responding colleges had updated their promotion policies in the last ten years. Table 7 provides a visual representation of institutional size and the length of time since the last policy update.

Table 7

*Institutional Size and Currency of Faculty Rank and Promotion Policies*

Institutional Size		Time since Last Policy Update			Total
		0 – 5 Years	6 – 10 Years	11 Years or More	
Small	Count	20	2	2	24
	% of Total	(15.0%)	(1.5%)	(1.5%)	(18.0%)
Medium	Count	33	0	1	34
	% of Total	(24.8%)	(0.0%)	(0.8%)	(25.6%)
Large	Count	53	15	7	75
	% of Total	(39.8%)	(11.3%)	(5.3%)	(56.4%)
Total	Count	106	17	10	133
	% of Total	(79.7%)	(12.8%)	(7.5%)	(100.0%)

*Note.* n = 133

## The Percentage of Colleges with Rank who have Collective Bargaining

As shown in Table 8, 47% (65) of the 134 colleges responding to the survey indicated that they did have collective bargaining for their faculty; over half (51.7%) of these were in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Conversely, only one college in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools region had collective bargaining for faculty.

Table 8

*Number and Percentage of Colleges with Collective Bargaining by Accrediting Region and Institutional Size*

Institutional Size		Accrediting Region						Total
		New England	Middle States	Southern	North Central	Western	Northwestern	
Small	Count	9	1	0	1	0	0	11
	% of Total	(13.8%)	(1.5%)	(0%)	(1.5%)	(0%)	(0%)	(16.9%)
Medium	Count	9	1	0	5	0	1	16
	% of Total	(13.8%)	(1.5%)	(0%)	(7.7%)	(0%)	(1.5%)	(24.6%)
Large	Count	15	8	1	10	4	0	38
	% of Total	(23.1%)	(12.3%)	(1.5%)	(15.4%)	(6.2%)	(0%)	(58.5%)
Total	Count	33	10	1	16	4	1	65
	% of Total	(51.7%)	(15.4%)	(1.5%)	(24.6%)	(6.2%)	(1.5%)	(100%)

*Note.* n = 65



### **The Percentage of Colleges with Rank who have Tenure for Faculty**

As Table 9 shows, 67% (91) of the 134 responding colleges stated that they had a system of tenure for their faculty. All of the colleges in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges that responded to the request for participation in the study offered faculty tenure.

Table 9

*Number and Percentage of Colleges with Tenure for Faculty by Accrediting Region and Institutional Size*

Institutional Size		Accrediting Region						Total
		New England	Middle States	Southern	North Central	Western	Northwestern	
Small	Count	9	1	3	2	0	0	15
	% of Total	(9.9%)	(1.1%)	(3.3%)	(2.2%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	(16.5%)
Medium	Count	9	1	8	2	0	1	21
	% of Total	(9.9%)	(1.1%)	(8.8%)	(2.2%)	(0.0%)	(1.1%)	(23.1%)
Large	Count	15	9	21	6	4	0	55
	% of Total	(16.5%)	(9.9%)	(23.1%)	(6.6%)	(4.4%)	(0.0%)	(60.4%)
Total	Count	33	11	32	10	4	1	91
	% of Total	(36.3%)	(12.1%)	(35.2%)	(11%)	(4.4%)	(1.1%)	(100.0%)

*Note.* n = 91

After reviewing institutional policies, it became apparent that colleges had varying definitions, if any, of the criteria they used to determine rank at initial hire and subsequent promotion in rank. For example, when referring to activities such as publication, research, and work in professional societies, one institution referred to it as professional activity while another institution referred to it as professional development. Consequently, to ensure consistency among criteria, it was necessary to carefully review the policies and identify the common ideas used in the policies. Similar concepts were then grouped and matched to defined criteria, thus ensuring consistency. To assist with understanding, definitions for the criteria used in this study are provided below.

#### *Transfer Faculty*

1. Academic Contributions – refers to new program development, course improvement, developing alternative delivery methods of instruction, or new course development.
2. Service to Students – refers to advising of students, serving as student organization sponsor, or other student related services.

#### *Vocational Faculty*

1. Experience in Field – refers to previous work experience in the vocation in which the faculty member is teaching.
2. Industry Relationships – refers to ability to establish and maintain strong relationships with industry in the teaching field.
3. Industry Recommendations – refers to recommendations from previous employers in industry.

#### *Common Definitions*

1. Educational Credentials – refers to college degree(s) obtained.

2. Experience – refers to years teaching in college or high school.
3. Teaching Excellence – refers to evaluations of teaching; could be student evaluations or a combination of student evaluations and peer evaluations.
4. Professional Development – refers to professional conferences attended, research conducted, staying current in a vocational field, additional courses taken, or books and articles written.
5. College Service – refers to service to the college in the form of committee service, outreach activities such as college fairs, and participation in college projects.
6. Community Service – refers to service to the community including providing training for local businesses and continuing education courses.
7. Collegiality – refers to maintaining positive relationships with coworkers.
8. Time in Rank – refers to a stated minimum amount of time required in previous rank before being eligible for promotion.
9. Tenure Required – refers to a policy of requiring tenure before being eligible for promotion in rank.

### **The Criteria for Determining Initial Appointment in Rank for Transfer Faculty**

Of the 134 responding institutions, fifty-three (39.5%) had policies for determining initial rank at the time of hire that were separate from their policies on faculty promotion. Eighteen of the colleges used only educational credentials to determine rank at the time of initial hire. Two institutions used only teaching experience to determine rank at the time of hire. Eighty-one colleges did not have hiring policies that were distinct from their promotion policies. Table 10 summarizes the criteria used to determine rank at initial appointment for transfer faculty by institutional size.

Table 10

*Number and Percentage of Responding Institutions using Various Criteria for Determining Rank at Initial Hire for Transfer Faculty*

Institutional Size		Criteria						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Small	Count	5	3	0	1	1	1	0
	% of Total	(9.4%)	(5.7%)	(0.0%)	(1.8%)	(1.8%)	(1.8%)	(0.0%)
Medium	Count	13	5	3	2	2	2	2
	% of Total	(24.5%)	(9.4%)	(5.7%)	(3.8%)	(3.8%)	(3.8%)	(3.8%)
Large	Count	32	12	12	12	11	11	11
	% of Total	(60.4%)	(22.6%)	(22.6%)	(22.6%)	(20.7%)	(20.7%)	(20.7%)
Total	Count	50	20	15	15	14	14	13
	% of Total	(94.3%)	(37.7%)	(28.3%)	(28.3%)	(26.4%)	(26.4%)	(24.5%)

*Note.* n = 53; Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 – Educational Credentials; 2 – Teaching Experience; 3 – Teaching Excellence; 4 – Professional Development; 5 – College Service; 6 – Community Service; 7 – Collegiality

## **The Criteria for Determining Initial Appointment in Rank for Vocational Faculty**

In determining rank for vocational faculty, only 18 (14%) of the responding institutions had policies for determining rank at the time of hire separate from their promotion policies. All of the institutions that responded considered vocational experience in the teaching field when determining rank at initial hire. For example, several institutions required three years of work experience in the teaching field before being eligible for hire at any rank. Table 11 summarizes the criteria used for initial appointment by institutional size.

Table 11

*Number and Percentage of Responding Institutions using Various Criteria for Determining Rank at Initial Hire for Vocational Faculty*

Institutional Size		Criteria						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Small	Count	3	3	0	0	0	0	1
	% of Total	(16.7%)	(16.7%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)	(5.6%)
Medium	Count	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
	% of Total	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	(11.1%)	(0.0%)
Large	Count	12	13	12	12	12	11	0
	% of Total	(66.7%)	(72.2%)	(66.7%)	(66.7%)	(66.7%)	(61.1%)	(0.0%)
Total	Count	17	18	14	14	14	13	1
	% of Total	(94.4%)	(100.0%)	(77.8%)	(77.8%)	(77.8%)	(72.2%)	(5.6%)

*Note.* n = 18; Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 – Educational Credentials; 2 – Experience in Teaching Field; 3 – Teaching Excellence; 4 – Professional Development; 5 – Relationship with Industry; 6 – Collegiality; 7 – Good Recommendation

## **The Criteria for Promotion in Rank for Transfer Faculty**

The most common criterion used among responding institutions in determining promotion for transfer faculty was the educational credentials of the faculty. Ninety-four percent (126) of colleges used a faculty member's educational credentials in determining promotion in rank. Based on the information obtained from college policies, as faculty applied for higher ranks, more criteria were considered in determining eligibility for promotion. For example, in order for an assistant professor to be eligible for promotion to associate professor, the individual would have had to achieve tenure before being eligible for promotion. Table 12 outlines the data collected on criteria used to determine promotion in rank for transfer faculty.



Table 12

*Number and Percentage of Responding Institutions using Various Criteria for Determining Promotion in Rank for Transfer Faculty*

Faculty Rank	Criteria											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
Assist. Prof.	Count	120	88	86	116	15	86	84	76	25	54	5
	% of Total	(90.0%)	(65.7%)	(64.2%)	(86.6%)	(11.2%)	(64.2%)	(62.7%)	(56.7%)	(18.7%)	(40.3%)	(3.7%)
Assoc. Prof.	Count	120	91	86	116	17	89	88	78	25	56	8
	% of Total	(90.0%)	(68.0%)	(64.2%)	(86.6%)	(12.7%)	(66.4%)	(65.7%)	(58.2%)	(18.7%)	(41.8%)	(6.0%)
Professor	Count	126	95	88	121	18	94	91	82	25	60	9
	% of Total	(94.0%)	(71.0%)	(65.7%)	(90.3%)	(13.4%)	(70.1%)	(68.0%)	(61.2%)	(18.7%)	(44.8%)	(6.7%)

*Note.* n= 134; Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 = Educational Credentials; 2 = Time in Rank; 3 = Experience; 4 = Teaching Excellence; 5 = Academic Contributions; 6 = Professional Development; 7 = College Service; 8 = Community Service; 9 = Collegiality; 10 = Service to Students; 11 = Tenure Required

### **The Criteria for Promotion in Rank for Vocational Faculty**

Most colleges did not report separate promotion policies for transfer and vocational faculty. For those colleges that did, educational credentials were the most common criterion used to determine rank (n=18). Most responding institutions did not require vocational faculty to participate in service or leadership in their college or community. However, vocational faculty were expected to maintain strong ties with industry. For example, institutions in one state required an individual to be current in the occupational field taught and to maintain positive relationships with business and industry but required no service to the college or community. Table 13 shows the number and percentage of institutions using criteria to determine promotion in rank for vocational faculty.

Table 13

*Number and Percentage of Responding Institutions using Various Criteria for Determining Promotion in Rank for Vocational Faculty*

Faculty Rank		Criteria									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Assistant Professor	Count	16	13	18	16	15	13	2	1	0	0
	% of Total	(88.9%)	(72.2%)	(100.0%)	(88.9%)	(83.3%)	(72.2%)	(11.1%)	(5.5%)	(0.0%)	(0.0%)
Associate Professor	Count	17	13	18	16	16	13	2	1	1	2
	% of Total	(94.4%)	(72.2%)	(100.0%)	(88.9%)	(88.9%)	(72.2%)	(11.1%)	(5.5%)	(5.5%)	(11.1%)
Professor	Count	17	13	18	16	16	13	2	1	1	2
	% of Total	(94.4%)	(72.2%)	(100.0%)	(88.9%)	(88.9%)	(72.2%)	(11.1%)	(5.5%)	(5.5%)	(11.1%)

*Note.* n = 18; Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 = Teaching Excellence; 2 = Collegiality; 3 = Educational Credentials; 4 = Experience in Occupation; 5 = Professional Development; 6 = Relationship with Industry; 7 = Time in Rank; 8 = Community/College Service; 9 = Tenure; 10 = Community/College Leadership

**Differences in Criteria used to Determine Rank at Initial Appointment for Transfer and Vocational Faculty**

Of the 10 different criteria used to determine rank at initial hire for both transfer and technical faculty, both groups shared four criteria. They were educational credentials, teaching excellence, professional development, and collegiality/character. For example, vocational faculty were not appraised on teaching experience or college service when determining rank at initial hire. Conversely, transfer faculty were not evaluated on criteria that considered occupational or industrial experience. Table 14 provides a comparison of the criteria used to determine rank at hire between transfer and vocational faculty.

Table 14

*Differences in Criteria used to Determine Rank at Initial Appointment for Transfer and Vocational faculty*

Faculty Type	Criteria									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Transfer Faculty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Vocational Faculty	X		X	X			X	X	X	X

*Note.* Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 = Educational Credentials; 2 = Teaching Experience; 3 = Teaching Excellence; 4 = Professional Development; 5 = College Service; 6 = Community Service; 7 = Collegiality/Character; 8 = Experience in Occupational Field; 9 – Relationship with Industry; 10 – Professional Recommendation

**Differences in Criteria used to Determine Promotion for Transfer and Vocational Faculty**

Of the 14 criteria used to determine promotion in rank for vocational and transfer faculty, nine were common to both faculty groups. One area of difference between the two faculty groups was the emphasis on industry experience and relationship with industry. Fourteen institutions in one accrediting region required vocational faculty to have positive relationships with industry and to have at least three years employment experience before being considered for promotion. Another area of distinction was the importance of service to students for transfer faculty. Sixty

institutions considered service to students when evaluating a transfer faculty member for promotion, but none required it for vocational faculty. Table 15 compares the differences in criteria used in determining promotion for transfer and vocational faculty.

Table 15

*Differences in Criteria Used for to Determine Promotion Transfer and Vocational Faculty*

Faculty Type	Criteria													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Transfer Faculty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X
Vocational Faculty	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X

*Note.* Numbers represent the following criteria: 1 = Educational Credentials; 2 = Teaching Experience; 3 = Teaching Excellence; 4 = Professional Development; 5 = College Service; 6 = Community Service; 7 = Collegiality/Character; 8 = Experience in Occupational Field; 9 – Relationship with Industry; 10 – Professional Recommendation; 11 = Time in Rank; 12: Academic Contributions; 13 = Service to Students; 14 = Tenure Required

**Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to present data gathered from an examination of public two-year college policies to determine the prevalence of faculty rank among colleges and to determine the criteria used in determining rank at initial hire and subsequent promotion.

Additionally, information was gathered on the frequency of policy changes, whether institutions had collective bargaining for faculty, and whether or not faculty had the opportunity to obtain tenure. All responses came from community college chief academic officers, their representatives, or from institutional websites.

Out of a target population of 354 colleges, 134 institutions responded to the email request for participation. Institutions from all accrediting bodies and enrollment sizes participated in the study. The results of the email request indicated that almost 80% of the colleges had updated

their policies within the last five years. Additionally, 67% of responding institutions reported that they did offer tenure to faculty. Conversely, less than half (47%) of institutions had collective bargaining for faculty.

Most institutions that responded to the email request did not have separate policies for transfer and vocational faculty. In addition, most colleges did not have policies for determining rank at the time of hire separate from their promotion policies. A review of the policies for deciding rank at the time of hire revealed that 40% of the criteria were common among vocational and transfer faculty. When establishing eligibility for promotion, 64% of the criteria were used for both transfer and vocational faculty. Chapter 5 will discuss implications of the findings, and provide recommendations for improved practice and future research.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations**

This chapter begins with an overview of the study, and then provides the answers to each of the research questions. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and recommendations for improved practice and research.

#### **Overview of the Study**

The purpose of the study was to determine the prevalence of rank among two-year colleges in the United States; to determine the criteria used to determine rank upon hire for transfer and vocational faculty; to identify the criteria used to determine promotion for transfer and vocational faculty; and to determine if there are differences in criteria between transfer faculty and vocational faculty at initial appointment and subsequent promotion. Additionally, the study wanted to determine the prevalence of collective bargaining and tenure among colleges with faculty rank and the currency of the policies about faculty rank and promotion.

In determining the population, the researcher used the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education website (<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/>). The website allowed the researcher to access the two-year college listings and search for institutions that met the study's definition of a two-year college. After an initial review of the 928 colleges that met the study's definition, a review of all institution's catalogs was conducted to determine if faculty had rank. It was determined that 354 institutions had faculty rank.

The researcher emailed the chief academic officers of each of these 354 institutions. A follow-up email requested those individuals who had not responded to consider participating in the study. Responses to the first email revealed that two colleges were misidentified as having

academic rank. After the follow-up, one hundred thirty-four chief academic officers (38%) responded to the request for information.

### **Limitations**

The study had two limitations. The first was the use of a college's catalog to identify colleges with faculty rank. The second was the dependence on chief academic officers to provide the policies on faculty rank and promotion and not reviewing a college's website.

### **Findings**

The following section describes the findings for each of the research questions used in the study.

*Research Question 1: What percentage of two-year colleges has a system of academic rank for faculty?*

A review of the colleges' catalogs of 928 institutions revealed that 38% percent (354) of institutions had faculty rank. Faculty rank existed in colleges in all accrediting regions and in all institutional sizes. By institutional enrollment, faculty rank existed in 54 small colleges, 80 medium size colleges, and 220 large institutions. As a percentage, large colleges constituted the majority of colleges with faculty rank (62%).

*Research Question 2: For community colleges with rank, when were these policies established?*

Almost 80% (106) of colleges reported they had updated their policies within the last five years. Ninety-two percent (123) of colleges reported they had updated their policies within the last 10 years.

*Research Question 3: For community colleges with rank, what percentage has collective bargaining?*



Of those colleges that responded to the survey, 47% (65) indicated they had collective bargaining for faculty. Of the responding institutions, 100% of institutions in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges accrediting regions had collective bargaining agreements with their faculty; 76.9% of the colleges in the Middle States Association of Colleges had collective bargaining agreements; 61.5% of institutions in the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools had collective bargaining; 50% of the institutions from the Northwestern Accreditation Commission had collective bargaining for their faculty; and fewer than 2% of responding institutions in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools had faculty bargaining agreements.

*Research Question 4: For community colleges with rank, what percentage has tenure for faculty?*

Of the 134 responding colleges, 67% (91) indicated that they had a system of tenure for their faculty. Tenure could be found in all accrediting regions but was most common in the New England and Southern accrediting regions. By institutional size, large colleges were more likely to have tenure for faculty.

*Research Question 5: What are the criteria for initial appointment in rank for transfer faculty?*

In reviewing the policies provided by the responding institutions, institutions used seven criteria to determine initial rank for transfer faculty: educational credentials, experience in work related to their teaching field, teaching excellence, professional development, service to the college, service to the community, and collegiality. The most commonly used criterion was educational credentials. No college used every criterion.

*Research Question 6: What are the criteria for initial appointment in rank for vocational faculty?*

For vocational faculty, college policies identified seven criteria that were used to determine rank at initial hire. The criteria included educational credentials, good character, teaching excellence, experience in their teaching field, professional development, relationship with industry, and good recommendations from industry. The most commonly used criteria were experience in the vocational field followed by educational credentials. As with transfer faculty, no college used all criteria.

*Research Question 7: What are the criteria for promotion to a higher academic rank for transfer faculty?*

A review of the policies provided by the responding institutions revealed eleven criteria used by institutions to determine promotion for transfer faculty. Not all criteria were used by all colleges. The criteria were educational credentials, time in rank, experience, teaching excellence, academic contributions, professional development, college service, community service, collegiality, service to students, and a requirement for tenure before promotion could be achieved. Colleges used these criteria at all three levels of faculty rank (assistant professor, associate professor, and professor) in determining promotion. The most common criteria were educational credentials and teaching excellence. The least commonly used criterion was a requirement for tenure before being eligible for promotion.

*Research Question 8: What are the criteria for promotion to a higher academic rank for vocational faculty?*

For vocational faculty, policies provided by the colleges identified ten criteria: teaching excellence, collegiality, educational credentials, experience in occupation taught, professional development, relationship with industry, time in rank, community and college service, community and college leadership, and a requirement of tenure before promotion could be achieved. Educational credentials emerged as the most commonly used criterion.

*Research Question 9: Are there differences in criteria between transfer faculty and vocational faculty at initial appointment?*

The answer is yes, there are differences in the criteria used to determine rank at initial appointment and to determine promotion. Transfer faculty and vocational faculty differed in the use of teaching experience, college and community service, experience in the occupational field, relationship with industry, and the use of professional recommendations.

*Research Question 10: Are there differences in criteria between transfer faculty and vocational faculty in determining promotion?*

The answer is yes, there are differences in the criteria used to determine promotion. The two groups differed in the use of experience in the occupational field, relationship with industry, professional recommendations, academic contributions, and service to students. Transfer faculty were evaluated on academic contributions and service to students and vocational faculty were judged on criteria that corresponded with experience in occupational field and relationship with industry. As mentioned previously, most of the institutions made no distinction between the two groups and the criteria that were used to determine rank at hire and subsequent promotion.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings from the study, several conclusions were drawn:

1. The findings of this study revealed that less than 40% of two-year colleges had policies for faculty rank at their institution. This is consistent with Huber's 1998 study that found 46% of faculty held rank. However, the results of the study are in contrast with earlier studies (Blocker & Wolfe, 1964; Kinnick, 1969; Wright, 1956).
2. Two-year colleges in this study typically did not have separate rank and promotion policies for vocational faculty and transfer faculty. Most likely, this means that vocational faculty had to meet the same criteria as transfer faculty. However, different standards for the same criteria were used. For example, vocational faculty may only be required to have a bachelor's degree while transfer faculty may be required to have a doctorate to be eligible for promotion in rank.
3. The criteria used for determining promotion for transfer faculty in current college policies are consistent with the criteria found in Blocker and Wolfe's 1964 study. It appears that the criteria used in determining rank have been consistent over time.
4. By far, the two most common criteria in determining promotion in rank for transfer faculty were educational credentials and teaching excellence. This finding supports the results of Huber's 1998 study and Hardy & Laanan's 2006 work, which found faculty believed that teaching effectiveness should be the primary criterion when determining promotion.

5. Institutions are keeping their policies on faculty rank and promotion current. Since most of the institutions had updated their policies within the last ten years, this would suggest that colleges have made changes as needed.
6. Colleges with collective bargaining were typically large enrollment institutions from the Northeast and Midwest regions of the country. Fifty-nine of the sixty-five states with collective bargaining came from the New England, North Central and Middle States accrediting regions. Thirty-three of the fifty-nine colleges in these three regions were large enrollment institutions.
7. Colleges that have faculty tenure were typically from the New England or Southern accrediting regions. Sixty-five of the ninety-one colleges that offered tenure were from these accrediting regions.
8. Eligibility for promotion for vocational faculty did not include service to students. This is a surprising finding considering the involvement of vocational faculty in identifying internship opportunities and supervising students in clinical settings. These practices would suggest that criteria should include involvement with students, particularly outside of the classroom setting.
9. While reviewing college policies, most institutions used the same process to determine eligibility for promotion. The faculty member submitted a portfolio containing evidence for promotion to a promotion committee. After a review of the portfolio, the committee made a recommendation to the appropriate vice president. After an appraisal of the materials by the vice president, the vice president made a

- recommendation to the president of the college who then made a recommendation to the college's governing board.
10. A few institutions only considered educational credentials and teaching experience to determine eligibility for promotion in rank. Since the focus of the community college is teaching, not using these evaluations of teaching as a criterion would seem out of agreement with that mission.
  11. In reviewing the policies, many colleges did not discuss the part each criterion played in determining promotion or rank at the time of hire. This leaves individuals considering applying for faculty positions uncertain about the weight an institution gives to each criterion in making decisions regarding rank.

### **Recommendations for Improved Practice**

Over the course of conducting the research, several observations about existing policies were made. These resulted in the following recommendations:

1. Many of the college policies on faculty rank and promotion were not available publicly. Colleges should consider making their policies public so that individuals considering applying for faculty positions at their institution could review them. This would allow individuals to make an informed decision about applying for a job.
2. There is a lack of knowledge on this topic and other topics related to community college faculty as evident by the limited number of articles, book chapters, and surveys. Community colleges need more research about their faculty. As mentioned earlier, much of the research in higher education is produced by individuals working in four-year institutions who typically focus on what they know. Apparently, needed

- research will have to come from individuals working in community colleges or in organizations affiliated with the American Association of Community Colleges.
3. The criteria used for determining faculty rank focuses heavily on teaching and service. Higher education programs need to be aware that training faculty for work in community colleges is different than training faculty to work in institutions where the focus is on research and publication.
  4. In reviewing the policies of institutions, many did not provide clear definitions of the criteria used or provided very little information on how the criteria were used in promotion decisions. It would be beneficial to individuals considering applying for position to have clear and unambiguous definitions of these criteria so they could be better prepared to seek employment or to pursue promotion.
  5. Several institutions did not have separate policies for transfer and vocational faculty. Careful consideration needs to be given to developing policies for vocational faculty that are separate from transfer faculty. Their roles are very different and evaluation criteria need to reflect the different roles and responsibilities that transfer and vocational faculty have.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The primary purposes of the study were to determine the prevalence of rank among two-year colleges and the criteria used by colleges to determine faculty rank at the time of hire and subsequent promotion in rank. During the course of this research, several recommendations for future research emerged:

1. This study was limited to public, two-year colleges that fit the study's definition. Future research should include institutions that did not fit the study's definition, such as private institutions and two-year colleges that are part of a four-year university system. This would allow for comparisons between institutional types.
2. When comparing the criteria used for determining rank, no comparison was made between different institutional sizes or different accrediting regions. Future studies should seek to determine if similarities or differences exist in colleges of different institutional size or location.
3. When comparing the criteria used for determining rank, no comparison was made between colleges that had or did not have collective bargaining. Future studies should seek to determine if similarities or differences exist in colleges with or without collective bargaining.
4. There should be additional research conducted to determine why institutions chose to have or not have faculty rank and promotion policies. Blocker and Wolfe's 1964 study identified several reasons for the adoption of rank among community colleges. Trends over the last fifty years might help inform policy and governance.
5. The study sought to determine the percentage of two-year colleges with rank. There should be additional research conducted to determine if colleges with faculty rank are increasing or decreasing in number.

### **Summary**

This study sought to determine the prevalence of rank among two-year colleges and the criteria used to determine rank at hire and subsequent promotion for both transfer and vocational



faculty. The study has provided insight into the prevalence of faculty rank at two-year colleges. Additionally, the study provided information about the criteria used by colleges in their faculty rank and promotion policies. This information will assist institutions in developing their own faculty policies and will allow institutions to benchmark their own policies against other institutions.

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## Appendix A

### Request for Information E-mail

I am currently a doctoral student in Higher Education Leadership at the University of Arkansas. I am currently working toward completing my dissertation. In order to conduct the needed research, I am asking for your participation in this study.

As you are probably aware, there is little research available on criteria for promotion in rank for community college faculty. I am interested in this topic due in part to my ten years at Ozarka College in Melbourne, Arkansas. My research seeks to help address this lack of research by identifying schools that have faculty rank and promotion policies and identifying the criteria used for promotion.

A review of your catalog has identified your institution as having a system of initial rank and promotion for faculty. For the purposes of this study, I am requesting that your administrative assistant provide me with a copy of your policies for initial hire and promotion of faculty.

In addition, if you could answer the following three questions, it would be very helpful for my study.

1. When were the current policies established?
2. Do you have collective bargaining for faculty?
3. Can faculty achieve tenure?

I would greatly appreciate it if you would provide the requested materials within the next ten days. Your participation will be instrumental in helping me with the completion of my study and my doctoral program. Once the study is completed, I will be more than happy to send you the completed dissertation or an executive summary if you prefer. Additionally, I have attached my IRB approval from the University of Arkansas for confirmation of study approval.

I thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Michael Orf  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Arkansas  
Director of Faculty Recruitment and Development,  
Degree Completion Programs  
John Brown University  
Siloam Springs, AR



## Appendix B

### Follow-up Request for Information E-mail

This is a follow-up to my earlier email requesting your participation in a national study on criteria for promotion in rank for community college faculty. A second email has been sent to you in the event the first email did not reach you.

Your participation is very important to the success of this study. If you have already responded to my initial email, please disregard this request for participation. Thank you for your participation.

I am currently a doctoral student in Higher Education Leadership at the University of Arkansas. I am currently working toward completing my dissertation. In order to conduct the needed research, I am asking for your participation in this study.

As you are probably aware, there is little research available on criteria for promotion in rank for community college faculty. I am interested in this topic due in part to my ten years at Ozarka College in Melbourne, Arkansas. My research seeks to help address this lack of research by identifying schools that have faculty rank and promotion policies and identifying the criteria used for promotion.

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In addition, if you could answer the following three questions, it would be very helpful for my study.

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I thank you for your cooperation in this study.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Michael Orf  
Doctoral Candidate, University of Arkansas  
Director of Faculty Recruitment and Development,  
Degree Completion Programs

John Brown University  
Siloam Springs, AR

Appendix C

University of Arkansas Institutional Review Board Approval

July 3, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michael Orf  
James Hammons

FROM: Ro Windwalker  
IRB Coordinator

RE: New Protocol Submission

IRB Protocol #: 13-06-763

Protocol Title: *Criteria for Initial Appointment in Rank and Subsequent Promotion for Faculty in Two-Year Public Colleges*

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In reference to the request for IRB approval of your project titled *Criteria for Initial Appointment in Rank and Subsequent Promotion for Faculty in Two-Year Public Colleges*, the IRB is not authorized to oversee and approve such research. Federal regulations define human subjects as living individuals *about whom* an investigator obtains data. (See the citation below.) Given that the data you are collecting is not about the individuals with which you are interacting, this project does not fall under the criteria of research involving human subjects. You are free to conduct your research without IRB approval.

45 CFR 46.102 (f)

(f) Human subject means a living individual about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains

- (1) Data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or
- (2) Identifiable private information.

If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact this office.

## Appendix D

### List of Responding Institutions

Allan Hancock Joint Community College  
District  
Anne Arundel Community College  
Ashland Community and Technical College  
Asnuntuck Community College  
Berkshire Community College  
Blue Ridge Community College  
Bluegrass Community and Technical  
College  
Bowling Green Technical College  
Bridgemont Community and Technical  
College  
Bristol Community College  
Broome Community College  
Bunker Hill Community College  
Cape Cod Community College  
Capital Community College  
Cayuga County Community College  
Central Virginia Community College  
Central Wyoming College  
Cerritos Community College District  
Chattanooga State Community College  
Clarendon College  
Cleveland State Community College  
College of DuPage  
College of Southern Idaho  
Colorado Mountain College  
Columbia State Community College  
Dabney S Lancaster Community College  
Danville Area Community College  
Delaware County Community College  
Desert Community College District  
Dyersburg State Community College  
Eastern Shore Community College  
Edison Community College  
El Paso Community College  
Elizabethtown Community and Technical  
College  
Flathead Valley Community College  
Galveston College  
Gateway Community and Technical College  
Gateway Community College  
Germanna Community College  
Great Bay Community College

Harford Community College  
Hazard Community and Technical College  
Henderson Community College  
Hocking College  
Hopkinsville Community College  
Housatonic Community College  
Howard Community College  
Iowa Lakes Community College  
Iowa Western Community College  
Ivy Tech Community College  
J Sargeant Reynolds Community College  
Jackson Community College  
Jackson State Community College  
Jefferson Community and Technical College  
Jefferson Community College  
John Tyler Community College  
John Wood Community College  
Kirkwood Community College  
Lakeland Community College  
Lakes Region Community College  
Lehigh Carbon Community College  
Lincoln Land Community College  
Lord Fairfax Community College  
Madisonville Community College  
Manchester Community College  
Manchester Community College  
Marion Technical College  
Massachusetts Bay Community College  
Massasoit Community College  
Maysville Community and Technical  
College  
Middlesex Community College  
Middlesex Community College  
Montgomery County Community College  
Motlow State Community College  
Mount Wachusett Community College  
Mountain Empire Community College  
Nashua Community College  
Nashville State Community College  
Naugatuck Valley Community College  
New River Community College  
NHTI  
Niagara County Community College  
North Arkansas College

North Shore Community College  
Northeast State Community College  
Northern Essex Community College  
Northern Virginia Community College  
Northwestern Connecticut Community College  
Norwalk Community College  
Ocean County College  
Owensboro Community and Technical College  
Parkland College  
Patrick Henry Community College  
Paul D Camp Community College  
Pellissippi State Community College  
Pennsylvania Highlands Community College  
Piedmont Virginia Community College  
Quincy College  
Quinebaug Valley Community College  
Quinsigamond Community College  
Rappahannock Community College  
Raritan Valley Community College  
Redlands Community College  
River Valley Community College  
Roane State Community College  
Roxbury Community College  
Seminole State College  
Sinclair Community College  
Somerset Community College

South Arkansas Community College  
South Orange County Community College District  
Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College  
Southern State Community College  
Southside Virginia Community College  
Southwest Tennessee Community College  
Southwest Virginia Community College  
Springfield Technical Community College  
St Charles Community College  
Tallahassee Community College  
Thomas Nelson Community College  
Three Rivers Community College  
Tidewater Community College  
Trinidad State Junior College  
Tulsa Community College  
Tunxis Community College  
Virginia Highlands Community College  
Virginia Western Community College  
Volunteer State Community College  
Walters State Community College  
West Kentucky Community and Technical College  
West Shore Community College  
White Mountains Community College  
Wor-Wic Community College  
Wytheville Community College