

***Teaching in Today's Community Colleges: Who Are We?***  
***Written by Eileen Anderson***

**“If a nation does not have an educated workforce, an educated electorate, and educated people, that nation will soon be lost in the demanding world of today and tomorrow.”**

- U. S. Secretary of State Collin Powell

***Welcome to the Community College***

You are joining our faculty at a very exciting time for all community colleges! We are celebrating more than 100 years of serving the students in our communities. There is a lot to be proud of as we look back over these first hundred years! Community colleges have proven to be the fastest growing segment of higher education. Our community colleges- more than any other segment of the educational enterprise - have also proven to be the most responsive to the needs of their communities and workforces. Cutting edge innovations are everywhere! What a great time to be joining the team!

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***How about you? From the time of your first interview, what surprises have you had as you got acquainted with the programs, people, and policies at your campus? Have you seen the latest catalogue for your campus?***

Looking back, we recognize that many of the first community colleges primarily offered a general liberal arts education. You will be amazed when you get your first look at our comprehensive catalogue.

In Texas, the core curriculum includes courses that all students are required to complete successfully before receiving a degree. The core consists of a minimum of 42 semester credit hours. It includes courses in communications, humanities, mathematics, science, social sciences, and visual/performing arts. The academic core courses readily transfer to public colleges and universities in Texas. These courses also transfer to most universities throughout the nation. In addition, a selected course, not considered a core course, could be articulated to

***FAST FACTS***  
**About Community Colleges**

AACC on-line: [www.aacc.nche.edu](http://www.aacc.nche.edu)



***Please click on and open the web link above for more facts about our community colleges.***

**Number of Community Colleges**

Public institutions – 922  
Private institutions – 184  
Tribal institutions – 31  
Total – 1171

**Enrollment:**

10.4 million students  
5.4 million credit  
5 million noncredit

**Tuition and Fees**

\$1,518 average annual tuition

**Degrees and Certificates Annually**

More than 450,000 associate degrees  
Nearly 200,000 two-year certificates.

**Revenue Sources: (Public Colleges)**

42% - state funds  
23% – tuition and fees  
18% - local funds  
5% - federal funds  
10% - other

**Training:**

**95% of businesses and that use them recommend our community college workforce education and training programs.**

transfer to near-by, four-year institutions.

### **Community Colleges in the History of American Education**

Colleges and universities were established in the United States usually before a system of secondary education developed. The origin of the junior college idea was with an American university president who was dissatisfied with higher education in this country. Henry P. Tappan, President of the University of Michigan during the 1850's, felt that universities should rid themselves of collegiate level instruction and concentrate on instruction at the highest level. Specifically, he suggested the transfer of the lower level (or secondary work) of the university to the high school. He advocated that intermediate schools be extended upward – a forerunner of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> year concept. He spoke of German universities as having characteristics of excellence – they were pure universities, not a mixture of “universities” and “collegiates.”

In 1869, William Folwell, University of Minnesota, urged that the first two years of college should be turned over to secondary schools. He was, in essence, suggesting the establishment of a “collegiate department” including grades eleven through fourteen that was to be the nation's first four-year junior college.

At the University of Chicago, President William Rainey Harper had taken the lead among progressive educators in suggesting that the first two years of college work were really lower level or “junior college” work and belonged in the high schools. William Rainey Harper is sometimes referred to as the “father of the junior college movement.” He did not believe that the young college student possessed the maturity to do research-based “senior college” work. He also suggested that the first two years of college were really extensions of high school and should become the responsibility of secondary schools. Harper also initiated the awarding of the degree of **Associate of Arts** in 1900 to students who successfully complete the junior college program.

### *A Look at Our Beginnings*

#### **Famous Founders and Their Contributions**

- **Tappan, Henry (1850's)**
  - Higher levels of instruction in four- year colleges.
  - 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> year high schools.
- **Folwell, William (1869)**
  - Grades 11-14 (four-year junior college)
- **Harper, William**
  - First two years of college should be on a lower or “junior” level.
  - Extension of high school
  - Students not ready for “senior college work.”
- **Carroll, Rev. JM (Baylor U.)**
  - Small, Baptist two-year colleges in Texas and Louisiana.
  - Baylor U. accepts students into three and four-year baccalaureate degrees.

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*Which of these “founding fathers” had viewpoints that are not too different from your own?*

## **Crises or Opportunities**

One of the economic downturns, the Panic of 1894, led more formal thinking about two-year colleges. Reverend J.M. Carroll, President of Baylor University, had convened a convention of the Baptist colleges in Texas and Louisiana that year. The Convention recognized that there were insufficient finances and students to support the numerous, small Baptist colleges in the two states. Carroll suggested a solution. The smaller Baptist colleges would reduce their curriculum to the first two years of college. Baylor would accept their students providing years three and four of the baccalaureate degree. Thus, the two-year college was born.

Across the country at about this same time, many other community colleges began as two-year teacher-training institutions. One of their most unique and appealing characteristics was their accessibility to women, primarily those preparing to teach in the nation's grammar schools. In fact, it was common for more than 60 percent of these community college students to be women. Some people still think of community colleges as women's institutions that mostly train teachers.

It was during the Great Depression of the 1930's that community colleges took on the added task of training and re-training the nation's work force with a wide variety of programs intended to counter the ever-widening unemployment

World War II and the GI Bill brought a whole new set of opportunities (and crises) to the community colleges. Buildings sprang up and innovations in educating the returning veterans (mostly men) were the order of the day. New courses and varieties of extra-curricular activities became essentials. From those years forward, open admissions and the ability to charge low tuitions are policies that nearly all community colleges now have in common. Today, more than half the country's undergraduates are educated in community colleges. In the academic year 1996-97, 9.3 million people took credit courses. Five million more took noncredit courses.

## ***Challenges for the Future***

- Nursing – Urgent need for training programs will continue
- Inclusiveness – Diversity in all areas of the learning community
- Community Building - basis of growth for students and staff
- Workforce Development – face changing economic times
- Global Awareness – living and working in the widest environment
- Technology - online challenges and opportunities
- Teaching and Learning - meeting students' needs
- Institutional Development - planning, meeting needs, decision-making
- Credentialing – update and expand offerings and programs
- Leadership - challenge of retiring administrators and faculty
- Student Development – civic responsibility and service learning

## ***Related Reference Works***

(Not from the Internet)

**National Profile of community Colleges, Trends and Statistics, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition**

**Community College Snapshot**

**Community College Enrollment**

Statistics in this section are from *A National Profile of Community Colleges: Trends and Statistics: Third Edition (2000)* available from Community College Press

## Open to the Future

As community colleges look to the future, they value the resiliency and responsiveness to change that marked their first hundred years of success. They continue to take pride in the excellence of their academics while at the same time, providing remedial education where needed, While opening their doors to students from around the globe, our community colleges take steps to build inclusive communities of learners sharing goals of access and service. As the future beckons, new issues come to the fore. Economic development awaits. Technology challenges us all. Beyond that, the horizon opens to a shifting focus of partnerships with the world at large.

**REM-0200**

*What would you like to be teaching on your campus two years from now?*

*What evidence do you find that your campus is open to interacting globally with learners? Do you support these initiatives?*

## Topics for Discussion On-Line



*Does it surprise you that most community colleges today consider work force training to be a priority in their programming? Do you think we have come “full circle?” Please prepare to explain on WebCT.*

*Are you aware of any work force programs that are unique to your campus? Has your campus formed partnerships with neighboring corporations in need of skilled and specifically trained work forces Please describe one such program that you know about when we meet on WebCT.*