

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF STUDENT SERVICES
OFFERED BY KANSAS COMMUNITY
COLLEGES TO DISTANCE
LEARNERS-VIA
WWW SITES

By

JOHN JOSEPH KOSCELNY

Bachelor of Science

Oklahoma State University

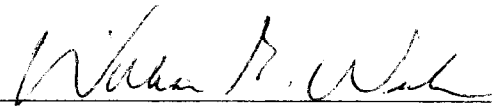
Stillwater, Oklahoma

1996

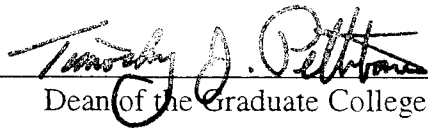
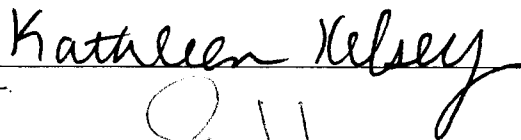
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 2002

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF STUDENT SERVICES
OFFERED BY KANSAS COMMUNITY
COLLEGES TO DISTANCE
LEARNERS-VIA
WWW SITES

Thesis Approved:



Thesis Adviser



Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

This study was conducted to review student services offered to distance learners. Student services are important to the success of the students in their college career. Distance education students are at a disadvantage due to the separation of distance students and these on-campus student services. While distance education is making strides in offering these students services via the WWW, equal access for student services for distance education students have fallen behind in the rush to get courses online. This study analyzed thirteen student service areas offered via the WWW in nineteen community colleges in Kansas. The student services were analyzed on content via the WWW and compared and analyzed to best practice recommendations of student services set forth by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications.

I sincerely thank my master committee—Drs. William G. Weeks (Chair), Kathleen Kelsey, and Kevin G. Hayes—for support and guidance in the completion of this research. I also thank my wife and daughters for their understanding and willingness in helping me to complete this serious undertaking. Finally, I want to thank my college students and fellow colleagues for accepting less than my full attention while I completed this endeavor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Background and Setting	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Objectives of the Study	4
Definitions of the Terms	4
Scope of the Study.....	5
Assumptions of the Study	5
Significance of the Study	5
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	7
The Role of Distance Education and Student Support Services	7
History of Distance Education	9
History of Student Services in Distance Education.....	10
Student Support in Distance Education.....	10
Student Services "Information for Prospective Students"	12
Student Services "Admissions"	13
Student Services "Financial Aid"	14
Student Services "Registration"	15
Student Services "Orientation Services"	15
Student Services "Academic Advising"	16
Student Services "Technical Support"	17
Student Services "Career Services"	18
Student Services "Library Services"	19
Student Services "Students with Disabilities"	20
Student Services "Instructional Support and Tutoring"	20
Student Services "Bookstore"	21
Student Services "Promote a Sense of Community".....	22
Summary of Literature Review	23
III. METHODOLOGY.....	25
Introduction	25
Design.....	26

CHAPTER	Page
Research Variables	26
Population and Sampling	27
Institutional Review Board.....	28
Instrumentation.....	28
Validity and Reliability	29
Data Collection Procedures	30
Collecting Printout Copies	31
Rating Web Pages	31
Researchers Notes	32
Analysis	32
 IV. FINDINGS	 33
Findings	33
Summary of Findings	34
 V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	 47
Summary	47
Conclusions	51
Recommendations	52
 REFERENCES.....	 55
 APPENDIXES	 60
APPENDIX A - SURVEY OF STUDENT SERVICES.....	61
APPENDIX B - COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN KANSAS	72

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Scores for Student Services “Information for Prospective Students”	34
II. Scores for Student Services Area “Admissions”	35
III. Scores for Student Services Area “Financial Aid”	36
IV. Scores for Student Services Area “Registration”	37
V. Scores for Student Services Area “Orientation Services”	38
VI. Scores for Student Services Area “Academic Advising”	39
VII. Scores for Student Services Area “Technical Support”	40
VIII. Scores for Student Services Area “Career Services”	41
IX. Scores for Student Services Area “Library Services”	42
X. Scores for Student Services Area “Disability Services”	43
XI. Scores for Student Services “Instructional Support and Tutoring”	44
XII. Scores for Student Services Area “Bookstore”	45
XIII. Total all Student Services offered to Distance Education Students	50

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Map of Kansas Community Colleges.....	27

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Setting

The purpose of this study was to examine student support services in distance education. The study investigated the student services provided by community colleges in Kansas and to determine if they meet the best practices set forth by several distance education organizations. In order to determine if they meet best practice procedures this study evaluated the literature of student services and listed some of the best practice procedures that are recommended. This study used the premise that the distance learner should be given the same advantages and privileges that a traditional on-campus learner receives.

A major issue confronting educational institutions integrating online courses into their curriculum is developing student services to support the online courses. One issue that is quickly realized is that on-campus student services are very difficult to duplicate to distance students online. The same staff that administrates student's services on-campus may have a hard time accommodating online students because they may not have the network technical support to handle online student services. A common theory is that

separate technical staff should be responsible for providing a centralized approach to addressing faculty and student technical concerns, complaints, and requests for assistance (Smith & Gunderson, 2000). Typically, this type of center maintains and monitors faculty/student problems, which should be addressed within 24 hours (Kickul & Kickul, 2001).

Student services are defined as support services that directly affect the student's learning experience. One of the goals of an effective online program should be to offer online students services that are equivalent to those available to on-campus students. Many schools are continuing to develop and improve their academic support through new applications of technology that are designed to accomplish the goal of offering quality student services.

The U.S. Department of Education found that 62 % of all two and four-year colleges offered distance learning courses in 1998; 84 % of all colleges expect to do so by 2002 (NGA, 2001). In Kansas, 17 of the 19 community colleges offer distance education courses. The student services offered to these online students by Kansas's community colleges is widely varied in quality and quantity.

Statement of Problem

Over the past ten years there has been a growing use of Internet technologies to serve students both off-campus and on-campus. While institutions previously had neglected student services in their rush to develop and deliver instruction online, they have recently begun to pay attention to the need to provide services, as well as courses

and programs in this form (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2001). Although these services were offered on-campus, it often was a hindrance to distance students because they were either a long distance away or these services were only offered during a certain time during the day, which defeated the reason the student was taking the course. Colleges and universities are increasingly recognizing the need to develop Web-based, anywhere, anytime, access to traditional student services, but often need help in envisioning what services to provide and how to design them (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2001).

Student services addressed in this study included the most common student services provided for on-campus students. The services were:

- Information for Prospective Students

- Admissions

- Financial Aid

- Registration

- Orientation Services

- Academic Advising

- Technical Support

- Career Services

- Library Services

- Services for Students with Disabilities

- Instructional Support and Tutoring

- Bookstore

- Services to Promote a Sense of Community

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this content analysis study was to identify the consistencies, similarities, and differences between Kansas Community Colleges that have distance education student support services online for their students.

The study examined the quality of student services and asked sixty-three operational questions about thirteen student service areas. These questions can be found in Appendix A.

Definition of Terms

Distance Education – the terms “distance education” or “distance learning” have been applied interchangeably by many different researchers to a great variety of programs, providers, audiences, and media. Its hallmarks are the separation of teacher and learner in space or time or both (Perraton, 1988), the volitional control of learning by student rather than the distance instructor (Jonassen, 1992), and noncontiguous communication between student and teacher, mediated by print or some form of technology (Keegan, 1986; Garrison & Shale, 1987)

Online Learning – the acquisition of knowledge or skills or both over the Internet or computer (McMahan, 1998)

Distance Learner – the one who is on the other end, learning the materials, asking questions, and providing work for evaluation (McMahan, 1998)

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to data from the two-year community colleges in Kansas. It was further limited to only those two-year community colleges that offered online courses. The study specifically analyzed community college online policies with no attempt to address how each institution should implement distance education programs.

Assumptions of the Study

The researcher assumes that the colleges reviewed will have student services offered online on its respective web site. It is further assumed that the web site is accurate and a true indication of what the college offers in the way of student services.

Significance of the Study

With the growth of online classes and the importance of providing an equal education to everyone it is important that student services be equal to services available to distance education students as those who are on-campus. Student services directly affect the student's learning experience. Piller (1992) stated:

One of the major issues associated with the use of technology in institutions is equality. The danger is that the distance between educational haves and have nots (or between the haves and have more) will be widened. By the year 2000, we would have created a Schism

American society between have and have not graduates from our own institutional systems. If computers have not been successfully integrated into primary and secondary education, our society would stratify into those with the knowledge to succeed and those who cannot (p. 218).

Distance learning need to provide for support and student services comparable to those provided in traditional programs (Picciano, 2001). Basic services such as admissions, registration, financial aid, counseling, and advisement are just as important as direct support services such as library, media, and access to technology (Picciano, 2001).

The challenge of offering student services that are equal for distance learner as to those that are on-campus is imperative for the success of the distance learner. A benefit to all learners will be that student services will improve as they strive to serve everyone.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Role of Distance Education and Student Support Services

Distance education is expanding at a rapid pace, but as it expanded student services to the distance students failed to keep up. Lowe (1997), reported attrition rates in adult education settings reflects, at least in part, on our inability (as distance education providers) to give students adequate emotional and academic support. If learners have not learned how to be responsible for their learning prior to their enrollment in a distant education course of any sort, they are at a serious disadvantage and may be jeopardizing their academic success at that institution. Kember (1995) reported attrition data that ranged from 28 % to 99.5 % in distant education settings. A major issue confronting any educational institution considering integrating online courses into the institution's curriculum is developing administrative support mechanism that sustain and enhance student learning (Barone, German, Katz, Long, & Walsh, 2000). Distance education changes the learning relationships from the common, centralized school to a decentralized, flexible school.

Wagner (2001) stated, as distance education became a prominent feature on the landscape of higher education, a comprehensive network of student support services was destined to follow. Western Cooperative's Guide to Developing Online Student Services. (2001) reported while institutions previously had tended to neglect student services in the rush to develop and deliver instruction online, institutions have recently begun to pay attention to the importance of providing services, as well as courses and programs, in this form. The guide further states that colleges and universities are increasingly recognizing the need to develop Web-based, "anywhere, anytime," access to traditional student services, but they often need help in envisioning what services to provide and how to design them. The report on Innovations in Distance Education from The Pennsylvania State University stated that the learner support systems and services required to establish and maintain effective distance education experiences must be at least as complete, responsive, and customer-oriented as those provided to on-campus learners (IDE, 1998).

In conclusion, student services have been lacking for the distant learner in the effort of all colleges and universities to get courses online. But, on the bright side, colleges and universities have recognized the need for student support services for the distant education learner and are now struggling to equalize the services for both the distant student and the on-campus student.

History of Distance Education

Many different researchers to a great variety of programs, providers, audiences, and media have applied the terms distance education or distance learning interchangeably. The hallmarks are the separation of teacher and learner in space or time or both (Perraton, 1988) the volitional control of learning by the student rather than the distant instructor (Jonassen, 1992), and noncontiguous communication between student and teacher, mediated by print or some form of technology (Keegan, 1986; Garrison & Shale, 1987).

The earliest form of distance learning took place through correspondence courses in Europe (Sherry, 1996). Until the middle of the 20th century this was the accepted norm, until instructional radio and television became popular. According to Cambre (1991), in the late 1950's and early 1960's, television production technology was largely confined to studios and live broadcasts, in which master teachers conducted widely broadcast classes. In the 1970's, the emphasis turned from bringing master teachers into the classroom to taking children out of the classroom into the outside world. In the 1980's the trend became professionally designed and produced television series or videotapes.

According to Sherry (1996) a major drawback to radio and broadcast television was the lack of 2-way communications between teacher and student. Today the trend is toward sophisticated interactive communication technologies such as electronic mail, bulletin board systems, Internet, and video streamed production with simultaneous broadcast to distant sites.

Distance education changes the learning relationship from a common, centralized school model to a more decentralized, flexible model. It also reverses social dynamics by bringing school to students, rather than students to school.

History of Student Services in Distance Education

The issue of student support has received wide attention in distance education. After examining 107 articles to determine the predictors of successful student support, Dillion and Blanchard (1991) concluded that the reported research was mixed. In a study analyzing learner support services in a statewide distance education system, Dillion, Gunawardena, and Parker (1992) outline the function and effectiveness of one learner support system and made recommendations for examining student program interactions. Feasley (1991) commented that although research on student support fell largely into evaluation category, there are some very useful case studies and institutional surveys such as reports issued by Fern Universitat and National Home Study Council, which summarized statistics about student services for a number of institutions.

Student Support in Distance Education

An examination of research on the thirteen areas of student support that this study investigated will be the emphasis of this section. Review of the literature on each of these areas will help explain how colleges can make improvements in that area. The Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications "Guide to Developing Online Student Services"(2001) provides some very good guidelines for each of these areas. The

Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications is a non-profit, membership based organization that seeks to improve the quality, efficiency, and impact of educational telecommunications programs and systems. Their guide is based on review of hundreds of institutional web sites on student services for distance learners. The good practice recommendations of the guide are to provide student services via the Internet on thirteen areas.

- Information for Prospective Students
- Admissions
- Financial Aid
- Registration
- Orientation Services
- Academic Advising
- Technical Support
- Career Services
- Library Services
- Services for Students with Disabilities
- Instructional Support and Tutoring
- Bookstore
- Services to Promote a Sense of Community

Student Services "Information for Prospective Students"

Stated in the Models of Distance Education A Conceptual Planning Tool
Developed by University of Maryland University College for the University System of
Maryland Institute for Distance Education (2001) "there must be easily accessible,
authoritative sources of information about nonacademic matters" (p.38). Good practice
recommendation of the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications
(2001) included the following:

1. Make online learning opportunities highly visible and clearly organized on your institution's Web page.
2. Give a real sense of your institution and its distance learning offerings.
3. Offer prospective students the opportunity to assess their personal readiness for an online course or program.
4. Provide information and/or tools for assessing hardware and software capabilities.
5. Include FAQs on costs, transferability, timing, and equipment related to your online or other distance learning offerings.
6. Describe how to get additional information about online programs and how to contact someone who will answer any additional questions.

Student Services "Admissions"

The online admission process should be easy and fairly straightforward. Distance students are faced with the challenges of tracking down the appropriate contact person for administrative questions; they must obtain registration materials, transcripts, and other official business in a timely manner through telephone or email contacts; and they must seek out guidance and career assistance from outlets removed from the campus. These can be challenging obstacles, and often lead to the high attrition rates associated with distance learning (Buchanan, 2000). The admission service should meet the following guidelines set forth in the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) guide:

1. Describe the admission process.
2. State admissions requirements.
3. Identify and describe methods for obtaining and submitting an application.
4. Provide an online application form along with clear instructions.
5. List deadlines.
6. Offer options to save and re-open the application as well as track the application once it has been submitted.
7. Provide multiple payment methods, including online credit cards payments.

Student Services "Financial Aid"

Financial Aid plays a critical role in the success of any students and the choices they make. Online financial aid should be easy to understand, apply for, and receive financial aid online without ever visiting campus. Good practice recommendations set forth in the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) guide are as follows:

1. Include general information about financial aid.
2. Identify and describe the various types of financial aid available.
3. Detail the costs of attendance.
4. Describe the application process.
5. State all institutional financial aid policies.
6. Provide your Federal School Code for the FAFSA application.
7. List deadlines and other important dates.
8. Link to the online Federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Linking directly to this form enables a student to complete an application online.

9. Supply other applications and relevant forms.
10. Link to related sites.
11. Offer online student loan entrance and exit counseling.

Student Services "Registration"

Registration is perhaps the most used and most important online administrative service (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2001). It is a service that every student will use every time he or she enrolls in a course. Gubbins, Clay, & Perkins, (1999) stated nothing could be more frustrating for a distant student than spending hours on the phone trying to find out pertinent school information. The Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) recommended the following:

1. Describe the registration process.
2. Identify and describe all registration methods.
3. Define any relevant policies.
4. Provide an online schedule planner.
5. Provide an online registration form along with clear instructions.

Student Services "Orientation Services"

Many studies have demonstrated a relationship between the provision of appropriate academic and relational support and a decrease in attrition rates both in traditional and nontraditional institutions (Lowe, 1997). The most significant variables identified from those studies that contribute to student persistence are orientation experiences of various sorts, level of commitment to the institution, early faculty contact, academic support (sometimes referred to as development programs) comprising a variety of strategies, learner self-confidence and self-perception, and affective support that takes

on a variety of forms but in essence provides emotional encouragement and motivation to persist in their academic endeavors (Turnbull, 1986; Tinto, 1987; Gibson, 1996).

Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, (2001) offers the following good practice recommendations:

1. Give a sense of what it is like to be a distance or online learner.
2. Offer tips for success in an online environment.
3. Describe or link to all requirements, important policies, cost information, student services, and information on how to get help.
4. Define the technical knowledge needed and describe the steps to access online courses.
5. Link to all student services available to distance learners.

Student Services “Academic Advising”

In the increasingly digitized world of higher education, student support services such as advising more often than not have lagged behind the infusion of technology into the curriculum (Wagner, 2001). An academic advising program ideally promotes learning and also encourages students to develop intellectually, physically and personally (NACADA Standards and Guidelines and Core Values Statements, 2001). Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) offered the following good practice recommendations:

1. Offer one-on-one access to advisors.
2. At a minimum, define all general education and major requirements clearly and concisely.

3. Give self-help pointers.
4. Link to automated transfer/articulation information.
5. Make advising guides accessible online to faculty, students, and/or advisors.
6. Provide students access to their own records.

Student Services "Technical Support"

Institutions that rely on technology for instruction are now recognizing the importance of establishing a systematic approach to providing students with technical support (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2001). Wolcott (1996) stated some student concern center around the technical problems in this "Frontier Land" (referring to distance education). It seems a necessary expense to have a technician available to correct problems as they occur. Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) offers the following good practice recommendations:

1. Describe services and provide introductory information.
2. Post scheduled network down times and maintenance.
3. Provide online tutorials and documents.
4. Provide self-help tools.
5. Offer assistance through a student help line/help desk.

Student Services "Career Services"

Career services are needed by distance students to locate potential employment opportunities. Buchanan (2000) stated we need to provide career assistance and guidance through electronic means. Distance students must have access to the same materials and personnel as housed onsite in guidance and career placement offices. Workshops and lectures should be video streamed and archived on the institutional web site. These services are needed to help develop their career and the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) offers the following good practice recommendations:

1. Describe services and make clear who is eligible for them.
2. Provide self-help career tools, including online tutorials.
3. Summarize opportunities for in-school career exploration.
4. Offer assistance in education-to-career planning.
5. Display local and national job listings.
6. Provide an online, comprehensive, job search handbook.
7. Develop a moderated online forum and/or automatic direct email specifically for students who register for the service.
8. Establish relationships with alumni and promote networking opportunities via the web.

Student Services "Library Services"

Access to library resources and services for students at a distance will continue to evolve as significant variables in the accreditation decision matrix, just as access to library resources and services have played a crucial role in the site-based institutional accreditation process (Wagner 1993). Without some library guidance and research structure, the distance learning student is being cheated out of a top-level educational experience (Roccas, 2001). The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services states "Members of the distance learning community are entitled to library services and resources equivalent to those provided for students and faculty in traditional campus settings" (Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, 2001). Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) makes the following good practice recommendations:

1. Provide orientation materials to the library.
2. Include information on how to contact a librarian with special expertise in serving students.
3. Provide remote access to electronic resources and basic instructions for remote access of electronic resources.
4. Offer reference support via email and/or phone.
5. Provide document delivery services and put necessary forms on the Internet for students to download and complete online.
6. Provide online tutorials on how to do library research.

Student Services “Students with Disabilities”

Distance education offers disabled students with their best chance for educational opportunity. Those students whose disabilities do not allow them to get to campus or to function within the confines of the traditional classroom often have met with failure until encountering a flexible distance education format that allows them to work at their own sites and at their own pace. Distance education can give students with disabilities what may be their first positive encounter with educational opportunity. Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) makes the following good practice recommendations:

1. Include general information of services available for students with disabilities.
2. List eligibility and documentation requirements to receive services.
3. Identify and describe available services.
4. Offer assistance in determining assistive technology needs.

Student Services “Instructional Support and Tutoring”

Although distance education is recognized by the geographical separation between the instructor and the learner, it does not mean the learner has a complete control over the program (Sadik, 2000). The distant instructor could play an important role in the success of learning. The distant instructor needs to observe, monitor and provide information as appropriate, not deliver a course in a fixed and rigid static format (Brown, 1997). According to Beaudion (1990), the task of the distant instructor as mentor is much more than merely grading the student’s submitted assignments. Sherry (1996)

argues that in recent distance education environments, additional roles are needed beside the traditional instructor roles. He explained that a team of instructor, technician and service provider must work together to produce and spread a quality distance educational program. Usually, there is one person who is responsible for running the class at a distance, managing the students and providing guidelines for both instructor and students. This person is usually known as the site facilitator. Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) makes the following good practice recommendations:

1. Provide online tutoring opportunities.
2. Give contact information to enable students to ask questions or seek assistance via the phone and or fax.
3. Link to external instructional resources and tutoring.
4. Present tips for study skills and test taking.
5. Consider online writing lab.

Student Services "Bookstore"

The bookstore should allow students to look up required textbooks and materials needed for their course selection. Buchanan (2000) suggests that bookstores should develop delivery mechanisms with campus or other bookstores, or ensure that course texts are available through Amazon or Barnes and Noble online. Students should be able to procure their texts as easily as on campus students, and this may require a toll free order line and direct delivery without additional delivery costs. Distant students should also have the opportunity to purchase university logo goods, software, and supplies (Aoki

& Pogroszewski, 1998). Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) makes the following good practice recommendations:

1. Show merchandise online.
2. State any relevant policies.
3. Offer an online method to look up course textbooks and materials.
4. Identify and describe each method available for ordering books.
5. At the minimum, provide an order form to assist in placing order via fax
6. Accommodate online textbook orders.
7. Deliver purchases to an off-campus address.
8. Accommodate online payments.
9. Accept online reservations for books not received yet or out of stock.
10. Provide order tracking.

Student Services "Promote a Sense of Community"

There is no question that a key to the success of an online course is the interaction between faculty and their students, and among students. Interaction outside the classroom gives the distant student a great sense of belonging to the institution (Aoki, Pogroszewski, 1998). Buchanan (2000) suggests if colleges and universities want to succeed in the online education environment, they must begin to reassess the ways in which distance students are treated across the board; their tuition dollars, while often greater than on-site tuition-is a significant factor in the continuing success of distance education enrollment. While students are clearly benefiting from the convenience and availability of online courses, additional mechanisms must be established and sustained if

distance education is to continue its successful run. Students will likely tire of their "second-class" student status unless institutional precautions are taken. Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications (2001) makes the following good practice recommendations:

1. Develop a student government for distance learners.
2. Develop a newsletter for distance students.
3. Use your web site for special announcements and to highlight chat rooms of potential interest to off-campus learners.
4. Establish a virtual community through a MOO (network-accessible, multi-participant, virtual reality).

Summary of Literature Review

Education is changing. Lever-Duffy (1993), suggest it is evident that the Industrial Age has given way to the Information Age, educational institutions are still using the Industrial Age models of instruction that encourage passive learning and stress knowledge mastery. In the media-rich Information Age, educators must shift to the instructional models that put learners at the core of both the curriculum and delivery systems and encourage them to become actively engaged in the acquisition of knowledge. As society moves into the Information Age with distance education colleges and universities must make sure that all students are treated equally. Access to student support services has been shown to be a critical factor in the learners' success (Tinto, 1987). Libraries, financial aid, advising, counseling, mentoring and opportunities for social interaction with other learners and faculty are some support mechanisms important

to student learning and development (Kovel-Jarboe, 1997). In conclusion, student support is just as important as the delivery of the courses for the success of distance education in the community college system.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This content analysis study was conducted to evaluate student services offered to distance education student taking online courses at Community Colleges in Kansas. A content analysis review of each Kansas Community College's web site for online student services was conducted in December 2001 and January 2002. The nineteen community colleges in Kansas and their websites are listed in Appendix B.

The variables looked at in this study were the thirteen areas of student services and the level of services offered to distance education students. The thirteen areas of student services were information for prospective students, admissions, financial aid, registration, orientation services, academic advising, technical support, career services, library services, services for students with disabilities, instructional support and tutoring, bookstore, and services to promote a sense of community.

Design

The research design chosen for this study was a content analysis. A content analysis is a detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material for the purpose of identifying patterns, themes, or biases within the material (Leedy, 2001). Content analysis is a research technique based upon measuring the amount of something in a sampling of some form of communication. The basic assumption implicit in content analysis is that an investigation of messages and communication gives insights into the people who receive these messages.

In this study quantitative data was collected on the frequency of student services offered. The colleges were then ranked on student services offered to distance learners.

Research Variables

In this study thirteen student services were analyzed and compared with an ideal type of web site. A nonprofit group, Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications, determined this ideal type. This group surveyed colleges and universities accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, and the two divisions of the Western Schools and Colleges to determine how they provide student services at a distance. By identifying some exemplary practices of web sites with student services offered to students at a distance, this group then put together a guide of best practice recommendations of student services for distance learners. This guide is then used as a

basis of evaluating the variables under each of the thirteen areas of student services.

Appendix A details the research questions that were evaluated under each of the thirteen areas of student services.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was nineteen Community Colleges in Kansas. The community colleges are directed by an elected board and governed by the State Board of Regents. A map of the community colleges is represented in Figure 1.

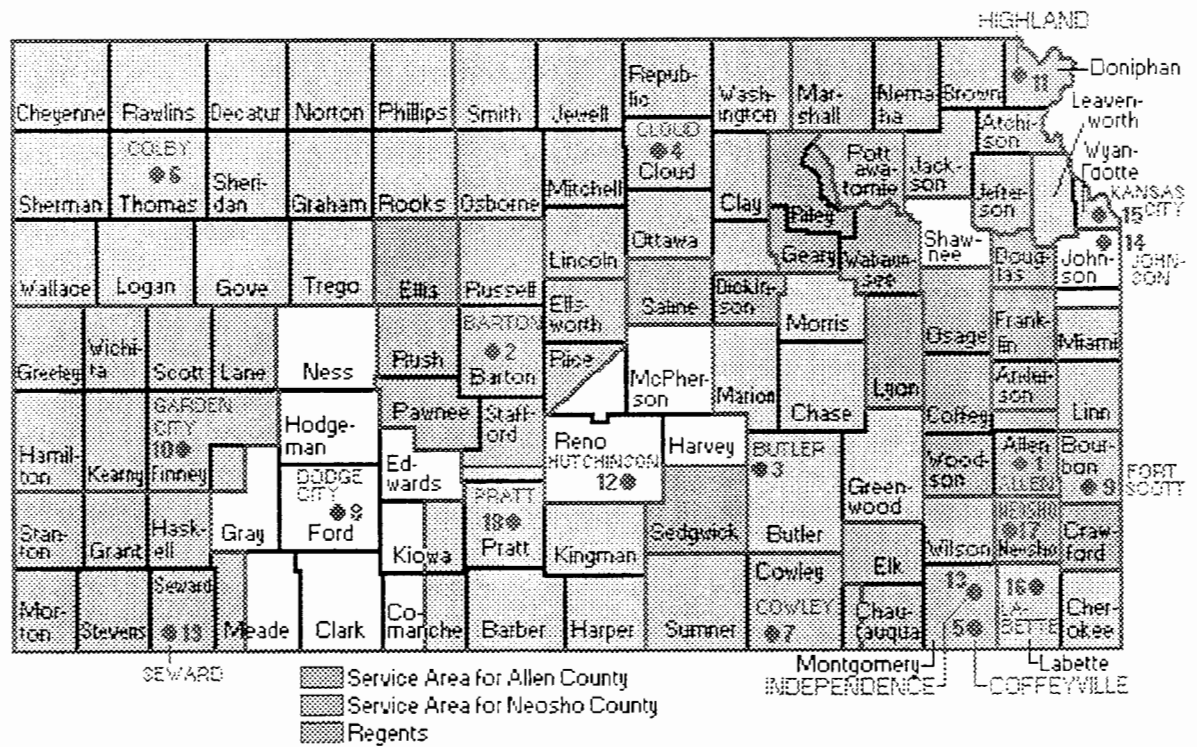


Figure 1. Map of Kansas Community Colleges.

Map retrieved from www.ksbe.state.ks.us/agencies/ccmap.html

Institutional Review Board

The proposal for this study did not have to be submitted to the OSU Institutional Review Board for review and approval. Since the study is a content analysis, approval was not needed because no human subjects were involved.

Instrumentation

A self-designed instrument was used. The instrument consisted of sixty-three questions about the thirteen student service areas researched. The basis of these questions came from the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications "Guide to Developing Online Student Services" (2001). The scale used in the instrument was a rank-ordered scale of 0-3 with 0 being the lowest and 3 being the highest rating. A score of zero is given for student service not present. A score of 1 was given for very limited student services. A score of 2 was given for average student services. A score of 3 was given for excellent student services meeting the criteria of the ideal web site for student services. The instrument is designed with a accompanying self –designed manual of print outs of the best practice web sites for each of the sixty-three questions asked for comparison purposes. The instrument was pilot tested by the researcher on a community college web site in another state to check it usefulness. The instrument is presented as Appendix A.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity in this study a mixed-methodology design was used. Creswell (1998) stated in the mixed-methodology design the researcher presents two purposes for the study, one qualitative and one quantitative and present them in the language characteristic of both paradigms. The focus is more on qualitative questions than quantitative questions. In this study, sixty-three questions with each question having a rank-ordered scale of 0-3. The questions were qualitative and the scale was quantitative.

The researcher's thesis committee examined the results and mentored the researcher. By doing so, peer examination was used. This is another strategy that helped with validity as suggested by Creswell (1998).

Researcher biases will never be removed, but biases must be recognized and acknowledged in this study. Biases could be anything that could cause the researcher to score the results differently than the researcher might normally. Some biases that might influence the researcher's results is the inability to find information on the web quickly and efficiently. If information was hard to find, then perhaps the score would be lower even if the information was complete.

Reliability is a measure of how the research findings can be replicated. Guba and Lincoln (1989) stated four criteria for judging a research study were credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Credibility is the accuracy with which the researcher has represented the views of the subjects in his or her conclusions. Credibility was accomplished in this study by the

persistent observations the researcher had and the peer debriefing that were conducted with fellow teachers and thesis committee members.

Descriptive detail of each area of the student services will lead to transferability of these results in similar settings. The self-designed instrument with the use of multiple raters should lead to the same results of this study. A point to remember is that the web is in constant change and hopefully student services will continue to improve at all colleges, but with the use of the instrument one could perhaps measure the change of student services.

Detailed records of this study leads to the dependability of the research. A copy of the survey document of the rater was kept and all documents and notes are available for inspection.

Complete records of the survey, the manual used with ideal web pages and a copy of the best practices guide give this study conformability. A copy printout from each college web site will also be available to set a historical basis of the web site for the day it was evaluated. All of these records were made available to the committee members.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection of this content analysis study were:

- Collecting print-copies of best practice web sites for comparison purposes.
- Rating the nineteen Kansas Community College web sites for student services offered to distance learners. Collecting the quantitative data based on the rating of student services.

- The researcher made extensive notes on each web site, printed a copy of each colleges' web site and evaluated each colleges web site.

Collecting printout copies.

Using Western Cooperative's Guide to Developing Online Student Services a print out example of best practice web pages for each question in the study about student services was used for comparison purposes. These print outs were placed in a binder and organized so they corresponded with the study so the researcher can easily find the web page to use for comparison purposes.

Rating web pages

The web pages were rated on a scale of 0-3. For consistency, the researcher rated the web site within the same week. This ensured consistent results by avoiding major updates of the sites and skewing results. The researcher went to each of the Kansas Community College web sites and administered the sixty-three questions rating each web site on available student services. The data was then entered in Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and analyzed.

Researcher Notes

The researcher made a copy of each of the student services offered at the nineteen Community Colleges in Kansas in relationship to sixty-three questions asked. These copies were bound and the date collected written on the document for historical purposes. The researcher made extensive notes on each web site noting any unique or interesting student services offered.

Analysis

The frequency of student services occurring was calculated in the quantitative data. The frequency of each of the sixty-three student services was reported and a percentage of the student services offered at Community Colleges in Kansas. The colleges were then ranked on the number of student services offered.

By conducting a content analysis on the level of student services offered by the Community Colleges in Kansas the researcher intends to show frequency of student services offered. The content analysis will also identify patterns or themes of student services offered.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

In this content analysis study nineteen community colleges in Kansas were studied for student services offered to distance education students. Of the nineteen colleges, two colleges - Highland and Neosho County offered no distance education courses, and Fort Scott and Coffeyville were just developing distance education courses and offered little or no presence on the web. The data of these four colleges were not included in the study. The remainder of the colleges offered various degrees of distance education courses.

The objective of this content analysis study was to identify the consistencies, similarities, and differences between Kansas Community Colleges that have distance education student support services online for their students.

Six colleges in Western Kansas have formed a consortium called Edukan offering a distance education program. The colleges involved in Edukan are Colby, Garden City, Dodge City, Seward County, Pratt, and Barton County. Along with offering the services of Edukan, Barton County and Pratt have additional distance education courses. Barton County has an extensive distance education program and Pratt offers an Electrical Power Technology Program via distance.

Summary of Findings

In the student services area of Information for Prospective Students, six questions were answered about details found on each of the colleges' web site. Of the fourteen colleges analyzed all scored from 9 to 18 out of a possible 18 points. Barton County had a perfect score of 18. For actual operational questions see Appendix A. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Scores for Student Services "Information for Prospective Students"

	Visible	Unique	Readiness	Hardware	FAQ	Contact	Score
Barton	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Colby	3	2	3	3	3	3	17
Cowley	2	3	3	3	3	3	17
Dodge	2	2	3	3	3	3	16
Pratt	2	3	3	3	2	3	16
Seward	2	2	3	3	3	3	16
Garden	1	2	3	3	3	3	15
Independence	2	2	3	3	2	3	15
Butler	0	1	3	3	3	3	13
Cloud	2	3	0	3	1	3	12
Hutchinson	0	3	3	3	1	1	11
Johnson	0	2	3	3	0	3	11
Kansas City	2	1	1	2	2	2	10
Labette	1	1	3	1	2	1	9

In the student services area of admissions, five questions comprised the admission process section. Actual questions can be found in Appendix A. The results ranged from two for Labette County to 15 for Barton County for a wide range of admission processes. The availability of an online application was a weakness area for many schools. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Scores for Student Services "Admissions"

	Procedures	Requirements	Application	Online	Deadlines	Score
Barton	3	3	3	3	3	15
Pratt	3	3	2	3	3	14
Butler	3	3	3	3	1	13
Cloud	3	3	3	3	0	12
Colby	3	3	2	0	3	11
Dodge	3	3	2	0	3	11
Garden	3	3	2	0	3	11
Seward	3	3	2	0	3	11
Kansas City	1	3	2	3	0	9
Hutchinson	2	1	2	3	0	8
Independence	2	1	2	3	0	8
Johnson	2	0	2	2	2	8
Allen	1	1	2	2	0	6
Labette	1	0	1	0	0	2

The section on financial aid had seven questions for a possible raw score of 21. Items analyzed on the web site were frequent asked question format, description of financial aid, costs involved, deadlines for different forms, link to the FAFSA web site, School code for FAFSA form, and links to other financial aid sites. The actual questions can be found in Appendix A. The results can be found in Table 3.

Table 3

Scores for Student Service Area "Financial Aid"

	FAQ	Aid	Costs	FAFSA	Deadlines	Link	Other	Score
Barton	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	20
Butler	2	3	2	3	1	3	3	17
Johnson	1	3	1	3	3	3	3	17
Cloud	1	3	3	0	3	2	3	15
KC	0	3	3	3	0	3	3	15
Pratt	1	2	3	3	1	3	2	15
Colby	1	2	3	3	1	3	0	13
Dodge	1	2	3	3	1	3	0	13
Garden	1	2	3	3	1	3	0	13
Seward	1	2	3	3	1	3	0	13
Labette	1	1	1	0	0	3	3	9
Allen	0	1	0	3	0	3	0	7
Hutchinson	1	3	0	0	0	3	0	7

In the student service area of registration the Edukan group (Barton County, Colby, Dodge City, Garden City, Pratt, Seward County) had a registration process in place and all scored 15 out of 15 raw score in this student service area. Some of the colleges in the analysis offered no online registration and forced the distance student to come to campus to register. Areas analyzed included, clarity of the various stages of the registration process and availability of on-line registration. In all five questions were scored in the registration area for a total raw score of 15. The questions can be found in Appendix A. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Scores for Student Service Area "Registration"

	Process	Method	Policies	Schedule	Form	Scores
Barton	3	3	3	3	3	15
Colby	3	3	3	3	3	15
Dodge	3	3	3	3	3	15
Garden	3	3	3	3	3	15
Pratt	3	3	3	3	3	15
Seward	3	3	3	3	3	15
Butler	2	2	2	3	3	12
Johnson	3	3	1	1	3	11
Kansas City	1	1	1	3	3	9
Cloud	3	3	2	0	0	8
Hutchinson	2	2	0	0	3	7
Independence	1	1	0	0	3	5
Allen	0	0	0	0	1	1
Labette	1	0	0	0	0	1

Orientation services gives the distance learners an idea of what it is like to be a distance learner and provides examples of work habits needed to be a successful online learner. All of these areas were analyzed with five questions on orientation services for possible raw score of 15. The Edukan colleges scored 14 out of 15. Two colleges, Independence and Allen County had no apparent orientation services. The results are represented in Table 5. The actual questions can be found in Appendix A.

Table 5

Scores for Student Service Area "Orientation Services"

	Describe	Tips	Polices	Technical	Links	Scores
Barton	3	2	3	3	3	14
Colby	3	2	3	3	3	14
Dodge	3	2	3	3	3	14
Garden	3	2	3	3	3	14
Pratt	3	2	3	3	3	14
Seward	3	2	3	3	3	14
Butler	2	2	3	2	3	12
Hutchinson	2	3	1	2	2	11
Johnson	2	1	3	3	1	10
Cowley	3	2	0	3	0	8
Cloud	0	0	2	3	3	8
Labette	1	1	1	1	0	4

In academic advising, Allen County, Cowley County, Independence, Kansas City, and Labette County presented no signs on the colleges' web sites of any academic advising. Results of the content analysis for academic advising are shown in Table 6. Actual questions are shown in the instrument in Appendix A.

Table 6

Scores for Student Service Area "Academic Advising"

	Advisor	GenEd.	Transfer	Curriculum	Technical	Helpdesk	Score
Barton	2	3	2	1	1	1	10
Butler	3	1	0	1	3	1	9
Hutchinson	3	2	1	1	0	1	8
Johnson	2	2	2	2	0	0	8
Pratt	1	3	3	1	0	0	8
Cloud	3	1	1	1	0	0	6
Colby	1	3	0	1	0	0	5
Dodge	1	3	0	1	0	0	5
Garden	1	3	0	1	0	0	5
Seward	1	3	0	1	0	0	5

Technical support had low scores overall in the student services offered to distance education students. A new leader emerged in this area with Butler County scoring 11 out of 15 points for technical support. Allen County scored a 0 on technical support on all questions. None of the colleges posted network down times. Results are in Table 7. Actual questions are in Appendix A.

Table 7

Scores for Student Service Area "Technical Support"

	Description	Network	Tutorials	Self-help	Help-desk	Scores
Butler	3	0	3	3	2	11
Barton	3	0	3	1	1	8
Cowley	3	0	3	0	2	8
Johnson	3	0	2	1	1	7
Kansas City	3	0	0	0	3	6
Dodge	2	0	1	1	1	5
Garden	2	0	1	1	1	5
Pratt	2	0	1	1	1	5
Seward	2	0	1	1	1	5
Colby	2	0	1	1	1	5
Cloud	1	0	0	0	0	1
Hutchinson	0	0	1	0	0	1
Labette	1	0	0	0	0	1

Johnson County had the best results in career services with a score of 11 out of 15. Ten colleges offered no career services on their college web page. Areas analyzed in career services through a series of five questions included, description of career services available and who is eligible for these services, self-help tools and online tutorials, career exploration, potential jobs in the student's major, and a display or link to local and national job sites. Results are presented in Table 8. Actual questions presented in Appendix A.

Table 8

Scores for Student Service Area "Career Services"

	Describe	Online	Career	Opportunities	Links	Scores
Johnson	3	2	2	2	2	11
Barton	3	3	0	3	0	9
Cloud	3	0	1	0	2	6
Colby	3	3	0	0	0	6
Dodge	3	3	0	0	0	6
Garden	3	3	0	0	0	6
Pratt	3	3	0	0	0	6
Seward	3	3	0	0	0	6
Allen	1	0	0	0	0	1

While most of the colleges with distance education courses provide access to electronic resources and databases. One college, Johnson County had a very weak system of delivery of materials to distance students, and the other eighteen colleges had none. Library services were a weak point for four of the colleges that were part of the Edukan group with little reference to library services on the Edukan web site. Six questions were analyzed on library services for a total of 18 points. Actual questions are presented in Appendix A. Scores are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Scores for Student Service Area "Library Services"

	Orientation	Contacts	Electronic	Support	Delivery	Tutorials	Scores
Johnson	2	2	3	3	1	3	14
Barton	2	2	3	2	0	3	12
Cloud	2	1	3	2	0	2	10
Butler	1	0	3	2	0	3	9
Independence	2	0	3	3	0	0	8
Kansas City	1	1	3	3	0	0	8
Pratt	1	2	2	2	0	1	8
Allen	1	0	2	0	0	0	3

On the services for students with disabilities none of the colleges met W3C Content Accessibility Guidelines by testing with Bobby. Bobby is a free service based on W3C guidelines that tests web pages to see if they meet content accessibility guidelines. Four questions were used to assess disabilities services. Only Cloud, Kansas City and Barton posted on their web site eligibility requirements for disability services. None of the colleges posted links to other possible services from other agencies. Actual questions are shown in Appendix A. Results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Scores for Student Service Area "Disability Services"

	Bobby	Information	Eligibility	Links	Scores
Cloud	0	3	3	0	6
Kansas City	0	3	3	0	6
Barton	0	2	2	0	4
Colby	0	2	0	0	2
Dodge	0	2	0	0	2
Garden	0	2	0	0	2
Johnson	0	2	0	0	2
Pratt	0	2	0	0	2
Seward	0	2	0	0	2
Allen	0	1	0	0	1
Hutchinson	0	1	0	0	1
Labette	0	1	0	0	1

Three questions were used to analyze instructional support and tutoring. Items analyzed included whether the web site provided online tutoring, chat rooms available for tutoring, contact information available for tutoring, and online study skills tips available. Hutchinson and Pratt both scored 5 points out of a possible 9 points, with Hutchinson showing strength on contact information and making distance students aware of whom to contact for tutoring support. Overall the scores were low for tutoring and instructional support. Table 11 represents scores. Actual questions can be found in Appendix A.

Table 11

Scores for Student Service Area "Instructional Support and Tutoring"

	Tutoring	Contacts	Study Skills	Scores
Pratt	1	3	1	5
Hutchinson	2	3	0	5
Allen	0	3	0	3
Barton	0	3	0	3
Colby	0	3	0	3
Dodge	0	3	0	3
Garden	0	3	0	3
Seward	0	3	0	3
Labette	1	1	0	2

In the student service area of “bookstore” three questions were used to analyze bookstore services offered to distance education students. The questions determined if the web sites provided a way for distance education students to utilize the bookstore via the web. Barton County and Pratt scored 6 points out of 9 points possible. Cloud and Labette had no services available in the bookstore student service area. Scores are shown in Table 12. Actual questions can be found Appendix A.

Table 12

Scores for Student Service Area “Bookstore”

	Merchandise	Ordering	Delivery	Scores
Barton	1	2	3	6
Pratt	1	2	3	6
Colby	0	2	3	5
Dodge	0	2	3	5
Garden	0	2	3	5
Independence	2	0	3	5
Seward	0	2	3	5
Butler	1	0	3	4
Cowley	0	1	3	4
Kansas City	1	0	3	4
Hutchinson	0	0	3	3
Johnson	2	0	0	2
Allen	1	0	0	1

None of the colleges provided services to “Promote a Sense of Community” by offering a student government to distance learners, newsletters, web sites for special announcements or chat room for distance learners. In the series of three questions the colleges all scored zero.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of chapter five is to present a summary of the findings, conclusions that can be made, and recommendations that are based upon the findings. The objective of this content analysis study was to identify the consistencies, similarities, and differences of student services offered to distance education students in Kansas Community Colleges.

The area of student support services is central to the success of any distance education program. Often overlooked, student service policy issues directly impact prospective and current distance learning students. It is important that distance learning student service policies maintain the same student-centered focus as on-campus student service policy. It is critical that current student service policies be reviewed with the distance student in mind. Tinto (1987) stated that access to student support services has shown to be a critical factor in the learners' success.

The theoretical framework in offering student services to distance learners is very important. Student services are important to the community colleges if they want to be

successful in the distance education market or even as an educational institution to on-campus students. Keegan (1993) stated:

According to the service management theory, the delivery of service takes place in a series of decisive moments, when the customer experiences the service or decides what it is worth. These moments are often called "moments of truth". They may be moments when the individual customer is confronted with a service carrier, one of the "front line staff", in person, by telephone or in writing. But there may also be moments when nobody else is there, when the customer experiences the value of what is delivered to him. The decisive impression of service and quality comes from such moments – for instance, when a student phones the institution, or attends a tutorial seminar. Service theory is therefore extremely user-oriented – or student-oriented – when applied to distance education (p. 185).

The success of distance learning in an institution could ultimately hinge on how well that institution provides student services to the distance learner. Distance learners need to have the ability of being able to perform basic student services just as on-campus learners from a distance.

In summing up the student services offered by community colleges, it was found that approximately one-half of the colleges offered satisfactory student services to distance learners. This is based on anything over a score of 66.5 points is one-half of the total points scored by the best school, Barton County. Table 13 represents a total of all student services found in the community colleges in Kansas.

This study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, due to the nature of the WWW nothing is static, information on the Internet is constantly changing and in the case of student services, some colleges could have updated their web site to include new student services since the study was conducted. Second, the content analysis was conducted by only one researcher and although a best practice recommendation and recommended web site was used for comparison purposes it was still a judgment call on the part of the researcher to rate the web site.

Table 13

*Total all Student Services offered to Distance Education Students in Community Colleges
in Kansas*

Community College	Total Score
	189 points possible
Barton County	133
Pratt	114
Johnson County	107
Butler County	100
Colby	96
Dodge City	95
Seward County	95
Garden City	94
Cloud County	84
Kansas City	71
Hutchinson	62
Independence	44
Cowley County	37
Labette County	30
Allen County	26
Coffeyville	0
Fort Scott	0
Highland	0
Neosho County	0

Conclusions

As a result of this content analysis, a body of data was gathered that documented the status of student services offered in distance education in the community colleges in Kansas. From this body of data gathered in December 2001 and January 2002 the following consistencies, similarities, and differences were found:

1. A majority of the community colleges in Kansas offered some form of distance education.
2. A majority of community colleges offered their distance education students some form of student services online.
3. The level of student services varied tremendously across the community colleges in Kansas that offered online student services,
4. Six community colleges in Western Kansas had previously formed a consortium called Edukan and offered distance education to students through this consortium. These six colleges scored from 94 to 133 points out of 189 possible points.
5. None of the colleges offered distance education students a sense of community.
6. While most of the colleges provided a link to FAFSA web site in their financial aid web site very few of the colleges offered a "frequently asked questions" section and failed to list deadlines involved in securing financial aid.

7. A majority of the colleges offered the ability to for students to test their browser and hardware requirement in the orientation section but very few of the colleges offered tips on how to be a successful distance learner.

Recommendations

While this study shows the extent of student services offered by community colleges in Kansas, perhaps the more important concept of this study is to make an awareness of the importance of student services to the distance learner. There are some weak areas in student services for distance learners in community colleges in Kansas. But the study also shows that distance education is growing and that some areas of the state, such as Western Kansas are the most progressive in the distance education arena. Recommendations that can be made are:

1. Southeast-Kansas area colleges should consider the Edukan consortium as a model for a distance education consortium in the Southeast Kansas area.
2. Institutions or consortia members must determine in advance which department, campus, or institution will handle student questions from learners who have difficulties with a number of critical areas. These include computer-related connection problems, registration glitches, undelivered textbooks, advisement options and so on.
3. Work through the steps that students must take to learn about, enroll, participate and successfully complete a distance-learning course in planning for distance learning.

4. Learners' needs must be kept in focus. Strong student service policies can greatly increase that the learners' needs are met.

Further recommendations about each of the student service areas that could be made based on study results in each of the student services areas are:

1. A prominent icon about distance education on the institutions home web page about distance learning program is necessary for ease of use.
2. The institution must have online admission forms.
3. Providers must include the federal school code for FAFSA applications and links to financial aid.
4. Websites of colleges providing distance education must provide online schedules and registration.
5. The institution must have an orientation for distance students to help ease them into distance learning.
6. Academic advising is a critical need for students who have questions about their schedules and classes.
7. Institutions must have technical support to help students with distance learning problems.
8. Institutions must offer career services to distance students to help explore career opportunities.
9. Institutions should have in place a help desk that could provide a human contact person for handling questions on distance learning and access to an advisor.

10. The college website should have links to resources and agencies for students with disabilities.
11. Institutions must provide instructional support such as test taking strategies and study skills.
12. A contact person in the library for distance education students as well as a section on web page of the library for distance education students is imperative.
13. Eligibility requirement for disability students must be posted.
14. The institution must see that instructional support is of high quality and tutoring is available for distance learners.
15. The education provider must provide a sense of belonging by utilizing the bookstore to show merchandise.
16. A student organization for distance learners is necessary to give a sense of belonging.

REFERENCES

- Aoki, K., Pogroszewski, D., (1998). Virtual university reference model: A guide to delivering education and support services to the distance learner. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 1,3
- Barone, C. A., German Jr., R.F., Katz, R.N., Long, P.E., & Walsh, B. (Eds.). (2000). *Informational Technology, System, and Services in Higher Education*. Washington, D.C.: Educause
- Beaudoin, M. (1990). The instructor's changing role in distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 4, 21-30.
- Brown, A. (1997). Designing for learning: What are the essential features of an effective online course? *Australian Journal of Educational Technology*, 13, 115-126. Retrieved January 17, 2002, from:
<http://cleo.murdoch.edu.au/ajet13/su97p115html>.
- Buchanan, E. A. (2000). Going the extra mile: Serving distance education students. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 3,1.
- Cambre, M.A. (1991). The state of the art of instructional television. G.J. Anglin (ed.). *Instructional technology, past, present, and future*. Englewood: Libraries Unlimited.
- Creswell, J. W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage Publications.

- Dillion, C.L. & Blanchard, D. (1991). Education for each: learner driven distance education. *Second American Symposium on Research in Distance Education*. University Park, PA.
- Dillion, C.L. & Gundawardena, C.N. & Parker, R. (1992). Learner support: the critical link in distance education. *Distance Education* 13, 29-45.
- Feasley C. (1991). Does evaluation = research lite? *Second American Symposium on Research in Distance Education*. University Park, PA.
- Garrison, D.R., & Shale, D. (1987). Mapping the boundaries of distance education: Problems in defining the field. *The American Journal of Distance Education* 1, 7-13.
- Gibson, C. C. (1996). Toward an understanding of academic self-concept in distance education. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 10, 23-36.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Gubbins, J., Clay, M., & Perkins, J., (1999). The development of an online course to teach public administrators computer utilization. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 2(2), Retrieved from World Wide Web:
<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/jmain11.html>
- IDE, (1998). *An emerging set of guiding principles and practices for the design and development of distance education* Retrieved July 15, 2001 from:
http://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/ide/docs/guiding_principles.pdf.

- Jonassen, D.H. (1992). *Applications and limitations of hypertext technology for distance learning*. Paper presented at the Distance Learning Workshop, Armstrong laboratory, San Antonio, TX.
- Keegan, D. (1986). *The foundations of distance education*. London: Croom Helm.
- Keegan, D. (1993). *Theoretical principles of distance education*. London: New York
- Kember, D. (1995). *Open learning courses for adults: A model of student progress*. Englewood Cliffs: Educational Technology Publications.
- Kickul, J. & Kickul J. (2001). *Implementing E-Learning innovations and technologies: test of an integrated model within a university setting*. Retrieved October 21, 2001 from: <http://betj.ggu.edu/spring01text.htm>.
- Kovel-Jarboe, P., (1997). From the Margin to the Mainstream: *State-Level Policy and Planning for Distance Education in the Directions for Community Colleges*, 99, Fall.
- Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod J. E. (2001). *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. Upper New Saddle: Prentice-Hall.
- Lever-Duffy, J. (1993). *Multi-Access education: A model for instructional delivery in the Information Age*. Retrieved September 17, 2001 from: http://www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC_Digests/ed438010.html
- Lowe, S. D. (1997). *The "Situational Academic and Relational Support in Distance Education" (SARSIDE) Model*. Paper presented at International Symposium on Theological Distance Education, Trinity College.

- McMahan, K. (1998). *Distance educators' desk guide*. Retrieved July 14, 2001 from:
http://www.bizresources.com/learning/de_deskguide.html.)
University of Maryland: *Models of distance education* (1997).
- Maryland Institute for Distance Education. Retrieved October 5, 2001 from:
<http://www.umuc.edu/ide/modlmenu.html>
- NACADA. (2001). *Statement of Core Values of Academic Advising*.
Available: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Profes/corevalu.htm>. (2001, September 20).
- NGA. (2001). *The state of e-learning in the states*.
Available: <http://www.nga.org/cda/files/060601ELEARNING.pdf>. (2001, September 19).
- Perraton, H. (1988). A theory for distance education. In D. Stewart, D. Keegan,
& B. Holmberg (Ed.), *Distance education: International perspectives*, 12, 34-45.
New York: Routledge
- Picciano, A. (2001). *Distance learning making connections across virtual space and time*. Upper New Saddle. Prentice Hall
- Piller, C. (1993). *The Fail-Safe Society: Community defiance and the end of American technological optimism*.
- Roccas, L.J. (2001). *Distance learning and distance libraries: Where are they now?* Retrieved September 21, 2001 from:
<http://www.westga.edu/distance/ojdl/fall43/roccos43.html>.

- Sadik, A. (2000). Tutor's and site facilitator's roles in wired class: A web based learning environment. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 13,3. Retrieved October 25, 2001 from:
<http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/fall33/sadik33.html>.
- Sherry, L. (1996). Issues in distance learning. *Instructional Journal of Educational Telecommunications* 4, 337-365. Retrieved September 21, 2001 from:
<http://www.cudenver.edu/~lsherry/pubs/issues.html>.
- Smith, K. M., & Gunderson, M. (2000). Building an Effective Online Course-Development Community. Retrieved September 10, 2001, from the World Wide Web: <http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm00/articles005/erm0055.pdf>
- Tinto, V. (1987). *Leaving College*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Turnbull, W.W. (1986). Involvement: The key to retention. *Journal of Developmental Education* 10, 6-11.
- Wagner, E. D., (1993). Variables affecting distance education program success. *Educational Technology* 22, 28-32.
- Wagner, L. (2001). *Virtual advising: Delivering student services*. Paper presented at DLA, Callaway, Georgia.
- Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications. Learning anytime anywhere partnership. Retrieved September 12, 2001, from the World Wide Web Available: <http://www.wiche.edu/telecom/Projects/laap/index.htm>.
- Wolcott, L.L., (1996). Distant, but not distanced: A learner-centered approach to distance education. *Techtrends* 41, 23-27.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A
Survey of Student Services

Name of college: _____

Does the college offer distance education? Yes _____ No _____

Rate each category in comparison to the college provided on the scale of 0-3 with 0 = none, 3 = excellent

On each category below compare the web site to the paper copy of the "compare to" web site in the survey manual.

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

1. Is distance learning opportunities highly visible and clearly organized on the institution web page? Are online programs highlighted on the home page? Compare to Chemeketa Community College.
0 1 2 3
2. Does the college web page give a real sense of the institution and its distance learning offerings? Is the distance learning opportunity unique? Compare to Washington State University.
0 1 2 3
3. Does the college web page offer prospective students the opportunity to assess their personal readiness for an online course or program? At a minimum, does this section contain a list of questions that students can ask themselves to determine their likelihood of success in an online course? Compare to Edmonds Community College.
0 1 2 3
4. Does the college web page provide information for assessing hardware and software capabilities? Are prospective students made aware of the hardware and software needed to take an online course from this institution? Compare to National University.
0 1 2 3

5. Does the college web page include FAQs on costs, transferability, timing, and equipment related to online or distance learning offerings? Compare to Cuesta Community College.

0 1 2 3

6. Does the college web page describe how to get additional information about online programs and how to contact someone who will answer any additional questions? Compare to Northern Arizona University.

0 1 2 3

ADMISSIONS

7. Does the college web page describe the admissions process? Is each step of the admission process given in detail? Compare to University of California, Santa Barbara.

0 1 2 3

8. Does the college web page state the admissions requirements? Compare to West Virginia University.

0 1 2 3

9. Does the college web page identify and describe methods for obtaining and submitting an application? Compare to University of Iowa.

0 1 2 3

10. Does the college web page provide an online application form along with clear instructions? Compare to Ferris State University.

0 1 2 3

11. Does the college web page list deadlines? Compare to Occidental College.

0 1 2 3

FINANCIAL AID

12. Does the college web page include general information about financial aid such as a frequently asked questions format section? Compare to University of Wyoming.

0 1 2 3

13. Does the college web page identify and describe various types of financial aid available such as grants, loans, scholarships, work-study, and is there a special section for distance learners? Compare to University of New Mexico.

0 1 2 3

14. Does the college web page give details on the cost of attendance, tuition, fees, estimated living expenses? Compare to Northern Arizona University.

0 1 2 3

15. Does the college web site provide the Federal School Code for the FAFSA application? Compare to University of Wyoming.

0 1 2 3

16. Does the college web site list deadlines and other important dates? Compare to Iowa State University.

0 1 2 3

17. Does the college web site provide a link to the online Federal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)? Compare to Metropolitan State College of Denver.

0 1 2 3

18. Does the college web site provide a link to related financial aid sites? Compare to Azusa Pacific University.

0 1 2 3

REGISTRATION

19. Does the college web page describe the registration process? Is each step clear and detailed? Compare to University of Minnesota, Crookston.

0 1 2 3

20. Does the college web page identify and describe all registration methods? Compare to University of California, Irvine.

0 1 2 3

21. Does the college web page define all relevant policies that effect the student's registration process? Such as student handbook or catalog. Compare to University of Missouri.

0 1 2 3

22. Does the college web site provide an online schedule planner making it possible for student to view course descriptions, search for courses, and availability of courses? Compare to University of Colorado.

0 1 2 3

23. Does the college web site provide an online registration form along with clear instructions for filling out the form? Compare to University of Illinois.

0 1 2 3

ORIENTATION SERVICES

24. Does the college web page give a sense of what it is like to be a distance or online learner? Does it describe the experience of learning online or at a distance? Provide an online tour of a real or hypothetical course. Compare to National University.

0 1 2 3

25. Does the college web page offer tips for success in an online environment? Are work habits described to be a successful online learner? Compare to University of Illinois.

0 1 2 3

26. Does the college web page describe or link to all requirements, important policies, cost information, student services, and information on how to get help? Is all the information in one place? Compare to Rio Salado College.

0 1 2 3

27. Does the college web site define all the technical knowledge needed (knowledge of software, email accounts, internet browsers) and describe the steps to access online courses? Compare to University of Washington.

0 1 2 3

28. Does the college web site provide a link to all student services that are available to distance students? Is the information highly visible? Compare to Washington State Community and Technical Colleges Online Consortium.

0 1 2 3

ACADEMIC ADVISING

29. Does the college web site offer access to advisor online? Is a chat room for advising available? Compare to Weber State University.

0 1 2 3

30. Does the college web site explain all general education and major requirements clearly and concisely? Are degree requirements posted on web? Compare to North Dakota State University.

0 1 2 3

31. Does the college web site provide links to major universities on transfer requirements? Compare to ASSIST.

0 1 2 3

32. Does the college web site provide advising guides online. Are the online curriculum guides and handbooks up to date on current requirements? Compare to Washington State University.

0 1 2 3

33. Does the college web site provide self help tools that will enable a student to research technical problems they are experiencing and perform their own troubleshooting? Compare to Ohio University.

0 1 2 3

34. Does the college web site offer assistance through a student help line/help desk that students can contact staff with specific question via telephone and email? Compare to Chemeketa Community College.

0 1 2 3

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

35. Does the college web site describe and provide information on technical support services available to distance students? Compare to Washington State University.

0 1 2 3

36. Does the college web site post scheduled network down times and maintenance? Compare to University of Hawaii.

0 1 2 3

37. Does the college web site provide online tutorials and documents on how to operate hardware and software and how to use them effective? Compare to Portland State University.

0 1 2 3

38. Does the college web site provide self-help tools that enables student to perform troubleshooting on basic technical problems they are experiencing? Compare to Ohio University.

0 1 2 3

39. Does the college web site offer assistance through a student help line/help desk so they may ask specific question via telephone and email? Compare to Chemeketa Community College.

0 1 2 3

CAREER SERVICES

40. Does the college web site describe career services and make clear who is eligible for them? Does it specify the services? Compare to San Diego State University.

0 1 2 3

41. Does the college web site provide self-help tools, including on-line tutorials and links to self-assessment instruments? Compare to University of Montana.

0 1 2 3

42. Does the college web site summarize opportunities for in-school career exploration such as internships, part-time jobs, ect.? Compare to University of Alaska.

0 1 2 3

43. Does the college web page offer assistance in education-to-career planning by explaining the major and potential jobs in that major? Compare to Brigham Young University.

0 1 2 3

44. Does the college web site display or provide a link to local and national job listings? Compare to University of Hawaii.

0 1 2 3

LIBRARY SERVICES

45. Does the college web site provide library orientation materials and make it clear of what resources and services are available to distance learners? Compare to Oregon State University.

0 1 2 3

46. Does the college web site include information on how to contact a librarian with distance education expertise? Compare to Oregon State University.

0 1 2 3

47. Does the college web site provide remote access to electronic resources and basic instructions for accessing electronic resources? Compare to University of Wyoming.

0 1 2 3

48. Does the college web site offer reference support via email and or phone? Compare to New Mexico State University.

0 1 2 3

49. Does the college web site provide document delivery services and put necessary forms on the web for students to download or complete online? Can a distance student get delivery of materials where it most convenient? Compare to University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

0 1 2 3

50. Does the college web site provide online tutorials on how to do library research? Compare to California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo.

0 1 2 3

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

51. Run Bobby to see if web site meets W3C Content Accessibility Guidelines. Bobby can be found at <http://www.cast.org/bobby/>. How do you rate the site for W3C Content Accessibility Guidelines?

0 1 2 3

52. Does the college web site offer general information for students with disabilities? Does the web site explain what services are available to students with disabilities? Compare to University of Wisconsin.

0 1 2 3

53. Does the college web site explain the eligibility and documentation requirements necessary for students with disabilities to receive services? Compare to Ferris State University.

0 1 2 3

54. Does the college web site provide link to related sites for students with disabilities? Compare to Illinois State University.

0 1 2 3

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT AND TUTORING

55. Does the college web site provide online tutoring opportunities? Is online tutoring available via email, chat, or online conference room with threaded discussions? Does the college focus on two or three subjects or a large number of subjects? Compare to El Camino Community College.

0 1 2 3

56. Does the college web site provide contact information on whom to contact via phone or email for tutoring advice? Compare to California State University, Dominguez Hills.

0 1 2 3

57. Does the college web site give tips for study skills and test-taking? Compare to University of St. Thomas.

0 1 2 3

BOOKSTORE

58. Does the college web site show merchandise at the bookstore and state relevant policies? Compare to University of Oregon.

0 1 2 3

59. Does the college web site provide a online method to look up course textbooks and materials? Compare to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

0 1 2 3

60. Does the college web site identify and describe each method available for ordering textbooks and delivery methods? Compare to University of Minnesota, Crookston.

0 1 2 3

SERVICES TO SUPPORT A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

61. Does the college offer a student government for distance learners. Compare to Washington State University.

0 1 2 3

62. Does the college have a newsletter for distance students.

0 1 2 3

63. Does the college have a site for special announcement or chat rooms for distance learners? Compare to Washington State University

0 1 2 3

Appendix B

Community Colleges in Kansas and Web Sites

Barton County Community College	www.barton.ecoll.ks.us
Butler County Community College	www.buecc.cc.ks.us
Cloud County Community College	www.cloud.ss.ks.us
Coffeyville Community College	www.raven.ccc.cc.ks.us
Colby Community College	www.colby.cc.ks.us
Cowley County Community College	www.cowley.cc.ks.us
Dodge City Community College	www.dccc.cc.ks.us
Fort Scott Community College	www.ftscott.cc.ks.us
Garden City Community College	www.gccc.cc.ks.us
Highland Community College	www.highland.cc.ks.us
Hutchinson Community College	www.hutchcc.edu
Independence Community College	www.indy.cc.ks.us
Johnson County Community College	www.jccc.net
Kansas City Kansas Community College	www.kckcc.cc.ks.us
Labette Community College	www.labette.cc.ks.us
Neosho County Community College	www.neosho.cc.ks.us
Pratt Community College	www.pcc.cc.ks.us
Seward County Community College	www.sccc.net

VITA

John Joseph Koscelny

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CONTENT ANALYSIS OF STUDENT SERVICES OFFERED BY KANSAS
COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO DISTANCE LEARNERS – VIA WWW SITES

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Coffeyville, Kansas, On March 7, 1959, the son of John
And Patricia Koscelny.

Education: Graduated from Delaware High School, Delaware, Oklahoma,
in May 1977; attended Coffeyville Community College 1978-1979;
received Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education from
Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 1996.
Completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major
in Agricultural Education at Oklahoma State University in May 2002.

Experience: Purebred swine producer from 1977 to present; employed as High
School Agricultural Education teacher at Grove High School, Grove,
Oklahoma, 1996-99; Agricultural Instructor at Coffeyville Community
College, Coffeyville, Kansas, 2000 to present.

Professional Memberships: National Association of Colleges and Teachers of
Agriculture