

CASE STUDY EXAMINING THE STUDENT TRANSFER
PROCESS: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND AN
URBAN HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTION

BY

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CHAPTER I

Introduction to the Study

This study focuses on the student transfer process between Tulsa Community College (TCC) and Oklahoma State University-Tulsa (OSU-Tulsa) an urban higher education institution in Tulsa, Oklahoma. A lack of ongoing dialogue and clear communication of curricular updates between two-and four-year institutions is cited as a major contributor for the low transfer and graduation rates at the two-year institutions (Manzo, K. K., 2004). This fact becomes even more enlightening when you consider that almost half –46% -- of all undergraduates attend two-year institutions (Almanac Issue, Chronicle of Higher Education, 2005, August).

A majority of community college students want to transfer to a four year institution (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2001). In a study of 152 community colleges, data indicated transferring to a 4-year institution was a major goal of 53% of community college students. Despite this fact, only 25% of community college students, some graduates, some not, transferred to a 4-year institution (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2001; Cohen, Brawer & Bensimon, 1985). Similarly, Cohen & Brawer (1996) determined the two-year institution transfer rate was around 22%.

How many two-year college students are actually graduating? A study conducted by the American Council on Education involving all two-year institutions found that only 25% of students who began in the 1995-96 school year with a goal of obtaining a degree had earned a degree or certificate by 2001 (American Council on Education, 2003). It should be noted this 25% total includes certificate program which generally require 15 to 30 community college credits, whereas Associate of Science degrees require 60 plus hours of credit courses. In summary, a higher graduation rate was an important objective among community college students (American Council on Education, 2003).

Inadequate academic advising has been noted as one of several barriers to baccalaureate access for community college students. In 2004 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) found academic advising was the most important student support service (McClenney, 2004). The same survey also found Academic Advising the least frequently used student support services. Consequently, one of the conclusions of the survey was community college students are least satisfied with academic advising.

The transfer function has been a critical component of the community college since its inception in 1902 (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Transfer rates at two-year institutions have not risen for the past 40 years according to Gordon (1996). An adequate strategy to improve the transfer rates of two-year institutions has been and remains a challenge for educators and administrators (London, 1996).

TCC and OSU-Tulsa Background

OSU-Tulsa, an urban higher education institution, and TCC desire to make the student transfer process effective and seamless. On January 31, 1997, Dr. Dean P. Vantrease, then President and CEO of TCC and Dr. James Halligan, then System CEO and President, Oklahoma State University (OSU) signed a joint resolution between TCC and OSU-Tulsa to achieve this desire. On July 10, 2002, the TCC Board of Regents approved another resolution that reaffirming its commitment to the original resolution (Appendix A). Per the TCC reaffirmation, the original resolution was to join OSU-Tulsa in support of its goal to have achieved enrollment of 20,000 by 2020. Secondly, by helping OSU-Tulsa reach its goal, TCC believed OSU-Tulsa's success would subsequently lead to an increase in the number of TCC's Associate degree graduates. While student welfare is important, TCC and OSU-Tulsa believed the agreement was in their self-interest and expected to receive benefits. These actions by TCC Board of Regents indicate a desire by TCC and OSU-Tulsa to develop complimentary and mutually beneficial programs.

From a national perspective, two and four-year institutions have some noticeable student characteristics that differ. Table 1 (below) illustrates a demographic profile of two-and four-year college students. Students at two-year institutions are older, from lower-income levels, first-generation students, employed and attend college part-time (American Association of Community Colleges [AACCC] & American Association of State Colleges and Universities [AASCU], 2004). Four-year institutions have more traditional age college students that are typically younger and attend school full-time.

Table 1
Demographic Comparison Profile of Two and Four Year Students

Two-Year Student Profile	Four-Year Student Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The average community college student is a 29 year old part-time student with a full-time job ➤ Thirty-seven percent of community college students are full-time; ➤ Thirty percent of full-time community college students have a full-time job ➤ Fifty-eight percent of community college students are women with major family responsibilities like child care parenting that may negatively impact their ability to attend school. ➤ Fifty-five (55%) percent of Latino and Native Americans undergraduates and 46% of all Black undergraduates attend a community college. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The average public four-year student begins post secondary studies at age 21 ➤ Seventy-nine percent of public four-year institutions students are full-time ➤ Approximately sixty percent of public four-year college students enroll full-time and work part-time ➤ Fifty-five percent of public four-year college students are women; Many with major family responsibilities have a hard time finding child care ➤ Public four-year institutions enroll 35% & 34% of Latino and Native American undergraduates respectively; and 31% of Black undergraduates.
<p>Source: American Association of Community Colleges & American Association of State Colleges and Universities, 2004. Improving Access to the Baccalaureate Note: Data on two-year students are from AACC (2000); data on four-year students are from IPEDS (2002) and NPSAS (2000).</p>	

From a state perspective, Oklahoma Higher Education 2004 Student Data Report indicates the three-year graduation rate for first-time full-time freshmen (Table 2) in 2003 for two-year institutions in Oklahoma is 19.9%. For TCC, with approximately 6,000 first-time full-time freshmen, the comparable graduation rate is 12%. Therefore TCC's rate is almost 8% less than the state average. More importantly, Oklahoma Higher Education 2004 Student Data Report for the 2001-02 cohort indicated student transfers from two-year institutions to four-year institutions was 30 percent.

From an institutional perspective, community colleges, like TCC, provide an important avenue to higher education for a two-year college student which makes the

transfer process a crucial mission objective for community colleges (Olivas, 1979; Avila, Baller, Brown, Vera, 1983). TCC enrolls an average of 27,000 students annually with only 7,000 to 9,000 students pursuing a TCC degree. Yet, data obtained from the TCC Office of Institutional Research and Assessment indicated that only 2,028 TCC students earned associate or certificate degrees in 2004. This institutional statistic becomes even more pronounced when you consider TCC students represent almost 50% of Oklahoma's two year college student population.

TCC was listed in the top 3%, or 34th out of 1150 community colleges in the nation in graduating students with associate degrees according to the U.S. Department of Education (as cited by Community College Week, 2003). Table 2 (on the next page) indicates from a state perspective TCC is not performing well regarding first-time full-time graduation rates. It is important to note Table 2 only refers to first-time full-time graduation rates using a percentage format and not absolute numbers. However, when all graduates are evaluated in terms of absolute numbers TCC fares better.

Table 2

Three-Year Graduation Rates for First-Time, Full-Time Freshmen in Oklahoma Public Two-Year Colleges

Institution	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Connors State College	20.4%	21.1%	20.8%	21.3%	24.1%	27.5%	27.6%	23.3%
Eastern Oklahoma State College	30.7%	29.7%	33.8%	40.3%	32.2%	38.9%	33.5%	31.4%
Murray State College	14.5%	16.6%	18.3%	19.9%	19.6%	21.4%	21.1%	16.6%
Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College	22.4%	22.4%	25.3%	29.9%	27.4%	27.0%	31.6%	32.1%
Northern Oklahoma College	11.1%	19.5%	21.1%	27.8%	28.2%	25.4%	22.5%	25.3%
*Rogers State University	10.6%	N/A	12.6%	12.2%	N/A	15.9%	16.4%	13.6%
Tulsa Community College	10.8%	10.5%	12.7%	13.2%	12.7%	11.9%	12.3%	12.0%
Oklahoma State University- Oklahoma City	N/A	13.3%	11.2%	7.9%	5.7%	6.9%	4.6%	8.4%
Oklahoma State University Technical Branch- Okmulgee	26.4%	26.0%	23.7%	24.8%	31.6%	31.3%	28.7%	37.5%
Western Oklahoma State College	17.8%	16.7%	22.3%	19.6%	25.7%	15.9%	17.8%	21.3%
Redlands Community College	11.0%	11.9%	14.4%	18.5%	24.4%	21.1%	19.0%	22.7%
Carl Albert State College	19.2%	33.2%	30.5%	36.0%	35.6%	33.9%	34.5%	36.6%
Seminole State College	19.3%	23.5%	18.1%	18.9%	17.3%	24.9%	21.8%	28.1%
Rose State College	6.3%	3.6%	4.5%	4.8%	4.9%	6.9%	8.5%	7.6%
Oklahoma City Community College	7.5%	10.6%	12.9%	11.7%	10.1%	12.1%	10.8%	11.6%
Two-Year Institution Average	15.4%	16.5%	17.5%	19.6%	19.5%	20.3%	19.2%	19.9%

SOURCE: Oklahoma State Region Higher Education (OSRHE) UDS, COHORT2 (April 2004) reports *Roger State Univ. began offering 4-year degrees in fall 2000. N/A: data not available

NOTE: The tier graduation rates are calculated by dividing the total number of graduates by the total number of fall first-time, full-time degree-seeking students at all of the institutions in the tier.

Statement of the Problem

Thesis Principal Proposition:

According to the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE) policy (page II-2-143 of Appendix B), students who graduate with a 60-hour associate of science degree from Tulsa Community College (TCC) may transfer these credits to other four-year public institutions in Oklahoma without loss of credit. Yet, in practice, officials at major Oklahoma public universities or colleges use their own standards when determining which transfer hours they will accept for their institution's degree programs if the transferring community college student did, or did not, earn an associate of science degree, etc. A loss of credit can occur when ...there are departmental requirement differences (Strain, 1982). Thus, there are uneven standards applied to transfer students.

TCC has not been successful in addressing this particular problem for several reasons: (1) most staff at TCC are not aware of this problem since it occurs after these students have left TCC and are accepted for admission to four-year schools; and (2) it is not a priority to receiving colleges and universities, e.g. OSU-Tulsa who primarily focus on their graduation requirements. Non-transferability of courses is an invisible problem and is only apparent to the student and student's family. There are approximately 90 days between the spring and fall semester which oftentimes does not provide sufficient time for parents and students to secure the money or investigate/remedy why a particular class did not transfer. Additionally, there are time limits for any such grievances. If a student is not permitted to transfer course hours taken at TCC, it simply means that he/she will be required to makeup those course hours at the admitting university. This does not directly

adversely affect the university; in fact it results in positive effects such as increased revenue from additional course enrollments due to rejection of community college courses, but does serve to discourage transferring students.

Purpose of the Study

Utilizing a qualitative case study approach, the purpose of this study was to examine the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa in conjunction with the state articulation agreement in order to determine its effect on potential or actual TCC transfer students. A case study is a research strategy used when a contemporary phenomenon is to be examined within its real-life context (Yin, Bateman & Moore, 1983, Yin, 1994, p. 92). The primary questions of interest are as noted:

- 1) How has the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy affected the TCC Associate of Science majors?
- 2) From an institutional perspective, what can be done at TCC and/or OSU-Tulsa to improve the student transfer process?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework utilized in thesis analysis was the self-interest theory. A brief description of the self-interest theory was then applied to the thesis in order to provide a framework to explain: (1) Does the theory help to reveal something about the problem; and (2) Does the theory help in developing strategies for solutions?

Self-Interest Theory

Self-interest theory postulates individuals and/or institutions will generally not agree to a course of action they think will not be an advantage for them or may affect them negatively. Kluegel and Smith (1986) argue due to an unequal apportionment of material wealth, self-interest may result in a disagreement of beliefs and attitudes. Those in power may support actions that maintain the status quo as well as their own interest. The self-interest theory holds it is irrational to make any acts of self-denial or to act on desires that negatively affect one's well-being.

While the origin of Self-interest theory may be questionable, its development arguably is rooted in philosophy and psychology. An early proponent was Adam Smith, a political economist and philosopher, who authored the seminal work "An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations" in 1776 (Smith, 1976). Smith's book studied the consequences of economic freedom which included the concept of self-interest among others. "It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest" (Smith, 1976, p. 27). Smith makes the claim that within the system of capitalism, an individual acting for his own good tends also to promote the common good of his community. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it (Smith, 1976, p. 456). He is most often recognized for the expression "the invisible hand," which he used to demonstrate how self-interest guides the most efficient use of resources in a nation's economy. Smith argued state and personal efforts to promote social good are ineffectual compared to market forces.

Earlier in 1759, as a professor of logic at Glasgow University, Smith published “The Theory of Moral Sentiments” which provided his Glasgow lectures regarding standards of ethical conduct that hold society together and concentrated on human motives and activities under a beneficent Providence. Further, it provided the ethical, philosophical, psychological and methodological underpinnings to Smith’s later works such as “An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations.” The synergy from both of Smith’s books eventually led him to lay the intellectual framework that explained the free market that is still influential today. Critics of the self interest theory contend man may not always act rationally, and sometimes may behave in altruistic or non-egoist ways. These criticisms are beyond the scope of this work.

Research involving students, counselors and coordinators utilizing the self interest theory to explain why certain events happen between two higher education institutions is very limited. As noted earlier, one possible reason why the self interest theory has not been utilized more is probably due to how the self interest theory is interpreted. For the purpose of this study Kluegel and Smith’s (1986) depiction on page 8 will be used.

So how may this theory help explain why so many TCC students are not earning an Associate of Science degree?

- I. TCC receives 50% of its funding based on the number of FTEs or students enrolled with 12 credit hours or more. Consequently, TCC must operate in a way so as to attract as many students as it can afford to educate.
- II. In 1970, TCC began with 2,800 students and now has on average 27,000 students per year. In 1970, there were no other public higher education institutions in Tulsa competing with TCC for students. Today TCC has more local competition for its

students. With an average of 27,000 students annually, one could posit TCC is successful in doing whatever it takes to attract and retain more students by removing perceived barriers such as mandatory advising which may serve to negatively affect enrollment.

- III. TCC, at one time, required each student to see a counselor before enrolling. Today, this is no longer required since it was viewed as an impediment to enrollment of non-degree seeking students.

Methodology

Definitions

For the purposes of this study the following definitions were adopted:

- Articulation – process of resolving credit transfer issues between community college and four-year institutions. It also refers to the policies that process produces.
- Transfer Agreement – formal articulation and transfer agreement between two and four-year institutions.
- OSU-Tulsa student – Students currently admitted and enrolled at OSU-Tulsa and/or Stillwater during the fall semesters from 2000 to 2004.
- TCC student – Students who attended TCC.

This research utilized a case study strategy that involved quantitative and qualitative mixed methods. From a developmental vantage, one purpose for using combined methods in a single study is the first method is used sequentially to help inform the second method (Creswell, 1994, p. 175). The quantitative and qualitative data

collection components involved the assemblage of student data and in-depth interviews respectively. All interviews were conducted by the author of this study. Those TCC students identified as Associate of Science degree major graduates were the sample population of study. Case study is an appropriate approach to use when investigating a “single entity” such as institutional transfer policies according to Creswell (Creswell, 1994, 12). The quantitative data collection component combined with the qualitative interviewing data collection provided a better opportunity to understand the dynamics involved in the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.

Quantitative Method

The quantitative component of this study consisted of statistical data, institutional and state transfer policies acquired from TCC, OSU-Tulsa, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) databases and national publications. Quantitative questions regarding the transfer policy and articulation agreements between TCC and OSU-Tulsa were identified in order to gain a better understanding of the student transfer process.

Information requested for review revolved around the following questions:

1. What was the total number of TCC transfer students to OSU-Tulsa for the fall semesters 2000 to 2004?
2. How many of these TCC transfer students did and did not earn an Associate of Science degree?
3. How many credit hours were those students (with and without an associate degree) identified in the previous question able to successfully transfer to OSU-Tulsa?

4. What was the area of major study at TCC? What was the area of major study at OSU-Tulsa?
5. What was the average number of credit hours transferred to OSU-Tulsa during the fall semesters 2000 to 2004?
6. What was the transfer grade point average (GPA) of those students who did and did not earn an Associate of Science degree for the fall semesters 2000 to 2004?
7. What was the cumulative OSU-Tulsa GPA of those students who did and did not earn an Associate of Science degree?
8. What was the length of time to graduate with a 4-year degree?

This analysis assisted in developing a more informed picture of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.

Qualitative Method

Qualitative interviews involved 15 participants who were identified with pseudonyms in this study. Interview questions (Appendix C & D) were comprised of general questions that probed the participants' transfer experience. Interviewees were asked to share their experiences regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa transfer process. Analysis of the interviews was used to determine facts and isolate themes. Interviews took four to six weeks to complete.

The qualitative data provided a means to verify the list of participants. The final list of participants (Table 6, pp. 77-79) was compared against the national two-year student profile (Table 1) for further validation. Valid representation of TCC/OSU-Tulsa

student transfer participants helped to advance the credibility of this case study. This step confirmed the validity and credibility of the case study population being studied.

Significance of the Study

This is a ground-breaking study. No evidence has been found that utilized the self-interest theory in conjunction with the student transfer process between a community college and a university. Moreover, the researcher could find no evidence that the self-interest theory has been utilized to study the student transfer process at any educational level. For further information about the researcher see page 21.

This case study sought to understand what was being communicated to the student by the advisor regarding the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Based on what is being communicated, this case study afforded an opportunity to provide a significant contribution and suggest possible remedies from student, institutional, state and national perspectives. The sheer numbers and characteristics of TCC and OSU-Tulsa transfer students presents an opportunity to contribute to existing research about the student transfer process.

TCC and OSU-Tulsa joint resolutions were developed and reaffirmed to ensure transfer functions involving all potential transfer students were as seamless as possible. Community college students in Oklahoma make up one-third of all college students in Oklahoma. OSRHE records indicated the transfer rate for students transferring from two-year institutions to four-year institutions is 30 percent. Given that TCC and OSU-Tulsa student demographics were similar to peer institutions, an improved transfer process as a result of this case study could produce a higher number of Oklahoma transfer students.

Illinois serves as an example of a seamless transfer system that has worked well. In the fall of 1990, Illinois had 29,000 students, or 41% of the fall undergraduate class, in four-year institutions who were transfer students. Of these, 15,158, or 52%, had attended a community college immediately prior to transferring to the senior institution (Illinois Board of Higher Education, 1991). While Oklahoma and TCC transfer rates cannot be compared because of our method of compilation, concerned Oklahomans should examine other transfer policies and practices in hopes of creating a model that will result in achieving the same success as has been accomplished in Illinois.

Student Perspective

Student responses addressed questions such as what could be done to improve the transfer process between two- and four-year institutions. Self-interest theory proposes students seek an efficient transfer process that does not waste their time and money. Improved transfer efficiency may yield increased graduation rates. Concerns regarding the quality of preparation that community college students receive prior to transferring to four-year institutions are unfounded. Research indicates community college students who transferred to a four-year institution as a junior have achieved GPA's that were equal to, and in some cases higher than those of native students (National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education and the Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2002; House, 1989). Unfortunately, it is also true that 22%-35% of potential student transfers drop out prior to receiving their Baccalaureate degree (Johnson, 1987). This case study examining the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa is significant from a student standpoint because it provides an opportunity to understand the student transfer process

via students' perceptions. When you consider TCC and OSU collectively represent approximately a third of all Oklahoma students, it is thought it would be hard to find a better sample population to study. The ultimate goal is a better student transfer process that produces a higher number of community college transfers and results in those that earning a Baccalaureate degree.

Institutional Perspective

A case study examining the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa is significant from an institutional point-of-view because it provides an opportunity for TCC and OSU-Tulsa to reevaluate their joint resolution regarding the student transfer process. The community college receives much criticism regarding transfer students (Adelman, 1988). For example, TCC had 2028 graduates in 2005. TCC records indicated there were 7,000 to 9,000 potential degree seeking students. The transfer process may affect the number of TCC graduates and even how a graduate is defined. And more importantly this study may suggest ways to improve the systematic student transfer process within and between TCC and OSU-Tulsa.

State Perspective

State involvement is needed not only to assure better transfer opportunities for students but to improve the quality of education by coordinating the resources and participation of the entire community... (Robertson & Frier, 1996). This study may stimulate review of the state articulation program. More specifically, this study may

provide a roadmap to how the Oklahoma state articulation and transfer policy can be revised into a more effective policy. Palmer and Eaton (1991) note that:

the quality in higher education is determined by the extent to which students moving from two-year to four-year institution are prepared to meet the collegiate expectations of the four-year institutions, the ease with which students are able to move from one institution to another and the rate of baccalaureate degree attainment among transfer students compared to that among students native to the four-year institutions (p. 4).

The OSRHE challenge; therefore, is to foster improvement by organizing the resources in a way that encourages cooperation and participation by the community and educational entities.

Improvement of OSRHE governance structures to coordinate transfer and articulation activities (Robertson & Frier, 1996) is one example how this case study could assist the state. For example, if states such as Oklahoma utilized statewide transfer agreements to only assist those community college student with Associate degrees, many more community college students who have not earned an associate degree yet wish to transfer may be left behind (Ignash & Townsend, winter 2000). A study of transfer rates in 13 states found that 37% of community college students earned their Associates degree before transferring (Palmer, Ludwig & Stapleton, 1994). A more informed state articulation policy may serve to increase the rate of potential transfer students with and without Associate degrees.

Another significant contribution from this case study could be to focus attention upon the heightened need for better uniform course content and numbering system in

Oklahoma that in turn may improve the transfer rate of community college students. For example, page 85 in the TCC 2005-2006 catalog shows business law as being as acceptable class for the OSU-Tulsa business program. According to several OSU-Tulsa students, the business law class is not accepted by OSU-Tulsa. An important mission of any state is to facilitate the successful transfer of community college students toward the bachelor degree (Rifkin, 2000). For example, in Oklahoma the accomplishment of this mission is predicated on the seamless transfer of student credit hours from the two-year institution to the four-year institution (Appendix E & F). Courses accepted for transfer at one state institution may not be accepted at another state institution (Rifkin, 2000). And even after a transfer student is accepted by a four-year institution his/her credits may not be applied to a specific major or degree.

Lastly, Knoell (1990) believed parity between two and four-year institutions is critical in successfully developing effective articulation agreements. Collaboration is the key for better transfer and articulation agreements (Rifkin, 2000). TCC, as the largest Oklahoma community college, and OSU-Tulsa, as one of Oklahoma two comprehensive four-year institutions, offer a great opportunity for successful collaboration since both institutions are within seven miles of one another in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Faculty/advisors from two and four-year institutions must positively work with one another to enhance and maintain the success of transfer students (Rifkin, 2000). Research indicates that frequent and ongoing meetings between faculty/advisors are very important for effective transfer and articulation agreements.

National Perspective

Nationally, the significance of the student transfer function continues to be explored as a result of its demographic, social and political effects. In 1901 the student transfer function was a part of the reasoning that led to the opening of the first two-year institution (Eells, 1931). Today, more than 100 years later, statistics indicate only 20-29% of all students attending two-year institutions transfer to four-year institutions (Rifkin, 2000, p. 4).

The student transfer and articulation function is an important component of higher education due to the fact that half the undergraduates in the U.S., who include a significant proportion of minority students, attend two-year institutions (Almanac Issue, Chronicle of Higher Education, 2005, August). From 1990 to 2000, enrollment at two-year institutions grew from 5.2 to 5.9 million, with the underrepresented minority population increasing 65% during this time period (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Thus, a successful student transfer process from the two-year institution to a four-year institution is a much needed resource for almost half of the U.S. undergraduates, and a major portion of minorities, pursuing a bachelor degree. The importance of a seamless articulation and transfer process between two-and four-year institutions is crucial because it has become “the single most important means for low-income and minority students to attain their baccalaureates” (NCPPE, 2004, p. 48).

Several national studies regarding the student transfer process within higher education have identified advisement/counseling as another area of concern. A joint study conducted by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) identified

advisement/counsel as a barrier to baccalaureate attainment.(Manzo, 2004, p. 6).

Inadequate support from two and four year institutions is the reason cited.

Another survey study titled “Engagement by Design” concluded a strategy is needed to engage students to use academic advisement more (McClenney, 2004). This survey, conducted by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), involved 152 community colleges. It found academic advising was the most important student support service (McClenney, 2004, p.).

A policy paper, titled “Improving Articulation Policy to Increase Transfer,” published by the Center for Community College Policy identified counseling/student advising as one way to increase transfer (Rifkin, 2000 p. 8). This study focused on articulation policy and transfer between community colleges and four-year institutions. This study involving TCC, as the largest Oklahoma community college, and OSU-Tulsa, as one of Oklahoma’s two comprehensive four-year institutions, presented an opportunity to contribute to the breadth of knowledge regarding the importance of advisement/counseling.

Better institutional transfer policies and state articulation agreements may be necessary to avoid federal intrusion. A portion of HR 3311 introduced by House Subcommittee Chair Buck McKeon (R-CA) on October 16, 2003 threatens to institutionalize the credit transfer process and penalize any institution that fails to adhere to the proposed rules by taking away its financial aid (Fusco, 2003). This congressional action was fostered by complaints from citizens who relocated from another geographical area.

Delimitations and Limitations

Delimitations

For the purpose of this case study, interviews were limited to advisors/coordinator and Associate of Science transfer students from TCC who matriculated at OSU-Tulsa. TCC, as a two-year college with the third largest enrollment in Oklahoma, and OSU-Tulsa, a satellite campus of OSU, were selected for this case study because TCC sends more transfer students to OSU as an institution than any other college in Oklahoma. Advisors/Coordinator and transfer students were selected on the basis of their years of transfer student experience, or their involvement as students, respectively. Quantitative data were limited to the fall semesters 2000 to 2004.

Limitations

Although TCC and OSU are generally ranked third and second respectively in student enrollments in Oklahoma, their state approved missions are generally viewed differently. For example, one objective of TCC's academic mission is full access to education through its open admissions versus selective limited admission at OSU-Tulsa. In short, TCC's mission is to educate any applicant with a high school diploma, or GED; while OSU's mission is to educate those individuals who qualify. Historically, the development of higher education has illustrated that two-year institutions, like TCC, as opposed to four-year institutions, like OSU, are affected more by this hierarchical arrangement (American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) & American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), 2004).

As noted earlier in Table 1 (see p.4), student characteristics are another important difference between two-year and four-year students. When compared against the four-year institutions, the two-year institutions have the least prepared students to educate.

Finally, given the aforementioned challenges, institutional capacity is a significant difference as well. TCC, with an open access policy, must educate an unlimited number of students on a limited budget; while OSU has enrollment limitations. Despite the OSRHE policy regarding transfer students, the above noted differences can have a substantial effect on the success of TCC students wanting to attend OSU. It is accepted the findings in this study might lead to different interpretations than those of the author. Consequently, examining only TCC and OSU-Tulsa might limit the degree the findings could be generalized to be deemed salient for other institutions.

This study used interviews that were subjective to the interpretive bias of interviewer, and focused on those student transfer practices and processes regarding university-parallel lower division courses experienced by TCC students who were current attendees at OSU-Tulsa.

Researcher

Patton (2002, p. 566) notes a qualitative researcher should include some information about himself or herself. The author as a former undergraduate student-athlete attended summer school and therefore realizes the importance of correct and timely course information. As a student the author had to maintain a certain grade point average to participate in athletics. Taking the correct summer courses saved time and money. As an undergraduate athlete the author had little time to waste due to classroom

hours and the physical training regimen required to compete in athletics. Undergraduate athletes were expected to follow specific rules of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) to remain eligible to participate in athletics.

Patton (2002) opines the first principle is to report any personal and professional information that may affect data collection, analysis, and interpretation- either negatively or positively. Accordingly, please note I am an OSU-Tulsa graduate student as well as a TCC administrator who professes a genuine interest in improving the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa for the benefit of students. In my role as an administrator, I understand if students are not satisfied with academic services then it most likely will have a negative impact on enrollment and eventually TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Further, every effort was made to ensure a diverse representative group (Table 6) of interviewees who would provide a broad perspective of the TCC/ OSU-Tulsa transfer experience was utilized. As a former Langston University-Tulsa administrator working under the previous University Center at Tulsa model, I witness the breakup of a successful university model whose primary goal was to serve the student first. Finally, I, as an OSU-Tulsa graduate student, naturally would like educational resources to be a priority in Oklahoma.

Outline of this Study

The outline for the remainder of this case study includes Chapter II which presents a review of literature related to articulation and transfer agreements. This chapter also presents institutional profiles of TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Chapter III presents the methodology used for this case study. Chapter IV introduces the findings of this case

study. Chapter V concludes with a discussion and analysis of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and observations by the researcher.

CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

This chapter will briefly discuss articulation and transfer agreement, followed by the university autonomy, community college history, the mission of TCC and OSU-Tulsa, student characteristics of TCC and OSU-Tulsa students, the history of TCC and OSU-Tulsa, OSRHE policy regarding articulation and transfer agreements and related studies should provide the background needed for this comparative study of TCC and OSU-Tulsa student transfer processes.

The most critical barrier of the student transfer process from a two-year to a four-year institution is a lack of understanding and open communication according to a 18-month joint study involving the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) (Manzo, 2004). This finding confirmed an earlier study from 20 years ago by Bogart (1987, p. 20) who stated the key ingredient to implementation of successful articulation agreement is open communication among institutions.

Kintzer (1973, pp. 26-29) presents at least three reasons that contribute to the lack of communication between two and four-year institutions. First, he documented community colleges are not allowed to advance their curricula because the universities believe is it their job to design the program curricula. Secondly, he noted community

colleges feel universities have less respect for their students because of a preconceived notion that community colleges transfer courses are not up to university standards.

Finally, Kintzer stated universities believe successful coordination of transfer students is affected because community colleges fail to provide appropriate counseling.

An articulation and transfer agreement in education is...a series of complex and interlocking formal relationships between schools (Kintzer, 1973, p. 25). “Articulation refers to the courses and programs – “the what”.” Transfer refers to the student flow among institutions and programs – “the who”.

Wattenbarger and Kintzer believe that articulation is essential but that community colleges should not be bound by universities dictates. They found that transfer students usually perform in a manner similar to their past patterns of accomplishment but that various senior institutions policies discriminate against students who transfer (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 191).

University Autonomy

Some land grant universities, like OSU and OSU-Tulsa were established by the Morrill Act of 1862 which granted 30,000 acres of public land for every member of its congressional delegation. States were to sell the land and then use the funds to build colleges in engineering, agriculture and military science. This act helped produce more than 70 colleges which came to be known as land-grant institutions.

According to Veysey (1965), after 1890 American-German educated university scholars who were influenced by the German model, developed a passion for academic freedom which entails two tenets: *Lernfreiheit*, or the freedom of the student to choose his own studies in an elective system, and *Lehrfreiheit*, the freedom of the professor to investigate and teach the results of his researches without governmental interference

(Veysey, 1965, p. 384). Academic freedom has typically been seen more as a professional right emerging from the nature of the scholar involved in research, scientific conceptions of the search for truth, and a perception of service to the community (Hofstadter, 1955; MacIver, 1955). Academic freedom is important because it enables academics to think freely, to speculate and to experiment with new ideas (position paper from internet). Eventually, universities assumed “academic freedom was extended to include a shield for partisan activities conducted outside the classroom among the public at large” which was not a part of the German theory (Veysey, 1965 p. 384).

As academic freedom became entrenched within the university, institutional autonomy was an outgrowth and thus became associated as a part of the university itself. Dressel (1980, p.1) defines “autonomy in the broadest sense as independence or to self-government and university autonomy as the ability of a university or college (whether as a single institution or as a part of a multicampus system) to govern itself without outside controls.” Although institutional autonomy may be viewed as an essential by-product of academic freedom, they are not one in the same. As noted earlier, academic freedom relates to academics, that is to individuals, whereas institutional autonomy relates to institutions (Tight, 1988, p. 123). Consequently, those situated within the university community came to believe *institutional autonomy* formed another level of security from outside interference or influence. Dressel (1980, p. 2) points out “there is no such thing as complete institutional autonomy; it is always limited by the needs and interests of those served.”

Relative to articulation and transfer agreements between four-year and two-year institutions, academic freedom and institutional autonomy concedes control to no one but

the university professors and administrators when determining the format of the curriculum. Betteridge (1969, p. 198) noted:

It is plain to see that the original academic freedom of the professors to teach what they thought fit and of the students to learn as they pleased has now been debased and perverted into the claim of the universities that they shall continue as corporate bodies within the state and to a large extent supported by the state, and yet shall remain free from state control. The freedom of the individual has become lost under the blanket of freedom for the institution.

Academic freedom and institutional autonomy at the public university will not go away as long as the state government which provides its funding is satisfied with the scholarship and human resources it receives. The state government determines the level of autonomy of the university, not the university itself. With regard to the state's articulation and transfer agreements, it is the same government responsible for its development and success. Dressel (1980, p. 22) notes:

Unrestrained freedom or autonomy of any person or unit in carrying out assigned duties is dangerous. Hence, duplication, a balancing of powers, and continuing review are necessary for all institutions and agencies. Autonomy should not only be used to further the best interests of those who delegated it but it should also be subject to continual review in order to determine whether the autonomy is being used to achieve the purposes for which it was extended.

At the same time, Halstead (1974, p. 13) says "if member colleges and universities are to survive as strong, independent participants and avoid coalescing into a mass, lockstep system, the precious assets of self-direction, identity, and integrity must be maintained."

In support of scripture which says "to whom much is given much is required," the university bestowed with academic freedom and institutional autonomy has a tremendous responsibility to the vast numbers of potential scholars. The university's responsibility

has not changed since its inception—to educate the intellect. Due to the overwhelming demand around 1900 for a university education, educators had to figure out a way to accommodate this need and in turn became gatekeepers of higher education. Ultimately, the university's response to swelling enrollments was the junior college; without the academic freedom or institutional autonomy it had procured. It was at this point when the protection of the university autonomy began to cross paths with the slow but steady growth of the junior college.

Historical Development of the Community College

The history and development of the community college is important because of its affiliation with articulation and transfer agreements. A chronological history of the community college will reflect a mindset the articulation and transfer agreement process was accepted as a means to an end. Thus the evolution of today's articulation and transfer agreements between community colleges and universities like TCC and OSU-Tulsa can be traced back thru the community college interactions with the university.

The opening of the first junior college (or community college), Joliet Junior College, occurred in Joliet, Illinois in 1902 (Eells, 1931, pp. 54-55) was the result of a merger between University of Chicago and Joliet high school. William Rainey Harper (University of Chicago President known as the father of the junior college) and J. Stanley Brown (Principal of Joliet) utilization of an articulation and transfer agreement was the catalyst which led to the merger. This arrangement occurred because of Harper's desire to emulate the German university model which at the time excluded the freshmen and sophomore curriculum and Brown's need to expand his high school curriculum to

university courses. The articulation and transfer agreement formally began with Stanley's agreement to take freshmen and sophomore off the hands of Harper who preferred not to have them. Harper only wanted to deal with junior and senior intellectuals. Prophetically, Harper's preference toward the German model was a clear sign the junior college's purpose would be to assist the university with the development of the intellect. The second community college emerged in 1910 in Fresno, California. After 1910, community colleges began to flourish (Table 3 on p.32).

Before President Harper's opening of Joliet, other notable, early developments stemmed from collegial support from other influential university statesmen such as President Henry P. Tappan of the University of Michigan, President Richard H. Jesse of University of Missouri and Stanford, and Alexis Lange, Dean of the School of Education at the University of California (Eells, 1931, p. 45, Brint, 1989, p. 24). As early as 1852, 49 years before the first junior college opened in 1901, President Tappan recommended secondary schools should offer the first two years of college (Eells, 1931, p. 45). Forty-four years later in 1896 President Jesse stated:

The first two years in college are really secondary in character. I always think of the high school and academy as covering the lower secondary period, and the freshman and sophomore years at college as covering the upper secondary period. In the secondary period, and at least the freshman and sophomore years of the college, not only are the students identical, but the character of the teaching is the same (Monroe, 1972, p. 8).

Dean Lange continued to perpetuate this concept of the junior college 19 years later in 1915 when he reiterated:

The work of the first two years, as a matter of history and fact, is all of a piece with secondary education and should, therefore, be relegated as soon and as far as practicable to the secondary school...The upward extension of the high school in the educational interests of the great mass of high school graduates who cannot, will not, should not, become university students. (Lange, 1915, p. 119).

Their endorsements were largely based on the thought the junior college should be utilized as an extension of high school for students thought to be inadequately prepared to enter the university.

In 1918, a national organization called the National Education Association (NEA) appointed a commission which eventually developed the “Carnegie unit” which created “formulas for credit transfer” (Kintzer, 1996, p. 5). This development created a unit of time needed by high school students and recognized by the junior college for acceptance. After the somewhat acceptance of the NEA’s unit, the Carnegie Foundation used it as an eligibility requirement for universities interested in their pension program being offered since there were none at the time. The pension program allowed faculty members to relinquish their teaching duties and focus on research which freed up funding for new professors. More important than anything else, the Carnegie Unit brought forth some uniformity that was eventually accepted by high schools, colleges and universities simultaneously. Regarding articulation and transfer agreements, the Carnegie Unit development was a major factor.

Table 3
Growth of Community Colleges

Community Colleges in	1901	1919	1940	1950	1960	1970
U.S.	1	39	217	256	345	654
California	0	21	47	66	62	94
Illinois	1	3	12	14	20	47
Indiana	0	0	1	1	1	1
New York	0	0	0	1	16	45
Washington	0	1	8	9	10	27

Notes:

- a. Academic-year enrollments are for year ending May of year listed. October enrollments are for year listed (except 1960, when they are for October 1959). The figures for number of community colleges exclude two-year university branches and entirely vocational postsecondary schools (going by such names as vocational-technical institutes, technical institutes, and technical colleges). They are restricted to public two-year colleges that offer academic programs (with or without vocational education) and are autonomous of the universities. For the individual state I use data compiled by the American Association of Community colleges (under its earlier name, American Association of Junior Colleges) because they allow one to exclude two-year institutions that are not community colleges strictly speaking.
- b. Excludes the Indiana vocational-technical schools.
- c. Excludes the institutes for applied arts and sciences and the agricultural and technical colleges.

Sources:

1990: McDowell (1919: Appendix K)., 1919: McDowell (1919: 47)., 1940: American Association of Junior Colleges (1941); and U.S. Office of Education (1954: chap. 4, p. 7). The Washington figures above differ from those in the AAJC publications because in that year it listed the community colleges in Washington as private institutions. 1950: American Association of Junior Colleges (1950); and U.S. Office of Education (1954: chap. 4, p. 7). 1960: American Association of Junior Colleges (1961); U.S. Office of Education (1962: Pt. 3, 13; 1964:15); and U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (1987: 122). October figures are for October 1959. 1970: American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (1971); and U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (1971: 13). 1980: U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (1982: 84, 91); American Association of Community and Junior Colleges (1982: 62). 1991: U.S. National Center for Education Statistics (1992a: 170); American Association of Community Colleges (1992: 58).

Around 1917-1918, another notable event occurred when a junior college presidential survey indicated the majority of junior college presidents believed the public

demand for more educational access was the primary reason their colleges opened (McDowell 1919). By 1919, 11 states had 39 community colleges (McDowell, 1919: Appendix K). It was apparent that a chance for a college education was much desired and therefore it should be “brought within the reach of all” (McDowell, 1919, p. 24). In 1920, at an American Association of Junior College (AAJC) meeting, Dean MacKenzie of Detroit Junior College stated:

I think it is a great mistake to limit the scope of the junior college...If democracy is to be preserved by education it will be by bringing education down to the masses. There are many intelligent people in large communities who are capable of profiting by college work but who are in no way fitted for college according to the typical entrance examinations. The junior college ought to offer a large number of courses that will appeal to such persons.....This, I believe is going to be the saving grace of democracy (Eells, 1931, p. 236).

Coincidentally, it was during the same AAJC meeting in 1920 the American Association for Junior Colleges (AAJC) was created. The purpose of this meeting, which included 34 educators from 22 junior colleges in 13 states, was to discuss common interests and problems (Brick, 1964, p. 32). Secretary Doak Campbell described the AAJC agenda by stating:

The activities of the Association have been rather varied and interesting. At first, I think we should characterize them as defensive. We came together, a small group, seemingly for the purpose of defending this child which appeared to be greatly in need of defense just at that time....There was courage even to overlook traditions at times and efforts to find frontiers where logical development of the junior college might be wrought out. I somehow believe that the Association is somewhere on the outskirts of this latter phase today (Eells, 1931, p. 78).

The formation of the AAJC was an important step because for the first time in the short history of the junior college it had a recognized team of national voices, fueled by

support and exposure, which was dedicated to transforming the goal of the junior college from a terminal education to a comprehensive instruction of scholarship.

Eleven years later in 1931, Walter Crosby Eells authored the influential book titled *The Junior College* that included a synopsis of the historical perspective of the junior college goals. Eells began by presenting one of the modern day goals of the junior college which was the “preparation of students for upper-division work in the universities (Eells, 1931, p. 5). This goal was much different than the “terminal education” goal proposed by William Rainey Harper in 1901. However, Eells did not totally dismiss Harper’s idea when he stated another purpose of the junior college was to also “provide collegiate opportunity for the mass of high school graduates who can’t, won’t, or shouldn’t become university students” (Eells, 1931, p. 192). Eells book illustrates the junior college transition from a terminal institution to one that now offers to prepare students for the next level—the university. Eells seminal book was another important milestone toward the articulation and transfer agreements as we know them today.

Another important event was the 1947 Truman commission study titled “Higher Education for American Democracy” which addressed the community college and its expansion (Kintzer, 1996 p. 5). One notable proposal was the elimination of the *junior college* name in favor of the *community college* name. AAJC executive secretary Jesse Bogue agreed with proposal and stated “practical experience and wide contacts with the movement” suggested *community college* more nearly approximated trends of thinking as well as observable usage of the name itself” (Bogue, 1950, p. xviii). The Truman Commission expressed the same spirit by asserting:

The Commission does not subscribe to the belief that higher education should be confined to an intellectual elite, much less a small elite drawn

largely from families in the higher income brackets. Nor does it believe that a broadening of opportunity means a dilution of standards either of admission or scholarly attainment in college works. (U. S. President's Commission 1948, vol. 3, p. 6)

Additionally, the Truman commission recommended tuition free education to the community college the same way it was offered through the 12th grade and that it be acknowledged and greatly expanded. The language of this particular recommendation was encouraged by the return of thousands of World War II veterans and their invasion on an unprepared higher education system. The Truman Commission recommendation furthered the eventual development of articulation and transfer agreements by suggesting the junior college offer associate degrees in addition to vocational degrees (Kintzer, 1996, p. 5). With regard to articulation and transfer agreements, it identified and designated a critical role for the two-year college relative to the future of higher education.

After the 1947 Truman Commission endorsement to utilize the two-year college, James Bryant Conant (president of Harvard University 1933-1953) agreed with the Truman Commission and called for the expansion of the two-year college in hopes of addressing two concerns: 1) to prevent the U.S. from overproducing graduates the U.S. could not employ; and 2) to protect the elite research universities, like his, from being over populated. Conant cautioned “against the perils lying in wait for a nation which trains a greater number of professional men than society can employ” (Conant, 1938, p. 565) as his first concern from historical events that occurred in Germany around 1920. As Harvard's president, his second concern was borne more of self-interest because he did not want the elite research university to be overwhelmed by massive numbers of students who believed they were prepared and ready for university work. At the same time,

Conant noted “an occasional transfer of a student from a two-year college to a university should not be barred (Conant, 1948, p. 200).”

Conant’s support was influential and imperative because he was the president of a major university who envisioned an essential role for the two-year institution. Sometime after Conant’s retirement in 1953, he suggested the growth of 4-year institutions slow down in order to push more students toward the junior college (Conant, 1956, p. 58). Although articulation and transfer agreements were minimally used during this time, their transformation from high school extension curricula had come a long way since 1902.

After the junior college was endorsed by the Truman Commission and recommended to serve a critical role by the leader of one of the top U.S. universities (Harvard), the impact of the junior college student transfer process was documented and validated in a study by the Fifty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, *The Public Junior College* (1956). Grace V. Bird’s contribution to this volume entitled “Preparation for Advanced Study” analyzes the junior college function regarding the student transfer process. One study noted by Bird was a University of Illinois study that found:

Junior college graduates are able to pursue advanced college courses in the junior and senior years at the University of Illinois with a degree of proficiency equal to and in some cases superior to that of students who have received their first two years of training in standard colleges and universities (Bird, 1956, p. 82).

Moreover, she follows up with two important points when she states:

1) “the junior college appears to be providing an avenue of admission and success in further studies to a kind of student who would otherwise miss them” and 2) “that junior college transfers make records approximately the same as those made by transfers from four-year colleges” (Bird, 1956, p. 84).

After numerous studies Bird comes to the conclusion:

the performance of junior-college transfers in senior colleges has proven to be so satisfactory that doubts about the quality of junior-college preparation for advanced study no longer exist (Bird, 1956, p. 85).

For first time in its history, the potential of the junior college was no longer being questioned. The effectiveness of the junior college student transfer process would become one of the most pertinent questions of the decade.

In 1958, the joint committee on junior and senior colleges under the leadership of James Wattenbarger established a set of transfer guidelines (Kintzer, 1973, p. 6). The composition of this committee, featuring members of the Association of American Colleges (AAC) and the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) was significant. Together, they provided enough influence and justification to convince the University of California, Berkeley Center for the study of Higher Education to examine the status of the junior college student transfer process. Their efforts culminated with two important technical reports by Knoell and Medsker regarding the transfer and articulation agreements between two and four-year institutions (Kintzer, 1973, p. 6). Wattenbarger (1972) sums up the Knoell and Medsker research findings regarding articulation and transfer agreements with an 11- point outline in his article titled “*Articulation with High Schools, Colleges and Universities.*” Bird (1956, p. 88) presented the essential question two years earlier when she asked:

What shall be meant, then, by “the kind and quality of education” that advances the transfer student properly toward the four-year college goals which are his ultimate aim? Shall it mean strict course-for-course parallels in the junior college and lower divisions of senior colleges? Not necessarily, although some four-year colleges require such parallelism in transfer courses. The

thing that does seem necessary is that the junior-college programs of study for transfer students shall be equivalent in educational value to the programs in the senior colleges in terms of the senior-college purposes.

Knoell and Medsker concluded most articulation and transfer agreements at the time did not address the junior college student transfer problems.

In the 1970's, the community college and its articulation agreement was of interest to many researchers attempting to verify its effectiveness. One of the first major series of studies was a "Nationwide Pilot study on Articulation" by Kintzer that focused on articulation and transfer policies (Kintzer, 1970, p. 10). The scope of this study encompassed all 50 states.

"The Open Door Colleges: Policies for Community Colleges" was another important report sponsored by the Carnegie Commission in 1970 (Brint, 1989, p. 104). This report reviewed the role of community colleges at the time in order to increase its vocational enrollment which would then in turn protect the universities from being overloaded. During this particular time, the Carnegie Commission report supported the community college role and stated "access to four-year institution should generally be selective (Carnegie Commission, 1970, p. 15) with community colleges providing an open door access."

Between 1970 and 1977 the number of students enrolled in occupational programs grew tremendously (Blackstone, 1978; Grubb, 1984, p. 431). The growth of occupational programs brought about a sense of concern about transfer programs among the community college leaders (Lombardi, 1979; Medsker & Tillery, 1971, p. 140). A sluggish demand for college graduates at the time was

the major reason for reduced disinterest in the articulation and transfer agreements in the late 70's.

As the 1980's began, over 40 percent of all undergraduates were enrolled in a community college and more than half of all students entering higher education did so via the community college and not the university (American Council on Education, 1982; U. S. Bureau of the Census 1987); economic restraints were mostly responsible for the latter. With more students attending community colleges universities predictably wanted more two-year transfer students. Kintzer provided another report in 1982 titled "Improving Articulation and Transfer Relation" with the intention of rekindling interest regarding articulation and transfer between national leaders.

In 1985, Kintzer and Wattenbarger identified a typology of four state patterns of articulation and transfer agreements via a report called "The Articulation/Transfer Phenomenon: Patterns and Directions (Kintzer and Wattenbarger, 1985)." In short, their report summarized state patterns discovered by way of a comprehensive analysis of the approach used by each state to oversee their articulation and transfer programs. The four noted patterns were as follows:

1. Formal and legally based guidelines and policies – Determined by legislative act or approved by a governing or coordinating agency within the state. Emphasis is on completion of Associate degree before transfer.
2. State system policies – Generally developed and implemented by a state agency or a senior institution. Concentrates more on transfer process and less on articulation services. There is stronger and more direct state control.

3. Voluntary agreements – Voluntary cooperation and negotiation rather than unilateral declaration or legislative statute is the primary feature of this style.
4. Special agreements on vocational and technical credit transfer – Arrangements made within a few states to accept designated vocational and technical course credit.

The following handful of works regarding articulation and transfer surfaced in the 1980's and gained notoriety in the early 1990's.

Ethnic Minorities Access to Higher Education

Minorities' access to higher education, or lack thereof, was a topic of discourse in the 1980's. The Urban Community College Transfer Opportunity Program (UCC/TOP), sponsored by the Ford Foundation, funded 24 colleges to design and implement activities to increase the number of minority students obtaining associate degrees and transferring to four-year institutions (Cohen, Brawer & Bensimon, 1985). Subsequently, to successfully continue their activities for a second year, the Foundation gave larger grants to five of these colleges. A community college report published by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges titled "*Transfer: Making It Work*" (Donovan et al., 1987) provided documented evidence of progress being made by certain colleges regarding improved minority access to higher education. Although government support was lagging, the Ford Foundation, which is a private funding source, provided much needed support.

Vocational-Technical Education

Originally, vocational technical education (vo-tech) credit hours could only be applied toward the baccalaureate degree. After declining enrollment and

budget growth in the two-and four-year colleges, program and schedule compromises were instituted that enrolled more high school graduates. In 1985, *“The Neglected Majority”* focused considerable attention on the 2+2 tech-prep/associate degree format (Parnell, 1985). Parnell further argued for support of vocational and technical education in *“Dateline 2000: The New Higher Education Agenda,”* and advocated concern for the educationally disadvantaged populace (Parnell, 1990).

In 1988, a Carolyn Prager contribution in *“Enhancing Articulation and Transfer”* chronicles the role of private foundations, schools and state legislatures in advancing educational expectations at community colleges (Prager, 1988). Her interest centered on the transfer choices for occupational-technical majors. At the time Prager sensed a hostile environment toward the vocational thrust of the community college which affected and confined extensive research.

Business and Industry, the Military, and Proprietary Schools

Four-year institution articulation and transfer were altered by privatization corporate contracts and even more so in the 1980's. As the relationship between 4-year institutions and private corporations matured with the confirmation of accrediting agencies, development of more formal procedures became essential. During this time the relationship between proprietary schools and community colleges was at an impasse. Overall, transfer agreements were invisible except in those rare cases where some effort was made by certain institutions. Although some states attempted to establish transfer procedures, students desiring to do so were seldom recognized.

Computer Information Systems

Higher education institutions did a poor job of establishing and thus assimilating universal student data. Despite these shortcomings, institutions did collect what might have been useful information; but, unfortunately due to the absence of a coordinated student tracking system, this information was difficult to extract. Moreover, educational reports were confusing and even misleading. Ambiguous student data made it difficult to understand institutional reports and consequently how to design a statewide transfer plan.

The 1990's began with an unusual spirit of hope when the American Association of Community and Junior College (AACJC) Board of Directors pronounced 1990 as the Year of the Transfer. Dorothy Knoell and Louis Bender provided separate publications that mirrored the AACJC's enthusiasm. Knoell's publication titled "*Transfer, Articulation, Collaboration: Twenty-Five Years Later*" reexamined the 1961-64 Knoell-Medsker study. It focused on state practices and institutional data as opposed to the previous study which looked at institutional practices and student data. The study also defined the difference between transfer and articulation for clarification purposes.

Louis Bender's publication titled "*Spotlight on the Transfer Function: National Study of State Policies and Practices*" focused on state-level policies. The first part of his study described an ideal model of state-level articulation information systems. The second part presented a group of cases in three states—New Jersey, Florida, and California where collaboration between community colleges and universities took place.

Another notable study was Eaton's (1994) "*Strengthening the Collegiate Education in Community Colleges.*" Her study discusses the speculative missions of the community college. Her basic premise is the community college standards and practices should mirror those of the university.

In summary, by the end of the 1990's the saga of the community college articulation and transfer experienced numerous meaningful transformations.

- Perhaps the most significant historical event occurred before the opening of the first community college in 1902 when the dialogue about the framework of the community college was first discussed by University of Michigan President Tappan, University of Missouri President Jesse and Alex Lange, Dean of the School of Education at the University of California (Eells, 1931, p. 45, Brint, 1989, p.24).
- NEA development of "formulas for credit transfer" in 1918.
- Public endorsement of the community college in 1918 junior college president survey.
- Formation of AAJC in 1920 which provided a national collection of voices, support and exposure.
- 1947 Truman Commission study and its recommendation to eliminate the *junior college* name in favor of the *community college* name.
- Endorsement of the community college role by Yale's President James Bryant Conant in 1948
- 1956 Fifty-fifth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education regarding the impact of the junior college student transfer process.
- 1958 joint partnership of the Association of American Colleges (AAC) and the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC) to establish a set of transfer guidelines.
- Frederick Kintzer's *Nationwide Pilot Study on Articulation* in 1970.
- 1970 Carnegie Commission report entitled "*The Open Door Colleges: Policies for Community Colleges*".
- National evolution of state agencies development and coordination of state transfer policies between higher education public institutions.
- 1985 report by Kintzer and Wattenbarger called "The Articulation/Transfer Phenomenon: Patterns and Directions.

Other noted changes and trends after the 1990's by Kintzer

regarding articulation and transfer are as follows (Kintzer, 1996, pp.11-12).

- Associate degree importance in the student transfer developmental process
- Evolution of high school and community college relationships via two-year programs
- Open access to minority groups
- More focus on the coordination of statewide transfer agreements
- Informal transfer agreements with private industry are being created faster than formal transfer agreements between higher education institutions.
- Relatively no relationship exists among private schools and community colleges

Although there are countless other events regarding articulation and transfer not mentioned the aforementioned highlights provide an adequate chronological history of the community college articulation and transfer. The early rapid growth of community college and their evolution to the little growth /maturation stage can be directly linked to the fiscal conditions and capacity of their local governments (Dougherty, 1994, p. 119).

Comprehension of the evolution of the community college must be looked at vertically and horizontally according to Dougherty. Vertically refers to the policy development at the local, state and federal government levels. Horizontally refers to a broad cross sectional study of each state's experience regarding the growth of the community college. According to Dougherty, this

approach explains why the growth of the community college varied state to state.

Government Role in the Evolution of Community Colleges

Advocates and critics both agree the government played a significant role in the growth of the community colleges, but for different reasons (Dougherty, 1994, p. 119). A key role the government played during the late 1950's and early 1960's was the passage of four important legislative acts which resulted in community colleges serving an essential role for their constituency. The first legislative act was the 1963 Higher Education Facilities Act which "provided aid for the construction of academic facilities" (Dougherty, 1994, p. 175). Almost 22% of Title I (created to give grants for undergraduate facilities) funding was designated for community colleges (Congressional Quarterly, 1963: pp. 194-195). The second important legislative act implemented in 1963 also was the Vocational Education Act which set aside one-third of Section 4 funds for both local vocational school/community college construction and an educational prescribed course of action for high school graduates (Congressional Quarterly, 1963: 201-203). The third significant legislative act happened two years later in 1965 when Title III of Higher Education Act commissioned grants to fortify established schools by holding back 22% of the monies reserved for two-year colleges (Congressional Quarterly, 1965: 294-297). The last, and perhaps the most important legislative act, was the reauthorization of all three previous legislative acts with additional funding and support (Dougherty, 1994, 175).

As indicated earlier, advocates and critics alike offered different explanations for why the government eventually began providing support to community colleges. Advocates believed government involvement was a response to increased demands for

more education spurred by students and parents action (Cohen & Brawer, 1989, p. 5; Medsker, 1960, p. 18). Charles Monroe, a former leader of one of Chicago's community colleges stated:

The community college rose with the burgeoning number of high school graduates clamoring for a college education, the growing demands of business and industry for technically trained employees, the existence of local communities which had both sufficient taxable wealth and population willing to support a community college, and most important a body of parents and citizens who aspired to have their children enjoy the fulfillment of a dream for a college education... (Monroe, 1972, p. 13)

Moreover, advocates believed due to the demands of students and parents for a college education, universities, acting in their self-interest, endorsed community colleges because they also feared being overwhelmed by students who would ruin their preferred German model of research and graduate training (Bogue, 1950, p. 81; Cohen & Brawer, 1989, pp. 5-8, 14; Eells, 1931, pp. 45-52; Medsker, 1960, pp. 10-11; Monroe, 1972, pp. 7-12, 37-40). For example, University of Michigan president Henry Tappan endorsed the junior college (community college) in his inaugural speech in 1952 (Eells, 1931). While William Mitchell, a University of Georgia trustee, and William W. Folwell, President of University of Minnesota, endorsed the junior college (community college) in 1859 and 1869 respectively (Cohen & Brawer, 1989). It is interesting to note these suggestions were made before the first community college opened in 1901.

The advocates also believed demands of students and parents for a college education encouraged government officials to become more involved with supporting community colleges due to the desire of other local constituents such as educators, superintendents and board members who also wanted to expand the

opportunity for a college education (Bogue, 1950, pp. 88, 92-93; Eells, 1931, pp. 56-57, 91-93, 96-98, 106-107; Fretwell, 1954, pp. 73, 90-92, 113-124; Fields, 1962, pp. 26-29, 63; Gleazer, 1968, p. 15; Medsker, 1960, pp. 237, 252, 256, 262, 269, 282; Medsker & Tillery, 1971, pp. 15, 20; Monroe, 1972, pp. 10-15, 353, 357). William Rainey Harper (educator), J. Stanley Brown (Superintendent) and William Mitchell (Trustee/Board Member) are all notable examples of the advocates. Collectively taken into account, the advocates' agenda could easily be portrayed as a pluralist theory of politics whereby several interest groups with a common goal, push their interests through elected officials known as the government. The pluralists do not believe one particular group dominates the agenda; rather it is collective effort of different interest groups with various levels of power (Dahl, 1961).

Critics, on the other hand, while acknowledging community colleges do provide an opportunity for a college education, also believed community colleges expanded because of the capitalist/business posture would provide another avenue for occupational education while protecting and enhancing the selectivity process of the university (Bowles & Gintis, 1976, p. 208; Karabel, 1972, p. 552; Nasaw, 1979, pp. 215-225, 233; Zwerling, 1976, pp. 63-73). The critics believed this support by the capitalist/business community, toward the government schools was predicated on their self-interested intent to maintain the social economic status (SES) of the rich as opposed to improving the SES of everyone. Jerome Karabel, another critic of community college, stated:

The system of higher education, forced to respond to pressure for access arising from mobility aspirations endemic in an affluent

society...has let people in and has then proceeded to track them into community colleges and, more particularly, into occupational programs... This push toward vocational training in the community college has been sponsored by a national educational planning elite whose social composition, outlook, and policy proposals are reflective of the interests of the more privileged strata of our society. (Karabel, 1972, p. 552).

At the same time, other critics credit the internal workings of higher education elites as the catalyst for the expansion of community colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989, pp. 15-17, 214-220; Labaree, 1990, pp. 223-227). These critics view higher education as an organizational terrain composed of universities and community colleges dominated by universities. Universities are in control, they want only the best students. Consequently, they prefer to utilize and support the expansion of community colleges as a legitimate process to discourage lower class students from advancing to a higher social class or institution of higher learning (Brint & Karabel, 1989, pp. 26-27, 35, 208; Labaree, 1990, pp. 223-224).

The pattern of expansion in American higher education has always been to create a new form of college to deal with each new wave of college enrollments...The colleges from the first two waves [the private colleges and universities and the elite state universities] used their superior influence to protect themselves from the growing number of students pursuing post-secondary education by introducing new institutions at each spurt in enrollments... The exchange value of a college's credentials is a function of their relative scarcity in the credentials market...Creating new forms of higher education instead of expanding old ones was a way to meet the political demand for access while protecting the market position of existing colleges (Labaree, 1990, pp. 223-224).

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) was another organization/business, according to critics, that marketed the

community college as a vocational institution and in turn protected universities from the masses of lower class students. This concept was not only receptive to the university, but to state and federal legislators who needed votes and assisted with the development of the community college (Brint & Karabel, 1989, pp. 34-46, 54-66, 77-78, 96-100, 107-108, 124-126, 208-210). As a result of this position, the AACC became an asset for the universities and community colleges during the same period of time.

Understanding the perspectives of why and how the advocates and critics utilized the local, state and federal government to expand community colleges Dougherty (1994, p. 28) believes the government's self-interest in community colleges is predicated on their *relative autonomy of state perspective*. In short, the government or elected officials ideas are parallel with the advocates and critics interests in advancing their own state interest or self interest in community colleges. According to Dougherty the government or elected officials who are successful have identified themselves with two forms of constraint "resource dependence" and "ideology" (Dougherty, 1994, p. 28).

Resource dependence constraint simply means in order for the government to be successful in advancing its agenda it must align itself or depend upon a special group of people/voters with the necessary resources to make their goal a success (Dougherty, 1994, p. 28). For example, the local, state and federal governments in the 1960's united to create more community colleges by appealing to the demands of students, parents and businesses for a college

education. After government officials got the needed support from their constituents, the Higher Education Facilities Act was passed in 1963 (Dougherty, 1994, p. 175).

Conversely, *ideology constraint* is when the government expresses an opinion on a particular matter that aligns with the view of an interest group (Dougherty, 1994, p. 28). For example, if Bill Gates moved his Microsoft business to a new community he would exert a strong and influential impact upon policy makers. The important thing to remember is “constraint begins with the initiative of the government officials and leaves them with more autonomy (Dougherty, 1994, p. 28).” Simply put, governments can push forward their agenda easier when it lines up with the interests of a particular group that in turn is supported by a majority of society.

OSU-Tulsa and TCC Missions

Different philosophies of two and four-year institutions like OSU-Tulsa and TCC are embedded in their mission statements. OSU-Tulsa has particular requirements for acceptance while TCC has generally accepted any one with a high school diploma. The reason for the different missions is partly due to the fact OSU, OSU-Tulsa was constitutionally created, while TCC was statutorily created.

OSU-Tulsa Mission Statement

In a metropolitan setting, Oklahoma State University-Tulsa advances knowledge, enriches lives, and enhances economic development through innovative instruction, research and creative activities, and outreach (Oklahoma State University, 2005A).

Vision Statement

Oklahoma State University-Tulsa will be prized as the crown jewel of the city of Tulsa. By 2020, the 250-acre, 25-building campus will have 20,000 students enrolled in 100 undergraduate and graduate degree programs and:

- Be recognized for outstanding teaching, research and scholarship in select areas;
- Distinguish itself as a center of research and discovery where academic and a work-friendly environment inspire outstanding accomplishments;
- Be a model for strong partnerships between higher education, industry, and government organizations that stimulates social and economic development through intellectual discoveries and entrepreneurial activities;
- Play a vital role in the development of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus and will actively participate in activities that benefit the community as a whole; and
- Reach beyond campus boundaries and use cutting-edge technology to deliver courses, degree programs and learning resources directly to students.

Tulsa Community College Mission Statement

The mission statement as defined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is to (Appendix E):

- Provide general education for all students
- Provide education in several basic fields of university-parallel study for those students who plan to transfer to a senior institution and complete a bachelor's degree
- Provide one- and two-year programs of technical and occupational education to prepare individuals to enter the labor market

- Provide programs of remedial and developmental education for those whose previous education may not have prepared them for college
- Provide both formal and informal programs of study especially designed for adults and out-of-school youths in order to serve the community generally with a continuing education opportunity
- Carry out programs of institutional research designed to improve the institution's efficiency and effectiveness of operation
- Participate in programs of economic development with comprehensive or regional universities toward the end that the needs of each institution's geographic service area are met

According to an institutional memo issued by TCC former President Dean VanTrease the college is committed to excellence in instruction, student services, and programs relevant to the needs and interests of the greater Tulsa area (Appendix F). TCC offers educational opportunities leading to the Associate degrees, certificates of achievement, and/or self-improvement in a supportive learning environment conducive to the development of the student's potential.

Student Characteristics of OSU-Tulsa and TCC Students

According to the statistics from the August 2004 Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac Issue for 2004-05, almost fifty percent of all U. S. undergraduates attend two-year colleges. Table 1 (on p. 4) reflects a comparison profile of two-and four-year students that illustrates the differences between the two institutions a national scale. The following Table 4 represents those characteristics of OSU-Tulsa and TCC students:

Table 4
 Oklahoma State University at Tulsa and Tulsa Community College Student Profile

	Oklahoma State University at Tulsa	Tulsa Community College
Average Age	28	30
*% Full-time Students	40	43
*% Part-time Students	60	57
% Degree seeking	82	79
% of Women	47	63
% of Native American; African-American; Hispanic; Asian	24	23

*Based on Fall semesters 2004 Student Enrollment data

History of TCC and OSU-Tulsa

OSU-Tulsa

Oklahoma State University-Tulsa, which occupies the former University Center at Tulsa campus, became OSU-Tulsa on Jan. 1, 1999 as a branch of Oklahoma State University (OSU). The OSU-Tulsa campus has an annual operating budget of 24 million dollars (Oklahoma State University, 2005A). During this short time, the campus has worked to become an integral part of the Tulsa community and the development of the state of Oklahoma. During its first year, OSU-Tulsa began to experience a growth phase. Student headcount grew from 1,187 in the spring 1999 semester to 1,392 in the spring 2000 semester. During the same period, credit-hour production rose from 5,359 to 7,232 credit hours. OSU-Tulsa enrollment is now over 2700 students and has expanded to more than 85 undergraduate and graduate degree choices from education and business to engineering and public relations. The campus has anticipated enrollment growth to 10,000 students over the next decade.

The Tulsa campus has embraced the University's "one university, multiple sites" philosophy. OSU-Tulsa maximizes University resources by promoting a partnership where learning and research flourish through sharing faculty and resources with the main

campus in Stillwater. OSU-Tulsa further leverages its efforts by building relationships with Tulsa-area businesses, such as Williams, WorldCom, Southwestern Bell, and Xeta Technologies. The business community has welcomed OSU-Tulsa and its local connections to the research and resources available through the main campus.

Faculty

The excellence of OSU-Tulsa (Oklahoma State University, 2005A) instruction and research activities is a result of a talented faculty. Fueled by the growth in the number of OSU students and the demand for more OSU degrees, OSU-Tulsa has 55 full-time resident faculty, 150 commuting faculty from the OSU Stillwater campus and over 125 full-time staff. Additional faculty will be added over the next few semesters to accommodate expansion of academic programs at OSU-Tulsa. Tulsa-based faculty are appointed and tenured through their academic department in Stillwater, and research initiatives are closely coordinated between the campuses. This intellectual collaboration creates an interwoven academic family that leverages the strengths of the Stillwater and Tulsa campuses.

Faculty members at OSU-Tulsa excel in many academic disciplines. Some areas of emphasis for Tulsa research include: aviation sciences, civil engineering, computer engineering, computer science, curriculum and instruction, early childhood, e-commerce, education, engineering and technology management, environmental management, information technology, mass communications, occupational and adult education, telecommunications, mass transportation in the Tulsa area, and watershed and drinking water problems in northeastern Oklahoma.

Consumers Digest magazine named OSU (Oklahoma State University, 2005B) as one of America's top 20 values in public higher education. The magazine reviewed 3,500

colleges and universities to rank 75 schools as the top values in the United States. The rankings, published in the June 2004 issue, are based on several attributes that validate or define the institution's academic prowess balanced against the annual cost of tuition and room and board. "This latest honor for OSU recognizes that our faculty, students and staff are distinguishing themselves nationally and internationally and doing a tremendous job by wisely using the resources that are available to them," OSU System CEO and President David J. Schmidly said. "We have had a very productive year, with numerous academic, as well as athletic achievements. The entire state can be proud of what OSU has accomplished." Among 50 public institutions cited, OSU ranked No. 1, followed by the University of Georgia, the University of Michigan-Dearborn, Louisiana State University and the University of Hawaii-Manoa. Among 25 private institutions, Brigham Young-Hawaii took top honors.

TCC

Tulsa Community College (Tulsa Community College, 2004) has served Tulsa and the surrounding community since 1970. The largest two-year college in Oklahoma, TCC serves approximately 30,000 students per semester in credit and continuing education classes. In Tulsa, TCC is the only public higher education institution that can offer freshmen and sophomore level course programs. TCC operates four campuses and a conference center situated strategically throughout the Tulsa metropolitan area with an annual budget of approximately \$84 million. The College employs 2,291 people, including 278 full-time faculty and 678 adjunct faculty. For the sixth consecutive year, TCC is ranked in the top three percent of more than 1,150 community colleges nationally

in the number of associate degrees awarded in all disciplines. Furthermore, relative to its graduates, TCC was ranked fourth in Native Americans, seventh in business administration, 21st in education majors, 27th in communications and 46th in nursing (TCC Office of Institutional Research).

Since its inception, TCC has established a tradition of offering students a personal approach to higher education, an education designed to be practical and useful. Of the first-time freshmen enrolling in a public college or university within the Oklahoma State System for Higher Education in recent years, sixty-five percent (65%) of the Tulsa County students begin their college education at Tulsa Community College (TCC Office of Institutional Research). Oklahoma State University receives more than half of TCC transfers according to TCC office of institutional research.

Finally, the Oklahoma State Regents of Higher Education (OSRHE), in coordination with participating Tulsa-area public schools of higher education requested a study of the Tulsa (KDB Research/The Bailey Poll, 2004) –area to determine how higher education programs delivered by such schools as TCC and OSU-Tulsa can best meet the needs of 1) current college students; 2) high school seniors; and 3) potential adult students in the Tulsa area. Kenneth D. Bailey Research/The Bailey Poll (hereafter known as KDB) was retained to conduct the study during the fiscal year 2003-04. Some results from KDB Research/The Bailey Poll *Executive Summary and Overview of Findings* dated June 25, 2004 were that a) TCC students selected OSU as the school they would more than likely attend or transfer to; b) health professions and business-related courses were the most popular; c) higher education needs are being met and d) a majority of those

students polled stated they have not had problems transferring credits from one institution to another.

Related Studies

National Studies

An 18-month study titled “Improving Access to the Baccalaureate” was concluded by American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) & American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) in September 2004. This study involved 25 AACC and AASCU institutional representatives who focused on trying to find institutional solutions to the challenges related to successful transfer of community college students to four-year colleges. The two and four-year institutions both ranked reliable information/advising and articulation as the top two obstacles for successful transfer. More importantly, the study found among other barriers, lack of understanding and open communication, between educational institutions were major obstructions toward obtaining the baccalaureate degree.

State Studies

In 2000, a study titled “Evaluating State-Level Articulation Agreements According to Good Practice” was concluded which focused on the strength of each state’s articulation agreement (Ignash & Townsend, 2000). A total of 43 states out of 50 participated in the study. Four key measures were studied to evaluate each state’s articulation agreement:

- Transfer Directions – kinds of transfers among colleges and universities covered by the state articulation agreement
- Sectors – types of institutions included in each state’s articulation agreement
- Transfer Components –degree related aspects affecting ease of transfer
- Faculty Involvement- the extent to which faculty at community colleges and four-year institutions are actually responsible for crafting and maintaining the statewide articulation agreements.

The study concluded states are incorporating some good practices regarding student transfer, but policy makers needed to improve existing articulation agreements based upon actual student transfer behavior. This study confirmed the fact OSRHE articulation agreements warranted closer inspection.

Three Noted Studies

Local Studies

- 1) In the fall of 2004 a focus group study concerning student services was conducted by TCC’s student satisfaction committee. A total of 46 students selected from one general education requirement class on each campus was the sample population identified. The TCC focus group study found advisement/counseling at TCC needed improvement and suffered from poor communication.
- 2) A follow-up survey conducted by the student satisfaction committee utilizing the Noel-Levitz student satisfaction inventory also found TCC’s advisement/counseling needed improvement. A total 1520 students taking

credit courses completed surveys. This time, students were asked individually to rate student services and again students noted a lack of consistency with regard to TCC counselors/advisors.

- 3) In the fall of 2005, an exit student poll was conducted by the TCC Office of External Communications regarding TCC student services. A total of 413 students were polled. The study indicated TCC advisement from campus to campus was inconsistent.

The results of the above mentioned national and local studies seem to justify a need for further examination regarding the communication process, or the lack thereof, during the student transfer process. The national study triggered concern about the student transfer process while the TCC studies confirmed it.

Lastly, OSRHE is responsible for establishing and enforcing statewide policy with regard to the student transfer process. The OSRHE minimum standard (Appendix B) for those Oklahoma college students wishing to transfer is somewhat clear. Please note the comment at the end of outline seems to suggest more institutional autonomy for Oklahoma State University and Oklahoma University. The entire outline (Appendix B) is provided for further review.

In closing Richard Millard, drawing on his extensive experience as a college educator, administrator, and state higher education executive officer, states that given student mobility and the range of postsecondary opportunities available, transfer of credits should be based not on formal institutional peer group equivalence but on substantive knowledge and competency attained and should be assessed in the light of student and ... institutional objectives in the program into which the student is

transferring” (Millard, 1991, p. 65). Taking a stand against popular criticisms of today's colleges and universities, Millard rejects the view higher education is currently failing to respond to new challenges and that it should revert to its past as a model for the future. Instead, he writes, "the evolution of higher education should be accelerated to meet the conditions of a changed and changing world."

Summary

The articulation and transfer agreement is essentially a mutual agreement regarding programs and courses. These agreements originally were implemented to find a place for the student not wanted at the university. Universities cautioned against having too many students because they feared they were going to produce too many graduates.

Overtime universities developed and maintained their own institutional autonomy. Land grant institutions, like OSU, were developed and given a purpose to serve the citizens in their respective vicinities. The junior/community college on the other hand, had a difficult time finding their niche until James Bryant Conant, president of Harvard University 1933-1953 opened the door to a vital role. Later as the federal government discovered that the junior/community colleges were the way to extend higher education opportunities to the masses, then the junior/community colleges their role in this educational process was solidified.

The role of TCC and OSU-Tulsa parallels the first articulation agreement between University of Chicago and Joliet high school 1901. TCC, like Joliet high school, acts as a primary feeder of students to OSU-Tulsa. Although the missions of both schools are different, they are nonetheless complimentary of one another.

The OSRHE is charged with overseeing both institutions. Despite this fact OSU-Tulsa, as a university, maintains its own unique autonomy as one of two comprehensive universities in Oklahoma. TCC, on the other hand, as a community college is viewed as a subordinate to OSU-Tulsa. Data confirms that universities such as OSU-Tulsa wish to maintain their own autonomy without regard for most transfer students. Therefore community colleges must still fight for their transfer students to be respected and recognized.

Chapter III

Methodology

Overview

This case study attempts to examine the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa in conjunction with the state articulation agreement in order to determine its effect on potential TCC transfer students. According to Schramm (1971) the essence of a case study, the central tendency among all types of case study, is it tries to illuminate a decision or a set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented and with what result. In this chapter, the methodological plan for this case study will highlight what data were collected utilizing quantitative and qualitative approaches, from whom and how.

A case study aims to understand the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context (Punch, 1998). The case study then is not a specific technique; it is a way of organizing social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied (Goode & Hatt, 1952, p. 331). Miles and Huberman (1994) thus define a case as a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context. It may be an individual, or a role, or a small group or an organization.

Specifically, case studies may be considered a research strategy in which a contemporary phenomenon is to be examined within its real-life context (Yin, Bateman & Moore, 1983)

This case study utilized quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative method used a single-stage sampling procedure to help identify a representative sample from the population (Creswell, 1994, p.119). The validity and reliability of the quantitative data acquired from the OSU-Tulsa Office of Institutional Research and Information Management was confirmed after interviewing the students listed on the quantitative data provided by the aforementioned office.

Focusing on the same phenomenon, the qualitative method employed the holistic approach as a means to understand how the selected sample population experienced, or perceived, the phenomenon being studied. The holistic approach to research design gathers data on any number of aspects of the setting under study in order to assemble a complete picture of the social dynamic of the particular situation or program (Patton, 1982, p. 9). An analysis of case study methods found those case studies using multiple sources of evidence were rated more highly, in terms of their overall quality, than those that relied only on single sources of information (Yin, Bateman & Moore, 1983). The case study is bounded by time and activity and uses detail information from a data collection procedure (Stake, 1995).

Research Methodology

Site Selection

The site of this case study, Tulsa, Oklahoma, has an estimated population of 760,000 people (both TCC and OSU-Tulsa are situated in Tulsa). TCC is a multi-campus

community college that has four strategically located campuses with approximately 27,000 students. Approximately 79%, or 17,893, of those students are degree seeking. Tulsa Junior College (TJC) became Tulsa Community College (TCC) in May, 1996 by virtue of the Oklahoma legislature. TCC has served Tulsa and the surrounding communities since 1970, with a proud tradition - a tradition of offering students a personal approach to higher education. This tradition is still as practical and useful today as it was in the 70's. The college's day, evening, and weekend schedules, combined with low tuition and fees help make it accessible and affordable for nearly all students.

As previously noted, TCC has four campuses in operation. The Metro Campus, (the original campus), is located in the heart of downtown Tulsa and serves approximately 7,466 students. The Northeast Campus, (which opened in Spring 1979) is located at Apache and North Harvard, and serves over 5,043 students. The Southeast Campus, (which opened in Fall 1984) is located at 81st and South Mingo and serves approximately 7,257 students. The West Campus, (which opened in Fall 1996) is located at 7505 West 41st Street, and serves approximately 2,601 students in communities located west of the Arkansas river.

TCC opened its doors in September 1970 with an initial enrollment of 2,800 students. It has provided quality educational services to more than 300,000 persons in the Tulsa area since it opening 35 years ago. In terms of enrollment Tulsa Community College is the third largest institution of higher learning in Oklahoma, after Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma.

OSU-Tulsa, formerly the University Center at Tulsa, opened in 1999 and has approximately 2,700 students. Approximately 82% of OSU-Tulsa students are degree

seeking. The average age of OSU-Tulsa students is 28 years old. OSU-Tulsa has a goal of having an enrollment 10,000 during the next decade.

TCC awards three degrees: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science. A certificate, which is counted in OSRHE statistics as a degree, is awarded to those students who desire formal certification of their completion of a program of study that may require 9-30 credit hours, not the 60 hours required by the associate degree programs. Among the three Associate degrees and certificate program the Associate of Science degree generally ranks second or third in the number of degrees awarded at TCC. For example, TCC had 447 Associate of Science graduates the past year, which ranked 2nd out of the four TCC degrees awarded. This study is limited to TCC Associate of Science majors. Currently, OSU-Tulsa has over 85 degree offerings. Overall, Business Administration is one of TCC's and OSU-Tulsa most popular degree programs based on information from both institution's Office of Institutional Research.

Permission for this study by the author was requested and granted by the OSU Institutional Review Board (Appendix G). Permission was also requested and granted by the TCC Institutional Review Board to the author to conduct this study (Appendix H). The Institutional Review Board application requested and contained the purpose and objective of the study, subject description, methodology used, consent process for interviewees and confidentiality statement. These steps were required to protect both institutions, the interviewees' rights and to gain access to institutional student data.

Demographic Characteristics of TCC Students

TCC student demographics are as follows. State tape enrollment data indicated TCC had 22,650 students for the spring 2005 semester. Gender data indicated 64 percent of TCC students were females, and 36 percent were males. Full-time students made up 59 percent of students, while 41 percent of students were part-time. Student race composition showed 74 percent of students were Caucasian, 9 percent African American, 2 percent Asian, 8 percent Native American, 3 percent Hispanic, 3 percent other and 1 percent not categorized. An age breakdown of TCC students indicated 37 percent were 21 years or less; 37 percent were 22-31 years old; 15 percent 32-41 years old; 8 percent were 42-51 years old; 3 percent were 52-61 years old and 1 percent over 61 years old. The average age of TCC students was 30 years old. University parallel students made up 72 percent of TCC students while 28 percent of students were workforce development majors.

Quantitative Method

Data Collection

The quantitative data collection approach utilized for this case study was a purposeful sampling in order to gain relevant information from the participants or volunteers involved in the student transfer process (Creswell, 2003, p. 164). Purposive sampling, which means to sample in a deliberate way with some purpose or focus in mind (Punch, 1998, p. 193), was the approach used to develop the institutional and student sample population. The quantitative data collection was the beginning of the basic

framework utilized for the qualitative data collection. The quantitative step involved securing a specific list of the participants' names, home/email addresses and phone numbers that permitted later analysis of the population being examined. In addition to using the data to select eight students as interviewees, the quantitative data was utilized to create a situational analysis regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer status. This step helped to understand the problem and the research question (Creswell, 2003, p. 185).

Students and advisors/coordinator from TCC and OSU-Tulsa were identified as key stakeholders in the student transfer process since they both must communicate in order for the student transfer process to work effectively. Regarding the student data collection process for this case study, a list of students was compiled from the OSU Institutional Research and Information Management Office student database that fell within a certain range of criteria that allowed the assemblage of a representative sample of the larger student transfer population (Seidman, 1991, p. 42). The ranges of criteria identified were:

- OSU-Tulsa students who attended TCC as Associate of Science majors (This includes those students who simultaneously attended classes in Tulsa and Stillwater).
- OSU-Tulsa students who graduated from TCC with an Associate of Science degree
- OSU-Tulsa students who graduated from TCC without an Associate of Science degree
- Total number of transfers for each incoming fall semester for the last 5 years

After extrapolating those students associated with each above noted criterion, a potential list of interviewees along with their home address, phone number and email address was developed for sampling.

Selection of Participants

Open-ended interviews with 15 principal participants in the student transfer process were conducted. Informants, or respondents, are often critical to the success of a case study according to Yin (1994). Consequently, Yin believes interviews are essential sources of case study information about human affairs (Yin, 1994, p. 85). Yet, interviews should always be considered as merely verbal reports, since they are subject to bias, poor recall, and poor or inaccurate articulation.

Seven advisors/coordinator and eight students were identified for interviews. Two advisors associated with the TCC/OSU Tulsa student transfer process were from OSU-Tulsa. Four interviewees were advisors from each of the four TCC campuses. The final interviewee was a coordinator the TCC administrative office. Eight interviewees were TCC students who transferred to OSU-Tulsa from each of the four TCC campuses. Four students earned an Associate of Science degree from TCC and four students did not earn an Associate of Science degree. TCC and OSU advisors/coordinator, officially recognized as the course transfer experts, described their challenges regarding the student transfer process. Student interviewees provided an account of their student transfer experience from their initial enrollment at TCC until the time they began at OSU-Tulsa. The students selected were randomly selected from their respective groups. My aim was to obtain an oral account of the advisors/coordinator and students experience in order to understand their unique perspectives. In order for an articulation agreement to be effective, the process needs to include students, college curricula...and services to the students (Missouri State Department of Higher Education, 1980).

Qualitative Method

Questionnaire

In theory and practice, the questionnaire (Appendix C & D), in essence, is a reminder regarding the information that needs to be collected and why (Yin, 1994, p. 69). It is viewed as an optional phase in qualitative research interviewing (Yin, 1994, p. 24). Yet, when conducting interviews, a questionnaire is a must. The main purpose of these questions is to keep the investigator on track as data collection proceeds. The second function of the questionnaire is the care and scheduling of the prompts necessary to manufacture distance. The development of proper timing can assist in getting better feedback. The third function of the questionnaire is it establishes channels for the direction and scope of discourse. The fourth function of the questionnaire is it allows the investigator to remain focused on what is being said while attending to the task at hand. In summary, the questionnaire provides a semi-structured format of collecting information without being too rigid.

The questionnaires for students, advisors/coordinator (Appendix C & D) served several roles. It first ensured the interviewer covered the same terrain in the same order in each of the interviews. It next established channels for the direction and scope of discourse, especially for interviews with open-ended questions. And finally, the questionnaire kept the interviewer focused on the issue or topic being pursued (McCracken, 1988, pp. 24-25). The questionnaire developed for this study was composed of open-ended questions regarding the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa.

Patton (1980, p. 28) stated the purpose of gathering responses to open-ended questions is to enable the researcher to understand and capture the points of view of other people without predetermining those points of view through prior selection of questionnaire categories. Since communication, or lack thereof, during the student transfer process between the advisor and student was of primary interest, the questionnaire initially addressed the interviewee's role in the student transfer process. After the basic opening questions were posed, all student interviewees were asked to describe their experience regarding the student transfer process in order to encapsulate the interviewee's experience "in their own terms" (Lofland, 1971, p. 7). The advisors/coordinator were asked similar questions as well. These steps afforded the opportunity to illicit categories of concern from each interviewee.

Sample

The sample population for this study consisted of TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator and former TCC students who did and not graduate with an associate degree before transfer to OSU-Tulsa. TCC and OSU-Tulsa house advisors on each other's campus. A total of seven advisors/coordinator representing both schools were selected for study. A total of eight former TCC students were chosen for study. In all, a total of fifteen interviewees made up the sample population.

Data Collection

The primary way a researcher should investigate an educational organization, institution, or process is through the experience of the individual people, the "others"

who make up the organization or carry out the process (Seidman, 1991, p. 4).

Interviewing students and advisors/coordinator, as a research method, is a tool used to put behavior in context while providing access to understanding an action (Seidman, 1991, p. 4). At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of their experience (Seidman, 1991, p. 3).

Interviews are a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and construction of reality (Punch, 1998, p. 174). One advantage of interviews is the historical information provided by a participant directly involved in the process. Conversely, a disadvantage is reliance upon the participant's perception and recollection of what occurred.

Interviews may involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants (Creswell, 2003, p. 188). Open-ended questions establish the territory to be explored while allowing the participant to take any direction he or she wants (Seidman, 1991, 62). Depending on the way questions are interpreted interviewees may serve as informants or respondents (Yin, 1994).

Face-to-face, open-ended interviews were the qualitative data collection component used for this case study. Interview questions (Appendix C & D) were developed to assess the student transfer program, policies and practices and to understand the TCC/OSU-Tulsa transfer process. Standard procedures for interviewing were utilized to gain as much insight as possible. Interviewees were allotted no less than one hour to share their thoughts.

Each interview began with a review of the informed consent form. This step reintroduced the case study, its purpose and the assured confidentiality of the interview. A signed copy of the informed consent form by the interviewer and interviewee was then given to each interviewee for their records. Next the interviewer requested and documented some personal characteristics information from each interviewee. After verifying the recording device was properly adjusted, the interview began with a prepared questionnaire (Appendix C & D). Verification questions began the interviews which were followed by open-ended questions. Interview questions were limited in order to evoke feedback of past student transfer experience from participants (Creswell, 2003, 188).

Findings from the advisor/coordinator and student interviews identified possible barriers associated with the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy. After analysis of the advisors/coordinator transcriptions a coding scheme was utilized to categorize advisors/coordinator concerns. The first phase of the coding scheme involved the identification of each advisors/coordinator concerns as a state or institutional responsibility. The second phase of the coding scheme attached a brief descriptor (Table 7) to each advisor's concerns. The process described not only the party—state or institutional – associated with the barrier but also possible themes.

Data Analysis

Each interview was recorded, transcribed and coded for further analysis. After analyzing initial transcriptions, some interviewee/s were called for a follow-up interview. For example, follow-up phone calls to some students were made to confirm if they were

advised by a TCC or OSU-Tulsa advisor or both. Follow-up phone calls to some advisors/coordinator were made to confirm or clarify written transcript.

The quantitative data (pp. 62-70) component combined with the qualitative analysis was utilized to provide a better understanding of the dynamics involved in the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.

OSRHE web site, www.okhighered.edu, was utilized to retrieve and view Oklahoma State Regents student data reports and policies. The OSRHE policy was utilized to verify conformity by TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Phone conversations with the OSRHE offices served to clarify any questions regarding OSRHE policies.

Summary

The methodology chosen for this case study was quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data collection from OSRHE, TCC and OSU-Tulsa coupled with interviews was how data was assembled. Respondents were transfer students, advisors/coordinator. The presentation of the data, summary, discussion and analysis, recommendations for reform, further research and commentary follow this chapter respectively.

Chapter IV

Presentation of the Data

Introduction

The purpose of this case study was to examine the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa in conjunction with the state articulation agreement in order to determine its effect on potential or actual TCC transfer students. The OSRHE “GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSFER OF STUDENT COURSEWORK (Appendix B)” was developed and implemented to provide a seamless transition to senior institutions for students in programs leading toward the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees at institutions in the OSRHE system. The primary questions of interest are as noted:

- 1) How has the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy affected the TCC Associate of Science majors?
- 2) From an institutional perspective, what can be done at TCC/OSU-Tulsa to improve the student transfer process?

Overview

This chapter begins with the quantitative and qualitative findings. The quantitative search began at the OSRHE state system research office and ultimately led to the Institutional Research offices at OSU and TCC. The qualitative data collection component was partly the result of the quantitative data collection component. A summary will conclude the chapter.

Quantitative Findings

Student transfer data at the state and institutional (OSU-Tulsa) level is not uniform and therefore difficult to interpret initially. The OSRHE uses student cohorts as its common denominator to compute student transfer data. The cohort period of time for two-year student's is three full academic years after their initial enrollment. Consequently, annual student transfer data is computed and developed accordingly. TCC students who had not transferred, with or without a degree, within their first three years are not recognized in the OSRHE student transfer data. Research data regarding the progress of two-year student's indicates that students stop and start irregularly (Rifkin, 2000).

More specifically, OSU does not exclusively partition out or report OSU-Tulsa student data information to the OSRHE. Subsequently, quantitative student transfer data from OSRHE regarding former TCC students who transferred to OSU-Tulsa is unreliable. OSRHE web site, www.okhighered.edu, was utilized to review additional student data reports and policies.

OSU, unlike the OSRHE, does retain extensive OSU-Tulsa student data information regarding former TCC students. Initially, a request was submitted to OSU for a list of former TCC students, with and without an associate of science degree, who were admitted and enrolled at OSU-Tulsa and/or Stillwater during the fall semesters from 2000 to 2004. Due to the heightened sensitivity of personal information procurement of contact data for the list of requested students, it took a much longer period of time than anticipated and necessitated an Institutional Review Board (IRB), or permission to conduct study, extension that was requested and approved. Despite the aforementioned student transfer data limitations of OSRHE, a list of TCC students who transferred to OSU-Tulsa, with and without an associate of science degree, was eventually procured with the assistance of OSU.

Phone calls to the students with and without an associate of science degree revealed the data was not accurate in some cases. For example, phone calls to some of the students on the lists revealed some students on the list never attended OSU and other students who were listed as having an associate of science degree possessed instead an associate of arts degree. More surprising was the fact that two students indicated they never attended TCC. Overall OSU-Tulsa student transfer data, like OSRHE student transfer data, was unreliable. An example of this difficulty is illustrated in Table 5. This table shows the results extracted from OSRHE and TCC databases regarding the number of TCC student transfers to OSU for the 2003-2004 academic year:

Table 5
2003-04 Number of TCC Transfers to OSU* as Calculated by OSRHE and TCC

Institution	Number of Transfers
OSRHE	188
TCC	5,145

*Represents TCC transfers to OSU and not just OSU-Tulsa.

Table 5 illustrates OSRHE records had only 188 TCC students transferring to OSU while data from TCC records had 5,145 TCC students transferring to OSU. The 5,145 transfer students from TCC represent TCC students transferring to all OSU campuses and not just to OSU-Tulsa campus. The focus of this case study is on OSU-Tulsa only. In closing quantitative data regarding TCC student transfers to OSU-Tulsa was found to be limited, disconnected and difficult to acquire.

Qualitative Findings

Seven advisors/coordinator and eight students were purposely selected for interviewing. Advisors from each of TCC's four campuses, a TCC coordinator, and two OSU-Tulsa advisors were selected for interviews. Eight current OSU-Tulsa students, four with a TCC associate of science degree and four associate of science majors without a TCC degree, were selected for interviews.

Advisors/Coordinator Interviewees Demographic Data

The five TCC advisors /coordinator located on each campus collectively have at least 60 years of experience. The two OSU advisors have 4 ½ years of experience combined. Except for one male advisor, all advisors/coordinator were female. All of the advisors were Caucasian.

Table 6
 Student Interviewees' Demographic Data

Students Interviewed Demographics	Percentage of Students Interviewed
Males	37.5
Females	62.5
Caucasians	62.5
African-Americans	25
Native Americans	12.5
Students under 21-years old	12.5
Students 22 to 31-years old	62.5
Students 32 to 41-years old	12.5
Students 42 to 51-years old	12.5

The group of students interviewed for this case study made-up the following characteristics. Average age of students interviewed was 27-years old. Although collectively interviewee demographics (Table 6) do not mirror TCC or national demographics, they are representative of TCC associate of science majors who transferred to OSU-Tulsa. A profile of each student interviewed is as follows: Four OSU-Tulsa student interviewees with TCC Associate of Science degrees

- a) First generation, physically impaired wheelchair bound, part-time OSU-Tulsa student who is a single, 27-years-old African-American male with a part-time job. High school education is the highest education level of parents. Mother's occupation is supervisor. Father died before he was 4-years-old. Attended TCC Metro Campus.

- b) First generation, part-time OSU-Tulsa student who is a single, 23-year-old African-American female with a part-time job. High school education is the highest education level of parents. Mother's occupation is customer service representative, and father's occupation is laborer. Attended TCC Northeast Campus.
- c) Full-time OSU-Tulsa student who is single, 21-year-old Caucasian female with part-time job. Mom and Dad have bachelor degrees. Mother's occupation is housewife, and father's occupation is financial planner. Attended TCC Southeast Campus.
- d) First generation, full-time/part-time (credit load and status vary per semester) OSU-Tulsa student who is married with 2 kids; 43-year-old Caucasian male with full-time job. High school education is the highest education level of parents. Mother's occupation is housewife, and father's occupation is business owner. Attended TCC West Campus.

Four OSU-Tulsa student interviewees without TCC Associate of Science degrees

- e) Full-time OSU-Tulsa student who is single, 26-year-old Caucasian male with part-time job. Mom has 2 bachelor degrees. Dad has a bachelor degree. Mother's occupation is medical technologist, and father occupation is manufacturing engineer. Attended TCC Northeast Campus.
- f) Full-time OSU-Tulsa student who is single, 22-year-old Caucasian female with part-time job. High school education is the highest education level of parents. Mother's occupation is housewife. Non biological father (since 4-yrs-old) is a business owner. Attended TCC Southeast Campus.

- g) Full-time OSU-Tulsa student who is single, 22-year-old Caucasian female with full-time job. Mom and Dad have bachelor degrees. Mother and father are both Registered Nurses'. Attended TCC Metro Campus.
- h) Full-time OSU-Tulsa student who is married with 2 kids, 35-year-old Native American female with no job. Mom has bachelor degree. Dad has 2 bachelor degrees. Mother is now a housewife after being an entrepreneur. Dad is an entrepreneur. Attended TCC west campus.

Self-reported student responses regarding part-time/full-time job and student statuses were utilized for this case study.

Table 7
 Descriptors That Emerged From Advisors/Coordinator Interviews

1) Confusing	2) Frustration	3) Disconnected
4) Misleading	5) Conflict	6) Leadership
7) Ambiguous	8) Inconsistent	9) Cooperation
10) Self-interest	11) Faculty Misperceptions	12) Miscommunication

Advisors’/Coordinator Interview Findings

Interviews with TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator produced three themes with various concerns that seem to affect certain activities associated with the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy. The three dominant themes that emerged from the interviews with the advisors’/coordinator was the “*lack of consistency, inadequate leadership and miscommunication.*” The three themes presented provide a synopsis of the advisors/coordinator views.

The first theme presented is lack of consistency. Lack of consistency centered upon four areas; 1) standardization process; 2) OSRHE guidelines; 3) Website Updates and; 4) TCC catalog. Lack of consistency regarding internal standardization processes at the institutional level was noted in several other areas by the advisors/coordinator. One advisor/coordinator stated:

“We need a standard process for articulation agreements to be updated and maintained.”

Another advisor/coordinator noted a lack of consistency regarding institutional advisors’ meetings as an area of concern:

“We were directed to meet initially but not to maintain meetings.”

Another advisor/coordinator acknowledged the irregular meetings and commented:

“TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator have not met in one and one-half years!”

OSRHE guidelines for the transfer of student coursework, presented earlier in this chapter, were another inconsistency identified by several advisors/coordinator. Lack of consistency regarding the application of general education courses was a concern that came up during interviews. A general education core of 37 hours is set by the OSRHE office. Those hours were designed to be a standard for all students their first two years. However one advisor/coordinator stated:

“You go over there with your associate’s degree and they look at the general education requirements and, yes, you’ve met them. But when you start to get into the specialized requirements, that’s where additional courses- that’s where you have to be careful and look at the two plus two plan because you may have taken them, but fulfilled your requirement at TCC and you graduated but that wasn’t necessarily the specialized course that OSU wanted so they may or may not accept it.”

Moreover, the lack of consistency regarding the application of general education courses at OSU was noted as well.

“OSU does not have a standard general ed component for all majors, as Northeastern State University (NSU) does. NSU has a pretty standard general education component for all their majors so that you know with the associate’s degree, you know what’s going to be waived.”

Lack of consistency regarding how general education core classes are applied to each OSU major makes each student transfer process a questionable procedure.

Inconsistent maintenance of the website was another concern expressed by the advisors/coordinator. One purpose of the website was to assist those students interested in transferring to OSU. One advisor/coordinator noted:

“The website info was not updated in a long time”

Later, she further commented that when the web site did get updated the:

“Web info contradicted info from OSU advisors.”

Another inconsistency highlighted during the advisor/coordinator interviews concerned the student catalog. One advisor/coordinator stated:

“Looking at our catalog can be confusing internally! Students should get advised but advisement is not mandatory and would be hard to implement.”

Another advisor/coordinator stated:

TCC catalog and schedules have continuously been late. It is just common knowledge that the catalogue is going to be late!

Another advisor/coordinator referring to the catalog specifically went on to say:

“Students can not follow associate degree requirements in the catalog!”

As a quasi-official contract between the state and the institution, the student catalogue is an important document that should be easily understood.

The second noted theme was lack of adequate leadership. If leadership is not following the rules then why is it in the self-interest of their subordinates to do so? Inadequate leadership concerns centered upon three areas; 1) institutional power; 2) student transfer process and; 3) articulation agreements. Institutional leadership is associated with OSU-Tulsa given the fact they are one of two comprehensive institutions in Oklahoma given the authority, by the OSRHE, to assume higher standards for admission by transfer (Appendix B). How OSU-Tulsa uses its leadership is viewed differently. One TCC advisor/coordinator, responding to rumors of in-fighting between the institutions, stated:

Faculty who go down to these matrix meetings say that OU and OSU kind of run those meetings and we are lucky if we can get anything done from our level so I kind of get the impression that those larger comprehensive universities kind of run rough shod over the rest of the colleges and they get essentially what they want and that they will throw us a bone from time to time and that's pretty much the way it works from what I hear.

“Who got the most money, who got the biggest enrollment; I think that's always going to play a factor unfortunately.”

Leadership is recognized as a major catalyst regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. It was the presentation of the 2002 TCC/OSU-Tulsa resolution by the leaders of TCC and OSU-Tulsa that confirmed the collective commitment to the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa. According to some advisors/coordinator the leadership zeal which spurred the resolution has faded a bit.

One advisor/coordinator stated:

“We need someone to push the collaboration”

A second advisor/coordinator referring to OSU put it this way:

“A relationship has been initiated but must be maintained.....When done some of the best plans have been understood and developed.”

Referring back to the issue of the TCC catalog being late continuously one advisor/coordinator commented:

“From my perspective there tends to be too many people involved and no one really willing to take the ownership for who is in charge of the process.”

Furthermore, interviews with advisors/coordinator found leadership was somewhat absent regarding articulation agreements. Articulation agreements are supposed to help the students. However, some advisors/coordinator questioned the leadership’s commitment to student-centered articulation agreements.

“Articulation agreements are supposed to protect the studentsbut it really does not. It helps the schools protect their programs.”

Doubt regarding whose interest was primary was voiced by one advisor/coordinator who shared the feelings of one student who thought he was finished taking classes at TCC:

“Yeah, I just spent 60 hours at that place. I should be done with you (TCC)!”

The third and perhaps the most commonly shared theme that emerged among the advisors/coordinator was miscommunication. Miscommunication concerns centered upon five areas; 1) internal communication; 2) articulation agreement; 3) course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content; 4) TCC/OSU-Tulsa advisors and; 5) faculty.

Each advisor/coordinator expressed similar concerns that exemplified miscommunication.

Miscommunication within TCC was associated with a variety of people involved in the student transfer process. One advisor/coordinator, who felt strongly about the miscommunication problem regarding the student transfer policy, stated:

“I think that internal communications should be a standard process.”

Miscommunication regarding the articulation agreement between TCC and OSU-Tulsa had the most concerns. One advisor/coordinator who believed it is best for her to be connected to the development of articulation agreements stated:

“Communication issues occur when advisors are not involved in meetings concerning articulation programs or when changes are made and not communicated in a timely manner.”

Another advisor/coordinator agreed and stated:

“Articulation programs developed should involve advisors from TCC and OSU. Those developing articulation programs should do so because they are not aware of some concerns.”

Miscommunication involving the state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system was another voiced concern that affected the student transfer policy. One advisor/coordinator simply stated:

“The numbering system is a problem regarding the transfer issue in Oklahoma.”

This particular topic being such a divisive concern was noted by another advisor/coordinator who stated:

“The numbering system has too much in-fighting between institutions!”

Although the course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system are critical elements of the student transfer policy, advisors mostly felt that it is one of those fine lines faculty members do not like advisors to cross.

Miscommunication between TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator was acknowledged during interviews. One TCC advisor/coordinator commented:

“What advisors are told by OSU counselors versus what is determined to be needed is different. This is a communication problem.”

One possible reason for the different viewpoints may revolve around how TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator receive their training. One TCC advisor/coordinator noted:

“OSU-Tulsa has specific advisors for different programs and not general advisors like TCC.”

Another advisor/coordinator thought miscommunication was just as prevalent among the faculty. She believed:

“Communication between faculty members is where we are lacking the most.”

One basic agreement that emerged from the advisors’/coordinator interviews was the fact:

“Articulation agreements are mostly effective for those students who know on the first day of enrollment, or within their first 30 to 60 hours, what area they would like to study as well as the school they plan to transfer to.”

One TCC advisor/coordinator stated:

“Articulation agreements should not be written as though a student will know their major on the first day.”

For example, students who initially plan to transfer to Northeastern State University (NSU) and change their minds to attend OSU-Tulsa might lose hours or be required to take additional classes at TCC. An OSU-Tulsa advisor concurred by stating:

“75% of freshmen do not know what they want to major in their first day at TCC. It is a very small number who know for sure.”

The overriding premise by the advisors/coordinator that the articulation agreements are set up for students who know what they would like to major in on their first day of school was a strong concern by each advisor/coordinator. Articulation agreements must allow students to experience a sense of discovery according to one advisor/coordinator. Current articulation agreements do not provide this opportunity.

One plausible explanation for these particular themes may be tied to the fact the OSRHE student transfer policy is applied differently for regional and comprehensive institutions and may result in a schism as it pertains to the self-interest theory. One TCC advisor/coordinator commented:

“Comprehensives (institutions) are less flexible than regional.”

Another TCC advisor/coordinator stated:

“Everybody is out there doing their own thing and if I worked for a 4-year institution I would probably support...their point of view which is that they want to protect the integrity of what they feel is most appropriate for their students in that particular major. But everybody is out there doing their own thing and that leaves students who are transferring from community colleges to stand to lose credit.”

Recently, as of fall 2005, OSU-Tulsa was authorized by OSRHE to assume higher standards for admission by transfer (Appendix B). Thus, advisors/coordinator and

students will have to pay closer attention to what classes will and will not transfer to OSU-Tulsa.

In summary, findings from the advisor/coordinator interviews identified “*lack of consistency, inadequate leadership and miscommunication*” as the three major themes. Although concerns associated with these themes were mainly institutional matters, it is the Articulation of Transfer Students Agreement (Appendix B) that affects the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy. Several advisors’/coordinator noted leadership as a shortcoming of the OSRHE state policy since they are ultimately responsible for the application of the state policy. Consequently, OSU-Tulsa, as one of two Oklahoma comprehensive institutions, will generally be given the benefit of the doubt regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy. “Challenging” was the description given by one advisor/coordinator regarding the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa. “We have to be everything to everybody” was the comment given by another advisor/coordinator. “Oklahoma is a transfer hostile state” is another description given by an advisor/coordinator. Although other descriptors were just as important as the three themes identified, the selected themes arguably characterize the TCC and OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. Overall the “lack of ongoing dialogue and clear communication of curricular updates” regarding the TCC and OSU-Tulsa student transfer process was evident.

Student Interview Findings

The dominant theme that emerged from the student interviews was *missed opportunity*. *Missed opportunity* means it was a missed opportunity for the TCC/OSU-

Tulsa student transfer process to work properly for those students who did, and did not earn, an associate degree. *Missed opportunity* encapsulated each student's perspective. Interview findings for those students who earned an associate degree from TCC will be presented first followed by those students who did not earn an associate degree.

Four OSU-Tulsa Student Interviewees With TCC Associate of Science Degrees

Student A characterized his TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience as “pretty good.” His missed opportunity involved the loss of three business law credit hours from TCC when he transferred to OSU-Tulsa. One of the goals of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa transfer policy was to prevent the loss of credit hours. This mishap added an additional cost to the student of approximately \$500.00 dollars plus text books, study hours and time away from family. What is particularly disturbing about this occurrence is the fact that between TCC and OSU-Tulsa business is one of their most enrolled programs. Despite the loss of three credit hours student A believed TCC and OSU-Tulsa should market student transfer program more. Student A also commented he had the same counselor while he attended TCC which he felt was a great benefit to him.

Student B found her TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to be “pretty good” also. Student B also mentioned although she did not have the same advisor her transfer experience went well. The 2002 TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer resolution indicated they would work together to make the student transfer process as seamless as possible. Although student B did transfer with an associate degree her plight could have been less difficult if OSU-Tulsa offered more classes during the day.

Student C found her TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to be an unpleasant. She described the advisement information to be “crappy.” She stated each time she asked the same question she got a different answer from different advisors situated in the same office. What is unusual about student B is she knew from the very first day what she wanted her major to be. The information she received was so bad she missed the graduation deadline. She said eventually she had everything the TCC advisors stated double checked for accuracy.

Student D reported his TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to an ideally “pleasant adventure.” Yet, few TCC business majors are fortunate enough to get good advisors who tell them not to take the TCC business law class. Earlier I mentioned student A, who transferred from TCC to OSU-Tulsa with an associate degree, was forced to take three additional credit hours because his advisor failed to inform him not to take TCC business law class. Student D stated although the TCC/OSU-Tulsa business degree plan directed him to take the business law class, the advisor he had properly informed him that that information was wrong and to take another class that would transfer and be accepted by OSU-Tulsa.

Four OSU-Tulsa Student Interviewees Without TCC Associate of Science Degrees

Student E found her TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to be an “unimpressive.” The missed opportunity here involved the loss of three credit hours and respect for TCC advisors. This was another student who was told business law would transfer to OSU-Tulsa when in fact it did not. She did not know OSU-Tulsa had advisors on TCC campus. She stated she likes having one OSU-Tulsa advisor because she feels as

though she now has a relationship. She confirmed she was not degree seeking at TCC but she ended up speaking to three or four TCC advisors. She said they were “not good at giving information.” She stated “overall TCC seemed to be an extension of high school.”

Interview with student F found his TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to be a difficult process. The missed opportunity here involved lack of clarity for out-of-state students. This student transferred to TCC from Ohio State University which uses the quarter system as opposed to semester system used in Oklahoma. His initial problems centered on how quarter hour classes would compare to semester hour classes. He stated the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process could have worked better “if there was some kind of communication between TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors and faculty.” He felt he was just fortunate to have been taking a class at TCC and OSU-Tulsa at the same time because “after telling his instructors what he was doing things began to work themselves out.”

Student G found her TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience to be a questionable. The missed opportunity here involved the loss of 9 credits hours as a result of having three OSU-Tulsa advisors who disagreed with each other. This particular student had already received a bachelor degree from the University of Tulsa and therefore already had an expectation on how academic programs should work. Realizing what could happen without an associate degree, she had signed OSU-Tulsa degree plans that were subsequently ignored by her 3rd advisor. It was a TCC advisor who made the mistake earlier with student A. It was three OSU-Tulsa advisors involved in this disagreement. In both cases it was the student who suffered. This case ended up costing

the student a semester worth of time at an approximate cost of more than \$1,000 dollars plus text books, study hours and time away from family.

Student H called her TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience “frustrating.” Like student C, the missed opportunity here was she found the advisement information to be “terrible.” She also stated the TCC faculty seemed like they did not care. This particular student wanted to major in German but switched to Spanish after the advisors kept enrolling her in classes that cancelled. She went on to state each time she consulted with an advisor they “always rushed her and seemed impatient when you did not know what to do.” She also stated the numerous advisors she met with gave her bad looks and were unable to tell her what would transfer to OSU-Tulsa. She stated would have preferred to have one advisor. Eventually she ended up going to OSU in Stillwater to see an advisor.

Interviews with student transfers with and without an associate degree from TCC to OSU-Tulsa indicate missed opportunities for the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy to work. Similar problems came to light involving student transfers with and without an associate degree. Ironically the purpose for having advisors is to tell students what they need to do in the pursuit of a particular major. Out of eight interviews only one, student D, had an ideal student transfer experience that was seamless and without the loss of time or credit hours. These student interview comments illustrate although TCC and OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy was a good start, the process is not congruent with the expectations of the OSRHE student transfer policy.

Summary

Interviews with advisors/coordinator revealed three themes from 12 descriptors while interviews with transfer students revealed one common theme. Findings from the advisor/coordinator interviews identified “lack of consistency, inadequate leadership and miscommunication as the three major themes. Interviews with student transfers with and without an associate degree from TCC to OSU-Tulsa indicate missed opportunities for the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy to work. The findings highlighted the concerns of the participants directly involved in the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Transcriptions of all statements were used to understand the concerns more clearly.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

OSU-Tulsa and TCC have articulated a desire to make the student transfer process effective and seamless. According to OSRHE student transfer policy (page II-2-143 in Appendix B), students who graduate with a 60-hour Associate of Science degree from Tulsa Community College (TCC) may transfer these credits to other four-year public institutions in Oklahoma without loss of credit. Yet, in practice, officials at major Oklahoma public universities, or colleges, use their own standards when determining which transfer hours they will accept for their institution's degree programs if the transferring community college student did, or did not earn, an associate of science degree. A loss of credit can occur when ...there are departmental requirement differences (Strain, 1982). Thus the transfer student may be penalized by different state and institutional transfer policies and practices.

The transfer function has been a critical component of the community college since its inception in 1902 (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Transfer rates at two-year institutions have not risen for the past 40 years according to Gordon (1996). An adequate strategy to improve the transfer rates of two-year institutions has been and remains a challenge for educators and administrators (London, 1996).

This case study used self-interest theory as the lens to understand what was taking place in the student transfer process in terms of policy, faculty, advisors/coordinator and students. This case study sought to understand what was being communicated to the student by the advisor regarding the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa. Based on what is being communicated, this case study afforded an opportunity to provide a significant contribution and suggest possible remedies. The sheer numbers and characteristics of TCC and OSU-Tulsa transfer students presented an opportunity to contribute to existing research about the student transfer process.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the student transfer process between TCC and OSU-Tulsa in conjunction with the state articulation agreement in order to determine its effect on potential or actual TCC transfer students. A case study is a research strategy used when a contemporary phenomenon is to be examined within its real-life context (Yin, Bateman & Moore, 1983, Yin, 1994, p. 92). The primary questions of interest are as noted:

- 1) How has the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy affected the TCC Associate of Science majors?
- 2) From an institutional perspective, what can be done at TCC and/or OSU-Tulsa to improve the student transfer process?

Inadequate academic advising has been noted as one of several barriers to baccalaureate access for community college students. An effective strategy to improve

the transfer rates of two-year institutions has been and remains a challenge for educators and administrators (London, 1996).

This research utilized a case study strategy that involved a quantitative and qualitative mixed methodology. The quantitative component of this study consisted of statistical data, institutional and state transfer policies acquired from TCC, OSU-Tulsa, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) databases and national publications. The qualitative component involved interviews with seven advisors/coordinator and eight students. Two advisors associated with the TCC/OSU Tulsa student transfer process were from OSU-Tulsa. Four interviewees were advisors from each of the four TCC campuses. One interviewee was a TCC coordinator. Eight students consisted of four students who had earned an Associate of Science degree from TCC and four students who did not earn an Associate of Science degree. Eight former TCC students transferred to OSU-Tulsa from each of the four TCC campuses. The eight interviewees provided accounts of their student transfer experience.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

Discussion of quantitative and qualitative findings will be presented initially. Next, the research questions will be addressed followed by the recommendations.

Discussion of Quantitative Findings and Analysis

Quantitative findings regarding student transfer data revealed a lack of uniform information between OSRHE and OSU-Tulsa. OSRHE only collects student transfer data for OSU and not for OSU-Tulsa specifically. OSRHE student transfer data was organized

relative to student class cohorts to assemble data regarding student transfers. The period of time used for student cohorts to compute student transfer data by OSRHE for two- and four-year institutions was three and six years, respectively. The computation used by OSRHE ignores many students who fail to graduate within a certain period of time. Consequently, OSRHE student transfer data regarding OSU-Tulsa students for this study were unavailable.

On the other hand, the OSU database eventually provided a somewhat more extensive list of former TCC transfer students enrolled at OSU-Tulsa. OSU, unlike OSRHE, does not track its student transfers by class cohorts. After numerous requests, student data were obtained from OSU concerning former TCC transfer students. Phone calls to students from the data provided by OSU determined the student data obtained was useful but not totally accurate. For example, some students listed as OSU-Tulsa students stated they were not OSU-Tulsa students. OSU-Tulsa student transfers were identified according to how they were extracted from OSU's database. OSU-Tulsa student information relative to former TCC students is not specifically tracked.

In summary, quantitative data collection regarding TCC transfer students attending OSU-Tulsa is collected via two distinctly different methodologies at OSRHE and OSU-Tulsa. In chapter four Table 5 illustrates the computation results utilized by OSRHE and OSU-Tulsa. It appears as though OSRHE and OSU-Tulsa collect only the information they deem necessary for their needs. Although information regarding student transfer is collected by OSRHE from each institution, its methodology failed to present a clear description of many TCC student transfers.

Qualitative Findings and Analysis

Qualitative findings resulted from analysis of interviews with advisors/coordinators and student interviews. Interview findings from the advisors/coordinators will be presented first, followed by the student interview findings. Interview findings revealed several themes that describe the challenges associated with the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.

Advisors/Coordinator Interview Findings

Inadequate leadership, miscommunication and lack of consistency were the themes identified after analysis of the interviews with the advisors/coordinator. According to the advisors/coordinator interviews “inadequate leadership” is evident at the state and institutional levels. At the state level a clearer understanding regarding the application of the state articulation agreement is needed to ensure the student is the focus and not the institutional programs. At the institutional level, internal in-fighting among schools can be construed to be a sign that leadership or direction is needed to address the problems associated with the TCC/OSU student transfer process. Effective leadership would refocus the attention to student outcomes.

”Miscommunication”, resulting from inadequate leadership and somewhat ambiguous articulation agreement language, runs wide and deep in the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. An example of this can be found in the OSRHE Policy and

Procedure Manual page II-2-145 section 5 of Chapter 2 (Academic Affairs) states:

Senior institutions may, with the approval of the State Regents, require that transferring students complete additional general education work for the degree. However, such additional work shall be programmed as a part of the upper division requirements of the senior institution in order that any student shall be able to complete a baccalaureate program in a number of semester hours equal to the total specified for graduation published in the receiving institution's official catalog.

More recently additional language was added to the OSRHE Policy and Procedure Manual (page II-2-73 located in section 5 of Chapter 2) that provides OSU-Tulsa with more academic autonomy which may possibly affect the TCC/OCU-Tulsa student transfer process. It states:

* The University of Oklahoma was authorized beginning fall 2002 and Oklahoma State University was authorized beginning fall 2005 to assume higher standards (minimum GPA requirements based on number of credit hours earned) for admission by transfer.

This passage is unclear and therefore appears ambiguous. The aforementioned references may lead to miscommunication or unclear interpretation and ambiguity in the TCC/OCU-Tulsa student transfer process.

Internal miscommunications regarding the articulation agreement and course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content are serious concerns for advisors/coordinator. Moreover, external communications between the advisors and students reflect this ambiguity. Miscommunication problems, regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process, are compounded due to a lack of frequent dialogue regarding internal and external communication within and between the institutions. Thus, institutional needs appear to have been given priority over student needs.

“Lack of consistency”, as a by product of inadequate leadership and miscommunication was a noted occurrence in the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. The lack of clarity in the OSRHE guidelines also affects the content of TCC’s catalog and ultimately the credibility of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. An example which illustrates the lack of clarity is the issue concerning the rejection of TCC’s business law class by OSU-Tulsa. The State’s policy and procedure manual Chapter 2 section 5 on page II-2-145 states:

The determination of the major course requirements for a baccalaureate degree, including courses in the major taken in the lower division, shall be the responsibility of the institution awarding the degree. However, courses classified as junior-level courses generally taken by sophomores at senior institutions, even though taught at a two-year institution as sophomore-level courses, should be transferable as satisfying that part of the student's requirement in the content area.

The TCC business law class should be accepted by OSU-Tulsa if OSU-Tulsa sophomores are permitted to enroll in business law class. Regularly scheduled meetings and mutually agreed upon standard processes must be implemented and carried out consistently to assist those advisors/coordinator, administrators and faculty members, directly responsible for the success of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. For the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process to be an effective tool for TCC and OSU-Tulsa both institutions must recommit themselves to improving student outcomes.

Student Interviews Findings and Analysis

Interviews with the eight interviewees found missed opportunity as a common theme regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer experience. Missed opportunity regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process involved numerous mishaps. Six of the eight transfer students experienced some difficulties with student transfer process. Loss of credit hours by students with and without degrees was the most egregious missed opportunity. *Crappy advisement, frustration and questionable* were other descriptors used by the students in describing the transfer process. One of goals of TCC/OSU-Tulsa transfer process is to help students avoid loss of credit hours. Unclear information was the second most mentioned missed opportunity. Here again, advisors should be expected to be knowledgeable enough to direct all students through the course of study they select. Overall students revealed some major goals of the TCC/OSU Tulsa student transfer process were not being met. Improvements to the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process are needed.

In summary, the themes garnered from the advisors/coordinator and students' interviews are clear. Missed opportunities for students due to inadequate leadership, miscommunication and lack of consistency are the notable findings. Although the challenges regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process themes highlighted are numerous that does not make them insurmountable.

Advisors/coordinator and student concerns brought forth have a common thread of self-interest. "Everyone does their own thing" was the comment made by one advisor/coordinator. *Self-interest theory* postulates individuals and/or institutions will generally not agree to a course of action they think will not be an advantage for them or

may affect them negatively. The self-interest theory holds it is irrational to make any acts of self-denial or to act on desires that negatively affect our well-being. Kluegel and Smith (1986) argue due to an unequal apportionment of material wealth, self-interest may result in a disagreement of beliefs and attitudes. Those in power may support actions that maintain the status quo as well as their own interest. Although OSU-Tulsa does have the authority to act unilaterally or make changes accordingly per the State transfer policy, it should do so collegially and wisely especially with geographically close feeder schools such as TCC.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: COMMENTARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary questions (p. 7) of interest are as noted:

- 1) How has the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy affected the TCC Associate of Science majors?

The TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy has not affected the TCC Associate of Science majors any more than those students without an associate degree according to interviews conducted with advisors/coordinator and students. Student interviews indicated the missed opportunities experienced vary from advisor to advisor. It is noteworthy there were disagreements regarding the content and requirements of student degree plans by advisors from the same institution.

OSU-Tulsa does have some discretion as to how TCC transfer student credits are applied to its programs. Per OSRHE policy and procedure manual, OSU-Tulsa has had and continues to have the right to make changes to how transfer student credit hours are applied. At the same time, the OSRHE policy and procedure manual states how

acceptance of certain TCC classes, like business law, should be determined. Regularly scheduled meetings between and among TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator, administrators and faculty may serve to address this disparity. The current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy has not affected the TCC Associate of Science majors any more than those students without an associate degree according to interviews conducted with advisors/coordinator and students.

Institutional publications and websites designed to assist TCC transfer students regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process often confuse readers and cause students to lose credit hours, time and money. The catalog is an official institutional document that must receive consistent attention/updates to remain effective. Interviews with students and advisors/coordinator revealed problems stemming from the publications/websites that did not contain accurate and timely information relative to the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. The current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy has not affected the TCC Associate of Science majors any more than those students without an associate degree according to interviews conducted with advisors/coordinator and students.

Inaccurate information disseminated by advisors may be experienced by any student seeking advice from an advisor. One student interviewee noted she/he was not degree seeking but sought rather basic information from a TCC advisor in case she/he should change her/his mind. The interviewee found information given by this advisor was incorrect after she/he checked with an OSU-Tulsa advisor. The current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy has not affected the TCC Associate of Science majors any more

than those students without an associate degree according to interviews conducted with advisors/coordinator and students.

The most fundamental concern affecting TCC Associate of Science majors relative to the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process is the fact a student needs to know from the very first day of enrollment what his/her major is in order to benefit the most. Advisors/coordinator interviewed noted time and again this fact as a concern of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. Since OSU-Tulsa has the discretion to change how TCC class credits may be applied to its programs, TCC advisors/coordinator must be well informed at all times for the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process to truly be effective. This particular point of interest may negatively affect TCC Associate of Science majors.

Overall, the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy has not affected the TCC Associate of Science majors any more than those students without an Associate degree according to interviews conducted with advisors/coordinator and students. All students, those seeking a TCC Associate of Science degree and those not degree seeking, are being treated with substandard student service regarding the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. To say TCC Associate of Science majors are being treated worse than any other students would be misleading and serve to undermine this study. The quantitative results indicate many TCC students are transferring to OSU in Tulsa and Stillwater without a degree. One OSU advisor/coordinator commented in some cases/programs “it is probably best to transfer without a TCC degree.” Despite the previously mentioned concern, TCC students planning to attend OSU-Tulsa should regularly speak to TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors to ensure minimum loss of credit hours time and money.

2) From an institutional perspective, what can be done at TCC and/or OSU-Tulsa to improve the student transfer process?

Utilizing the lens of the self-interest theory may help explain the perceived “inadequate leadership”, “miscommunication” and “lack of consistency.” Institutional recommendations addressing what TCC and OSU-Tulsa can do individually and collectively follow. Suggestions for practice or future research by TCC and OSU-Tulsa regarding how to improve the student transfer process conclude this section.

When viewed through the lens of the self-interest theory, the effectiveness of the student transfer process is impeded due to a lack of incentives, rewards, penalties and enforcement of the state transfer policy. As stated earlier, self-interest theory helps explain behavior related to the three themes of *inadequate leadership, miscommunication and lack of consistency*.

Inadequate Leadership

Self-interest theory suggests various reasons that could help explain why inadequate leadership within the context of institutional power, student transfer process and articulation agreements was noted in the advisors’/coordinator interviews.

Historically, between two and four-year institutions, institutional power was vested in the four-year institution. The four-year institution has traditionally acted to protect its self-interest by selecting and educating only those students they deemed qualified. OSU-Tulsa behaves accordingly, and is empowered by the OSRHE to impose higher standards for admission by transfer (Appendix B). TCC may not view student satisfaction regarding the transfer process as a priority. After all, TCC can still boast it is listed in the top 3%, or

34th out of 1150 community colleges, in the nation in graduating students with Associate degrees according to the US Department of Education (as cited by Community College Week, 2003). The behavior of OSU-Tulsa and TCC reinforces their traditional roles in higher education. A lack of supervision and enforcement by the OSRHE seems to permit OSU-Tulsa to ignore OSRHE guidelines relative to TCC transfer students.

Leadership decisions and behavior regarding the student transfer process may be grounded in cost/benefit analysis. The costs to cure a problem such as course duplication may exceed the benefits gained. Collaboration between OSU-Tulsa and TCC could be a low institutional priority because additional expenditures of resources are not justified. Both institutions have limited financial and human resources to serve thousands of students, and must allocate them in ways that best advance their prioritized objectives. For example, the TCC catalog, according to the advisor/coordinator interviewees, is continually printed late. One thought attributable to this is a lack of priority. Moreover, TCC has done well enough to receive additional monies from a Brain Gain initiative that rewards Oklahoma higher education institutions who meet certain criteria. The State leadership rewards educational institutions financially via the Brain Gain initiative. But there are no monetary rewards or punishments evident for institutions regarding the student transfer process. Consequently, if TCC is listed in the top 3% of community colleges while receiving Brain Gain monies for meeting certain criteria, why is it in their self-interest to do more?

Inadequate leadership in the formulation of articulation agreements may be attributed to the protection of institutional academic programs. Institutions give protection of their academic programs a higher priority than a student's interest in not

repeating courses. Seen through the lens of the self-interest theory, OSU-Tulsa more than likely will not behave in a manner that negatively affects their programs. For example, TCC and OSU-Tulsa have a business degree articulation agreement. Despite this fact, credit hours for TCC's business law course are not accepted and recognized by OSU-Tulsa. Consequently, potential OSU-Tulsa business students who transfer from TCC are forced to take additional credit hours to compensate for the business law class they have taken at TCC. As an urban four-year satellite campus, OSU-Tulsa programs are created by its home campus in Stillwater, Oklahoma that, in turn, dictates policies for its programs.

Miscommunication

The self-interest theory offers possible clues that could help explain why miscommunications regarding the articulation agreement, state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content, and among TCC/OSU-Tulsa advisors were noted in the advisors'/coordinator interviews. When articulation agreements between TCC and OSU-Tulsa are misinterpreted by the advisors/coordinator, it seems to occur because there is no incentive or reward to encourage collaboration with the faculty who developed the program. Since there are no institutional incentives for advisors/coordinator and faculty to meet annually, a perpetuation of problems will continue as long as there are no incentives to collaborate. The self interest theory postulates individuals and/or institutions will generally not agree to a course of action they think will not be an advantage for them. Therefore, as one advisor/coordinator stated, why should faculty be concerned

whether advisors correctly communicate their articulation agreements if there are no penalties or rewards?

Miscommunication stemming from the state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system results from a selfish faculty driven process. Seen through the lens of the self-interest theory, faculty at each institution will more than likely not agree to implement comprehensive state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system since they have no compelling reasons to do so. Faculty members from both institutions gave advisors the message the state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system is the domain of faculty, not advisors. With no penalties or incentives for faculty to make the state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system more user friendly, faculty will continue to personalize their particular courses.

Miscommunication between TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator will continue to happen as long as there is no priority to regularly meet and collaborate towards the common goal of easing the transfer student's experience. Viewed in terms of the self-interest theory, OSU-Tulsa advisors, unlike TCC advisors/coordinator, may not believe it is in their best interest to confabulate with TCC about their programs since it may negatively impact their programs. For example, if OSU-Tulsa met regularly with TCC about its business degree program articulation agreement, OSU-Tulsa may realize they should be accepting rather than rejecting TCC's business law credit hours. Moreover, since OSU-Tulsa is not being punished for rejecting TCC business law credit hours, what benefit is to be gained by OSU-Tulsa by discussing the matter?

Consequently, given the set of circumstances, OSU-Tulsa will maintain the status quo regarding irregular meetings with TCC.

Lack of consistency

The self-interest theory could help explain why the lack of consistency in standardization processes, OSRHE guidelines, and websites updates was noted in the advisors/coordinator interviews. Lack of consistency due to an absence of standard operating procedures will continue to be a problem. For example, TCC lacks a standard process for developing and maintaining articulation agreements every year and will probably remain so without standard operating procedures as long as there are no incentives or penalties to change its behavior.

Lack of consistency applying OSRHE guidelines or lack thereof is attributable to different interpretation by different academic units with different interests and priorities. For example, the OSRHE general education core of 37 hours for OSU-Tulsa students is not applied equally, and therefore can be applied differently, by various OSU-Tulsa academic departments. Unfortunately, a state policy that is not enforced does not compromise OSRHE or OSU-Tulsa while permitting OSU-Tulsa the flexibility to amend the general education core of 37 hours. In fact OSRHE actions, or lack thereof, may be perceived as progress.

Lack of consistency as evidenced by TCC's websites not being updated or accurate is due to a lack of penalties or rewards. In self-interest terms, what is the punishment for institutions whose websites are not maintained? Because there are none, institutions may or may not make them a priority. Again, the self-interest theory holds

that it is irrational to undertake any acts that negatively affect one's well being. On the other hand, what is TCC's reward for institutional maintenance of websites? More students? Hopefully, but with no current way of measuring the impact of TCC websites, the reward is questionable at best.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REFORM

Self-interest theory is the cornerstone on which the following recommendations are made. As each of the recommendations is addressed it should strengthen the coherence and common cause efforts in acting on the self-interest of all involved entities.

1. Regular meetings between TCC and OSU-Tulsa should be mandatory.
 - TCC and OSU-Tulsa should mutually recommit themselves to the goal of ensuring the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process is seamless. This will require a plan encompassing consistently regular meetings between the two institutions EVERY YEAR. These plans should be written in order to avoid complacency, maintain expectations and serve as a reminder that the student should come first. Regular meetings may assist OSU-Tulsa and TCC to meet their goals of increased enrollments. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of institutional power.
 - Collaboration between TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator should be fostered via a mandatory meeting that occurs each academic year. It should be made a priority by TCC's and OSU-Tulsa's respective Academic Vice-Presidents. One way to stress its importance is for the Academic Vice-Presidents to make the performance evaluation an integral component of the

assessment process. This recommendation should address miscommunication as a result of articulation agreements.

2. Review State Policy

- An annual review of the Oklahoma student transfer policy by TCC and OSU-Tulsa officials should be conducted collectively to discuss, clarify and resolve any issues regarding TCC classes which are a requirement for an associate degree but are deemed unacceptable and non transferable by OSU-Tulsa. A minimum loss of student credit hours is one of the original goals and purposes for developing a TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. If OSRHE is not going to enforce their policy, a self imposed review by OSU-Tulsa and TCC might be the next best alternative. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of institutional power.

3. Make Process a Priority

- Academic Vice-Presidents at OSU-Tulsa and TCC must make the OSU-Tulsa and TCC student transfer process a priority. OSU-Tulsa will need to collaborate with TCC as much as possible if it hopes to capture a larger volume of students from the TCC. TCC might attract more students as well if students perceive the OSU-Tulsa and TCC student transfer process to be more beneficial to them. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of student transfer process.
- Academic Vice-Presidents at OSU-Tulsa and TCC must make the OSU-Tulsa and TCC articulation agreements a priority. OSU-Tulsa, with an enrollment goal of 10,000 during the next decade, should perceive better articulation

agreements with TCC as an asset. TCC, likewise, should feel the same way. The key for both institutions is to ensure a systematic process is in place for their respective advisors/coordinator that encourages continuous review of articulations agreements for accuracy on an annual basis. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of articulation agreements.

- Academic Vice-Presidents at OSU-Tulsa and TCC must make sure the OSU-Tulsa and TCC articulation agreements consider the student first. OSU-Tulsa must increase its enrollment to meet its objectives. TCC, in order to grow enrollment, must be a student-centered institution as well. With regard to articulation agreements OSU-Tulsa and TCC must help each other to achieve the self-interested objectives of one another. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of articulation agreements.
- TCC and OSU-Tulsa Academic Vice-Presidents must make it a priority, through incentives or punishments, for their advisors/coordinator, faculty, and staffs to meet at least once each academic year to resolve any problems. Application of OSRHE general education core of 37 hours for must be reviewed continuously to ensure minimum loss of money, time and credit hours. This recommendation should address the lack of consistency as a result of OSRHE guidelines.
- More developed standard operating procedures regarding the TCC and OSU-Tulsa student transfer process should be encouraged with incentives for those advisors/coordinator who come up with best practices. Again TCC and OSU-

Tulsa Academic Vice-Presidents must make it a priority for their advisors/coordinator, faculty, and staffs. This recommendation should address the lack of consistency as a result of absent standardization processes.

4. Develop Institutional Incentives

- TCC and OSU-Tulsa Academic Vice-Presidents should make it a priority for their advisors/coordinator, faculty, and staffs to meet annually. Rewards should be designed to encourage mandatory meetings each academic year. Follow-up studies should be conducted with former TCC students attending OSU-Tulsa as part of an assessment study regarding transfer students. This recommendation should address miscommunication as a result of what is said by TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator.
- If possible, institutional incentives should be created by TCC and OSU-Tulsa Academic Vice-Presidents to maintain their respective websites. Given the growth of TCC distance learning programs alone, websites that are well maintained may increase enrollment at TCC and OSU-Tulsa. This recommendation should address the lack of consistency as a result of website updates.
- TCC and OSU-Tulsa Academic Vice-Presidents should develop incentives which strongly encourage their advisors/coordinator, faculty, and staffs to work together to simplify the state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system. This recommendation should address miscommunication as a result of state course equivalency and uniform course numbering and content system.

5. Better state-wide incentives
 - OSRHE should provide more student transfer resources to TCC if a certain number of TCC students transfer successfully. A lack of incentives or rewards may encourage self-interested institutions to do nothing more than what they are already doing. In other words, why worry about distributing the catalog on time if there is no self-interest to do so. This recommendation should address the inadequate leadership as a result of the student transfer process.
6. TCC should develop one year curricula that does not penalize undecided students
 - A review of the sequencing and content of general education should be undertaken to see which classes a student, who is undecided about his/her major, can take for one year (30 credit hours) without penalty. TCC and OSU-Tulsa advisors/coordinator noted “the majority of students do not know what they would like their major to be on the first day of enrollment.”
Consequently, students should not be penalized too much for being undecided on the first day of school. This recommendation should address the undecided major problem.
7. TCC should develop a better catalog review plan
 - A renewed focus on the TCC catalog should be made with the goal of having current and accurate program information. This focus should involve a plan to schedule sufficient review time for both faculty and advisors/coordinator.
According to one advisor/coordinator, this step will only occur if the leadership, Academic Vice-Presidents, make it a priority. This

recommendation should address the lack of consistency as a result of catalog updates.

8. TCC and OSU-Tulsa should create new Articulation Officer positions
 - Academic Vice-Presidents at TCC and OSU-Tulsa should try to establish an Articulation Officer responsible for overseeing articulation agreements. This person would be responsible for maintaining and establishing articulation agreements for their respective institutions. Moreover, and just as important, this individual would be responsible for managing any student transfer discrepancies, complaints or problems. This recommendation should address the lack of an effective advocate.

The previously mentioned recommendations of this study should hopefully address concerns associated with the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.

Steven Covey (1990) outlines six competing paradigms of human interaction. Win-win-win, and “win-win-win or no deals,” are two of six Covey paradigms. Covey’s win-win-win or no deal suggests if a good deal is not attained then there is no deal. This approach suggests TCC and OSU-Tulsa may agree to disagree and do nothing until a good deal is reached. Covey’s approach validates the importance of TCC and OSU-Tulsa working together as equal partners in the student transfer process.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the research conducted here and the review of the literature, the following recommendations are made for further study.

- A. A study similar to this one should be conducted in Oklahoma between other two- and four- year institutions in order to identify problems and best practices.
- B. Further studies that focus on similar OSRHE-like governing bodies in other states and how their articulation processes function may be insightful.
- C. A study that surveys how Oklahoma and other states monitor and enforce compliance with articulation agreements may be beneficial.
- D. An internal review by OSRHE of the methodology, compilation, and utility of student transfer data may be helpful.
- E. Further research which focuses on the self-interest theory.

COMMENTARY

Why is it when TCC and OSU-Tulsa created a student transfer policy as a guide was it not implemented? The findings in this study have revealed there are three central issues that explain why. The first issue has to do with inadequate leadership. If inadequate leadership is to be addressed then the suggestions presented in the area of recommendations for practice and further research should be implemented in way which sincerely recognizes the student first followed by updated processes, mandates and appointments which support the need to improve leadership. Consequently, a thorough review of institutional and state student transfer policies and incentives would act as a catalyst toward meaningful reform.

The second issue focused on miscommunication. If we are going to deal with communication then the suggestions presented in the area of recommendations for

practice and further research are beginning steps toward overcoming these problems. As a result of this continuity and institutionalization would be built in to further safeguard against erosion in this area.

The third and final issue revealed was lack of consistency. If the lack of consistency is dealt with according to the suggestions presented in the area of recommendations for practice and further research improvement and solutions to the current student transfer process is possible. Moreover, if this particular issue is addressed then it would mean the two previous issues would more than likely be addressed. In sum, the student transfer process would function like it should.

Inadequate leadership, miscommunication and lack of consistency were the Achilles' heel with regard to implementation of the 1997 and 2002 TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process. If the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy was not a priority of the leadership then why would TCC/OSU-Tulsa vice-presidents and advisors/coordinator care? It was not in their self-interest to follow through on it. In other words, if it was not a part of their evaluation or if there were no incentives why would they bother?

Assuming inadequate leadership, miscommunication and lack of consistency are the three impediments perhaps a way of addressing these shortcomings is through incentives/rewards. The incentives/rewards could encourage a seamless student transfer process that could allow all parties to act in their and others' self-interests. The incentives/rewards should be attractive enough to assure continuous improvement in the student transfer process or risk having one more impediment. Progress not regress is the desired goal.

Self-interest theory, as evidenced by human behavior in this study, serves as a framework for understanding the TCC and OSU-Tulsa transfer process. In 1997, and again in 2002, TCC and OSU-Tulsa made a resolution to improve the student transfer process by making it seamless. However, after analyzing the reporting processes, data systems, student data from OSU and the OSRHE as well as advisors/coordinator and student interviews, shortfalls were identified. For example one advisor offered her opinion on a disagreement between institutions suggested it be resolved one way and shortly thereafter stated if she worked for the other institution, she would profess the opposite opinion. Yet, despite obstacles, those transfer students interviewed have persevered toward an OSU-Tulsa degree regardless of what happened during their transfer process. The author wonders though, if these areas are adequately addressed, how many more students might successfully transfer and graduate with a four-year degree from OSU-Tulsa? Although the advisors/coordinator and students all expressed unique experiences, none committed any irrational acts of self denial that negatively affected their well being. In sum, they all behaved in their self-interest.

The more things change, the more they stay the same, as the old saying notes. In 1901, University of Chicago President William Rainey Harper did not want the responsibility of educating freshmen and sophomores, while high school superintendent Stanley Brown wanted to be involved in higher education. The solution resulted in Stanley Brown moving up to higher education by opening the first community college for freshman and sophomores which freed up President Harper to focus upon educating juniors and seniors. Today, the 1997 and 2002 resolutions between TCC and OSU-Tulsa did change some things but failed to go far enough. Findings in this case study revealed a

similar win-win-win solution for TCC, OSU-Tulsa and the transfer students is needed and possible. Unfortunately, this will only become a reality when both institutions mutually agree to act, as Harper and Brown did, to policies and behavior which put the transfer student first.

What have I learned from this study? I will address this from two levels. First as an educational administrator, and next as a graduate researcher. As an educational administrator and graduate researcher I have come to understand some important observations. These observations are targeted at what I think should be addressed to improve the student transfer process expediently quickly. My observations should be viewed from a collective standpoint since OSRHE, TCC and OSU-Tulsa must act in a way which mutually benefits and educates the intellect.

My observation as an educational administrator is policy is irrelevant if it is not a clear, enforceable policy. Policy is defined as a method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine present and future decisions. OSRHE policy, relative to the student transfer process, seems ambiguous and therefore not enforceable. I have learned ineffective policy, regardless if it is within the public higher education system or private industry, leads to self-interest and more problems.

My observation as a graduate researcher is mixed. I feel good as a doctoral student studying how to improve the student transfer process. However, at the same time I am disappointed to learn that higher education espouses concern for the transfer student while acting in its self-interest. I have learned OSRHE acts in a way to remain neutral while allowing certain institutions to maintain their own institutional autonomy and

hierarchy. This means transfer students must be careful in order to avoid wasting time and money.

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Appendix A

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF MAKING THE TRANSITION OF STUDENTS
BETWEEN TULSA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND OKLAHOMA STATE
UNIVERSITY AS SEAMLESS AS POSSIBLE**

BACKGROUND: On January 31, 1997, Dr. James Halligan, System CEO, President, Oklahoma State University, and Dr. Dean P. VanTrease, President and CEO, Tulsa Community College, signed an important resolution between Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University to make student transition between the two institutions as seamless as possible. Since that time, numerous meetings have been held on an ongoing basis between representatives of the two institutions, which have brought about significant progress in meeting this objective.

While the missions of Tulsa community College and Oklahoma State University are somewhat different, one important function of Tulsa Community College is to prepare students to transfer and complete a baccalaureate degree at Oklahoma State University in a timely manner.

WHEREAS, the Governing Boards of Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University are committed to making student transition between the two institutions as seamless as possible; and

WHEREAS, Oklahoma State University receives its largest number of transfer students from Tulsa Community College; and

WHEREAS, Tulsa Community College offers freshman and sophomore classes on the OSU-Tulsa campus; and

WHEREAS, two OSU-Tulsa representatives serve full time at Tulsa Community College campuses and one TCC representative serves full time at the OSU-Tulsa campus to provide timely communications to students and employees; and

WHEREAS, joint appointment of permanent faculty positions could enhance offerings in certain academic programs; and

WHEREAS, joint academic and research initiatives could enhance the economic development prospects for the metropolitan Tulsa area; and

WHEREAS, the strengthening of the working relationship between Tulsa Community College and OSU-Tulsa can enhance the use of scarce resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that a Joint Council composed of three representatives from each institution shall meet at least three times a year to review progress and provide leadership for the continuation and further development of the seamless transfer of students. Initially, the representatives shall include one Regent selected by each Governing Board, the President of each institution, and one upper level administrator selected by each President.

The Joint Council should focus initially on the following to be completed by the 2003-04 academic year:

1. Charge administrators and faculty of both institutions to review, develop and update new and/or existing academic program articulation agreements on an ongoing basis.
2. Determine feasibility of joint appointment of permanent faculty positions if a specific need for such is identified by either institution. The teaching and research responsibilities for these positions would need to be determined jointly by each institution according to institutional procedures.
3. Charge administrators with developing a plan to enhance joint use of existing or future facilities.
4. Charge administrators to prepare a joint report regarding the effectiveness of administrative and support services in meeting the needs of students.
5. Determine if the combined capabilities of the two institutions would allow joint research and academic initiatives to be undertaken to enhance the economic prospects of the metropolitan Tulsa area and the state of Oklahoma.
6. Strengthen alignment of the two institutions in financial aid, marketing and class schedules.

Approved by the Governing Boards of Tulsa Community College and Oklahoma State University.

Dr. James E. Halligan Date
System CEO, President
Oklahoma State University

Dr. Dean P. VanTrease Date
President and CEO
Tulsa Community College

Mr. Fred Harlan Date
Chairman
Oklahoma A&M
Board of Regents

Mrs. Dorothy Zumwalt Date
Chairman
Tulsa Community College
Board of Regents



Norma Rodgers

07/10/2002 04:13
PM

To: allusers
CC:
Subject: TCC/OSU Resolution

From Dr. Dean VanTrease:

Today the TCC Board of Regents approved a resolution that reconfirms our commitment to provide a seamless transition for TCC students who choose to attend OSU-Tulsa . The following points below may be of interest to you and helpful if you have questions from students or the community. This is a very exciting time for TCC with more opportunities than ever for our students to continue with their education as well as strong community support for TCC and its mission.

- 1. This resolution is a reaffirmation of an agreement already in place.** It has been five years since the original agreement between TCC and OSU and it is appropriate to update the agreement and acknowledge the progress that has been made for Tulsa citizens.
- 2. As a student-focused and learning-centered College, TCC hopes this sets a tone for similar resolutions with other colleges in the area** and a spirit of cooperation that benefits students of all colleges in the area and the state.
- 3. It is important to note that this resolution is rather unique in the U.S. higher education arena. It is a model we would like to see continue and see flourish because students are the direct beneficiaries.**
- 4. Ultimately, I believe there can be 75,000 students attending college in the Tulsa metropolitan area** and it is imperative that seamless articulation and a cooperation between institutions exist to make that possible.
- 5. TCC believes this resolution will assist OSU-Tulsa with its goal of achieving an enrollment of 20,000 by 2020 and that it will lead to an increase in the number of TCC associate degree graduates.** While TCC already ranks in the top 3 percent of community colleges in the country in degrees granted, we share the State Regents goal of increasing the number of bachelor and associate degrees in the state.
- 6. TCC's enrollment is at an all-time high.** It is our obligation and responsibility to ensure those students who graduate have meaningful higher education choices.

Appendix B

II-2-73 E. Minimum Standards for Admission by Transfer^{13,*}

1. Undergraduate Students Entering by Transfer from a State System Institution An Oklahoma State System student who wishes to transfer to another State System institution may do so under the following conditions:

- a. Students originally meeting both the high school curricular requirements and academic performance standards of the institution to which the student wishes to transfer must have a grade point average high enough to meet the institution's retention standards as defined in Part II of this policy.
- b. Students originally meeting the high school curricular requirements but not the academic performance standards of the institution to which the student wishes to transfer must have a grade point average high enough to meet the institution's retention standards based on at least 24 attempted semester credit hours of regularly graded (A, B, C, D, F) college work; or
- c. Students originally meeting the performance but not the curricular requirements of the institution to which the student wishes to transfer must have a grade point average high enough to meet that institution's retention standards as defined in Part II of this policy and must also complete the curricular requirements before transferring; or
- d. Students originally meeting neither the curricular nor the performance requirements of the institution to which the student wishes to transfer must have a grade point average high enough to meet the institution's retention standards based on at least 24 attempted semester credit hours of regularly-graded (A, B, C, D, F) college work and must also complete the curricular requirements of the institution to which s/he wishes to transfer before transferring.

* The University of Oklahoma was authorized beginning fall 2002 and Oklahoma State University was authorized beginning fall 2005 to assume higher standards (minimum GPA requirements based on number of credit hours earned) for admission by transfer.

¹³ Transfer Student: Any undergraduate student with greater than six attempted credit hours, excluding remedial (0-level courses) or pre-college work and excluding credit hours accumulated by concurrently enrolled high school students.

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

<http://www.okhighered.org/policy-proced/Chapter%202/chpt2-section-5.pdf>

See appendix A for Oklahoma Student Transfer Policy

II-2-143 II. ARTICULATION OF TRANSFER STUDENTS

One of the primary goals of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education is to provide access at some public institution for all Oklahoma citizens whose interests and abilities qualify them for admission. Given the large number of individuals who annually seek admission to the State System, it is recognized that no single institution can physically accommodate the total student body, nor can any institutional type meet the diverse needs and demands of all the students for various kinds of educational programs. Therefore, each institution and each institutional type has been assigned a specialized role within the total State System, in order that all qualified individuals may be accommodated at some institution, although not necessarily at the institution of first choice.

Oklahoma two-year colleges currently enroll over one-half of the entering freshman students in the public sector, with the regional universities and comprehensive graduate universities sharing the remainder of the entering student load. Given this division of labor at the entering level, it is important that continuing access be provided for students in the two-year colleges who desire to pursue an upper-division program at a public baccalaureate institution. The policy statement to follow is designed to guarantee an orderly transition for students in programs leading toward the Associate in Arts and the Associate in Science degrees at institutions in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

A. GUIDELINES FOR THE TRANSFER OF STUDENT COURSEWORK

In order that students completing the Associate in Science or Arts degree requirements, outlined in Section I of this policy, may move vertically through the State System with a minimum loss of time and financial outlay, the following guidelines for transfer of students among institutions are hereby adopted for The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

1. A student who has completed the prescribed lower-division requirements of a State System institution developed in accordance with the standards set forth in Section I of this policy may transfer into a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree program at any senior institution of the State System and be assured of completing his or her program in sequential fashion. Senior institutions may, with the approval of the State Regents, require that transferring students complete additional general education work for the degree. However, such additional work shall be programmed as a part of the upper division requirements of the senior institution in order that any student shall be able to complete a baccalaureate program in a number of semester hours equal to the total specified for graduation published in the receiving institution's official catalog.

2. It is understood, however, that it might be necessary for certain students to take additional courses in general education to meet minimum professional certification requirements as defined by the state. For example, teacher education certification might require such courses as health and physical education, geography, Oklahoma History, etc. It is also understood that the completion of these requirements does not preclude requirements of senior institutions of particular grade points for admission to professional departments or fields.
3. It is further understood that it is the responsibility of the transferring institution to provide adequate counseling to enable a student to complete during the freshman and sophomore years those lower-division courses which are published prerequisites to pursuit of junior level courses of his or her chosen major disciplinary field.
4. The baccalaureate degree in all Oklahoma senior-level institutions shall be awarded in recognition of lower-division (freshman and sophomore) combined with upper-division (junior and senior) work. If a student has completed an Associate in Science or Associate in Arts degree, the lower-division general education requirement of the baccalaureate degree shall be the responsibility of the institution awarding the associate degree, providing the general education requirements specified herein are met. If, for any reason, a student has not completed an associate degree program prior to his or her transfer to another institution, the general education requirements shall become the responsibility of the receiving institutions. However, the receiving institution will recognize general education credit for all transfer courses in which a reasonable equivalency of discipline or course content exists with courses specified as part of general education at the receiving institution, provided that there is an appropriate correspondence between the associate degree and the baccalaureate degree being sought.
5. If a student has completed general education courses at a baccalaureate degree-recommending institution within the State System, the receiving baccalaureate institution will recognize general education credit for all courses in which a reasonable equivalency or discipline or course content exists with courses specified as part of general education at the receiving institution, provided that there is an appropriate correspondence of disciplinary study.

6. Lower-division programs in all state institutions enrolling freshmen and sophomores may offer introductory courses which permit the student to explore the principal professional specializations that can be pursued at the baccalaureate level. These introductory courses shall be adequate in content to be fully counted toward the baccalaureate degree for students continuing in such a professional field of specialization. The determination of the major course requirements for a baccalaureate degree, including courses in the major taken in the lower division, shall be the responsibility of the institution awarding the degree. However, courses classified as junior-level courses generally taken by sophomores at senior institutions, even though taught at a two-year institution as sophomore-level courses, should be transferable as satisfying that part of the student's requirement in the content area.

7. Courses offered at the freshman or sophomore (1000 or 2000) level at baccalaureate degree-recommending institutions may be offered at a two-year institution provided that such courses are included in the two-year institution's approved instructional program.

8. Other associate degrees and certificates may be awarded by institutions for programs which have requirements different from the aforementioned degrees, or a primary objective other than transfer. Acceptance of course credits for transfer from such degree or certificate programs will be evaluated by the receiving institution on the basis of applicability of the courses to the baccalaureate program in the major field of the student. Each receiving institution is encouraged to develop admission policies that will consider all factors indicating the possibility of success of these students in its upper division.

9. Each baccalaureate degree-recommending institution shall list and update the requirements for each program leading to the baccalaureate degree and shall publicize these requirements for use by all other institutions in the State System. Each baccalaureate degree-recommending institution shall include in its official publications (whether print or electronic) information stating all lower-division prerequisite requirements for each upper-division course. All requirements for admission to a university, college, or program should be set forth with precision and clarity. The degree requirements in effect at the time of the student's initial full-time enrollment in a State System college or university shall govern lower-division prerequisites, provided that the student has had continuous enrollment as defined in the official college or university publications. *Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education*
<http://www.okhighered.org/policy/Chaptar%202/chpt2-section-5.pdf>.

Appendix C

TCC/OSU-Tulsa Interviewee Questions for Advisors/Coordinator

- 1) What is your current title and role at TCC/OSU-Tulsa?
- 2) How many years have you worked for TCC/OSU-Tulsa?
- 3) How many years of experience do you have dealing with transfer students?
- 4) Are you familiar with the 1997&2002 TCC/OSU-Tulsa joint resolutions to make students transition between TCC and OSU-Tulsa as seamless as possible?
- 5) Describe your experience regarding the transfer student's process.
- 6) In your opinion what are the pros and cons of the TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer process.
- 7) If you were the VP of Academic affairs what would you do to improve the student transfer process?
- 8) Do you have concerns, comments, or suggestions for improvement about the TCC/OSU-Tulsa associate of science articulation agreements?
- 9) Are there any other comments that you would like to add that I did not ask about?

Appendix D

TCC/OSU-Tulsa Interviewee Questions for Students

1. What is your current class status at OSU-Tulsa?
2. Did you earn a degree from TCC before attending OSU-Tulsa? If so what was your field of study at TCC?
3. At what TCC campus did you receive your counseling (degree plan)?
4. Please describe your transfer student experience.
5. Do you have concerns, comments, or suggestions for improvement about the student transfer process you experienced?
6. In your opinion what are the pros and cons about the TCC transfer student process?
7. Are there any other comments that you would like to add that I did not ask about?

Appendix E

Mission

The mission statement as defined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education is to:

- Provide general education for all students
- Provide education in several basic fields of university-parallel study for those students who plan to transfer to a senior institution and complete a bachelor's degree
- Provide one- and two-year programs of technical and occupational education to prepare individuals to enter the labor market
- Provide programs of remedial and developmental education for those whose previous education may not have prepared them for college
- Provide both formal and informal programs of study especially designed for adults and out-of-school youths in order to serve the community generally with a continuing education opportunity
- Carry out programs of institutional research designed to improve the institution's efficiency and effectiveness of operation
- Participate in programs of economic development with comprehensive or regional universities toward the end that the needs of each institution's geographic service area are met

The college is committed to excellence in instruction, student services, and programs relevant to the needs and interests of the greater Tulsa area. TCC offers educational opportunities leading to the Associate degrees, certificates of achievement, and/or self-improvement in a supportive learning environment conducive to the development of the student's potential.

Appendix F

Strategic Vision *Goals*

Tulsa Community College's entire reason for being is to facilitate learning by its students. The College is committed to serving its diverse student body and to providing excellence in higher education through a variety of formats, locations, and techniques in order to maximize the educational benefit for every student.

Human Resources: Tulsa Community College recognizes that its greatest resources are found in its human resources—the faculty, staff, and administrators who carry out the College's mission. The College values its personnel and is committed to helping each faculty, staff, and administrator reach his or her highest professional potential.

Student Services: Tulsa Community College is committed to the development of each student to his or her fullest potential. Through activities and services beyond the classroom, the College seeks to nourish each student as an individual and as a member of society.

Marketing and Research: Tulsa Community College recognizes its responsibility to reach out to all potential students in the community and to help each student gain the maximum benefit from the educational opportunities provided by the college.

Community and Operation: Tulsa Community College recognizes the importance of collegiality and the exchange of ideas within the College and is committed to fostering an institutional environment that facilitates communication at all levels of the College and among all individuals and constituencies within the College.

Facilities: Tulsa Community College recognizes the human need for both aesthetics and functionality in environments and pledges itself to the maintenance and creation of the facilities which meet these criteria.

Funding: Tulsa Community College recognizes the importance of using its funds wisely and creatively and pledges itself to seeking funds from heretofore untapped public and private sources.

Appendix G

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date Friday, June 17, 2005 Protocol Expires: 11/23/2005
IRB Application ED0534
Proposal Title: Case Study Examining the Student Transfer Process Between TCC and OSU-Tulsa
Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as: **Modification**

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s) **Approved**

Principal Investigator(s) :

Frederick D. Artis
5929 E. 72nd St. South #1
Tulsa, OK 74136

Deke Johnson
310 Willard
Stillwater, OK 74078

The requested modification to this IRB protocol has been approved. Please note that the original expiration date of the protocol has not changed. The IRB office **MUST** be notified in writing when a project is complete. All approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB

- The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

Appendix H



(918) 595-7000

CONFERENCE CENTER
6111 East Skelly Drive
Tulsa, OK 74135-6198

METRO CAMPUS
909 South Boston Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74119-2095

NORTHEAST CAMPUS
3727 East Apache
Tulsa, OK 74115-3151

SOUTHEAST CAMPUS
10300 East 81st Street
Tulsa, OK 74133-4513

WEST CAMPUS
7505 West 41st Street
Tulsa, OK 74107-8633

September 23, 2004

Mr. Frederick Artis
Director of College Business Services
Tulsa Community College
6111 East Skelly Drive
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74135

Dear Frederick:

This is to officially notify you that the Office of Academic Affairs approves your proposal for research at Tulsa Community College. The College looks forward to receiving the results of your investigation.

Best wishes as you pursue your research.

Sincerely,

John T. Kontogianes, Ph.D.
John T. Kontogianes, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President
And Chief Academic Officer

JTK: jf

Appendix I

POLICY STATEMENT ON UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND ARTICULATION

Article XIII-A of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides that the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education "shall constitute a coordinating board of control for all State institutions... with the following specific powers: (1) it shall prescribe standards of higher education applicable to each institution; (2) it shall determine the functions and courses of study in each of the institutions to conform to the standards prescribed; and (3) it shall grant degrees and other forms of academic recognition for completion of the prescribed courses in all of such institutions" In order to carry out these constitutional responsibilities, the State Regents hereby adopt this policy statement establishing guidelines, criteria, and standards for use by State System institutions in developing degree programs for which degrees will be conferred upon students satisfactorily completing prescribed courses of study.

I. STANDARDS OF EDUCATION FOR COMPLETION OF ASSOCIATE DEGREES

A. STANDARDS FOR ARTS AND SCIENCE ASSOCIATE DEGREES

The titles Associate in Arts and Associate in Science shall be conferred upon students successfully completing programs designed for transfer to an upper-division baccalaureate degree program. The Associate in Arts degree gives emphasis to those majoring in the humanities, arts, social sciences, and similar subjects. The Associate in Science degree is typically awarded to those who wish to major in subjects with heavy undergraduate requirements in mathematics and science, including, but not limited to, fields such as engineering and agriculture.

The minimum requirements for the Associate in Arts or the Associate in Science degree at any institution in The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education shall include the following:

1. Students recommended for the Associate in Arts or Associate in Science degrees must achieve a grade point average of 2.0 as a minimum on all course work attempted (a minimum of 60 hours) excluding any courses repeated or repleved as detailed in the State Regents' Grading Policy and excluding physical education activity courses.

The completion, as a portion of the overall 60 semester-credit-hours, of a basic general education core, or a minimum of 37 semester-credit-hours, which shall include the following (Note: this 37 hour basic general education core is also required for the baccalaureate degree):

- a. English Composition.....6 hours

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

- b. U.S. History and U.S. Government (see section IV).....6 hours
- c. Science.....6 hours

(One course must be a laboratory science)

- d. Humanities.....6 hours
(Chosen from nonperformance courses defined as humanities by the institution granting the associate degree)

- e. Mathematics.....3 hours

- f. At least one course from the following areas.....3 hours
Psychology, Social Sciences, Foreign Languages,
Fine Arts (Art, Music, Dramatics)

- g. Additional liberal arts and sciences courses as needed to meet the minimum total of 37 credit hours required in this policy. (The Oklahoma State Regents' policies require a minimum of 40 semester hours of General Education for the Baccalaureate degree.)

A discussion of the framework for the development of the general education curriculum appears in Section III of this policy.

Credits earned consistent with the Oklahoma State Regents' policy, Standards of Education Relating to Credit for Extra Institutional Learning, may be used to satisfy given requirements.

- 2. The remaining minimum of 23 semester-credit-hours of academic work shall be applicable to the student's major objective including any prerequisite courses necessary for his/her anticipated upper-division program. A majority of such student credit hours should be taken in courses classified as liberal arts and sciences.

- 3. The associate degree general education core of 37 semester-credit-hours listed above shall be considered minimal and each two-year college may, with the approval of the State Regents, develop additional lower-division general education requirements for its own students.

4. Students must demonstrate computer proficiency, which includes the competent use of a variety of software and networking applications. This requirement may be completed through one of three options: 1) successfully complete a high school computer science course that meets the State Regents' high school curricular requirements, or 2) satisfy an institution's computer proficiency assessment or 3) successfully complete college-level course work that the institution designates.
5. The faculty of the awarding institution should have an opportunity to make a judgment as to the candidate's fitness for the degree. Therefore, a minimum of 15 hours of residence credit applied toward the associate degree shall be taken from the awarding institution, exclusive of correspondence work.

Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

¹ This is a minimal requirement. An institution may adopt higher standards. This requirement is effective for the first-time entering freshmen beginning fall 1998.
II-2-142 Policy Date: 4/1/04

VITA

FREDERICK DOUGLASS ARTIS

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: CASE STUDY EXAMINING THE STUDENT TRANSFER PROCESS:
A COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND AN URBAN HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTION

Major Field: Higher Education Administration

Biographical

Education: Graduated from Bladensburg High School, Bladensburg, Maryland in May 1979; received Bachelor of Science degree from Shepherd University, Shepherdstown, West Virginia in May 1984; received Master of Arts degree in Administrative Management in May 1989; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree in Higher Education Administration from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in May 2006.

Experience: Assistant Registrar/Office Manager for Langston University in Tulsa from 1996-1997. Assistant to the Vice-President for Business & Auxiliary Services at Tulsa Community College from 1997-1998. Director of College Business Services at Tulsa Community College from 1998 to present. Other previous positions include: Office Manager, Accounting Technician and Lead Accounting Technician at the Department of Interior, National Park Service, Accounting Operations. Employee Relations Analyst and Division Order Analyst at Phillips Petroleum Oil company from 1991-1995.

Professional Memberships: National Association of College and University Business Officers; Southern Association of College and University Business Officers; Oklahoma Association of College and University Business Officers; University Risk Management and Insurance Association;

Name: Frederick D. Artis

Date of Degree: May 2006

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: CASE STUDY EXAMINING THE STUDENT TRANSFER PROCESS:
A COMMUNITY COLLEGE AND AN URBAN HIGHER
EDUCATION INSTITUTION

Pages in Study: 149

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: Higher Education Administration

Scope and Method of Study: This case study examined the student transfer process between a community college, Tulsa Community College (TCC) and an urban higher education institution, Oklahoma State University – Tulsa (OSU-Tulsa), in conjunction with the state articulation agreement in order to determine its effect on potential or actual transfer students. The primary questions of interest were; 1) How has the current TCC/OSU-Tulsa student transfer policy affected the TCC Associate of Science majors? 2) From an institutional perspective, what can be done at TCC and/or OSU-Tulsa to improve the student transfer process? The methodology utilized quantitative and qualitative data collection that involved the assemblage of student data and in-depth interviews respectively. Quantitative collection consisted of statistical data, institutional and state transfer policies acquired from TCC, OSU-Tulsa, Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) databases and national publications. Qualitative interviews involved 15 participants. Interviews were seven advisors/coordinator and eight associate of science transfer students

Findings and Conclusions: This study argues that the student transfer process is not congruent with the expectations of the state student transfer policy. Self-interest theory was then applied to the thesis in order to provide a framework to explain: (1) Does the theory help to reveal something about the problem?; and (2) Does the theory help in developing strategies for solutions? Among key findings students noted instances that cost them time, money and credit hours; Advisors/Coordinator noted systemic problems; and although concerns were mainly institutional matters, the state Articulation of Transfer Students Agreement also adversely that affected the student transfer process. Quantitative findings revealed a lack of uniform information between the state and the institutions it oversees. Qualitative findings revealed several themes: missed opportunities for students due to inadequate leadership; miscommunication; and lack of consistency. These themes were analyzed utilizing self-interest theory, and recommendations for reform and further research were presented.

Advisor's Approval: _____