NO LONGER JUNIOR COLLEGES: INTEGRATING INSTITUTIONAL DIVERSITY INTO GRADUATE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	This article argues that given the isomorphic pressures on both community colleges and four-year institutions, historic divisions between community college leadership programs and general higher education programs are no longer serving the needs of new scholars and practitioners in the field. Graduate programs of higher education should integrate an understanding of community colleges and institutional diversity in meaningful ways throughout a graduate curriculum now focused on four-year institutions.
Background	Community colleges and four-year institutions are engaging in isomorphic change which is weakening traditional boundaries between these sectors to create a more integrated system of higher education.
Methodology	Using a framework of institutional isomorphism, this article reviews recent literature on changes within community colleges and four-year institutions and provides recommendations for infusing this isomorphism into graduate higher education programs.
Contribution	By infusing an understanding of institutional diversity into all graduate coursework, educators can prepare future scholars and practitioners for a changing higher education landscape and expand beyond reductive representations of the higher education field.
Keywords	community colleges, graduate higher education, curriculum, isomorphism

INTRODUCTION

Community colleges enroll the majority of post-secondary students in the United States and serve as important bridges to underrepresented student populations; yet within the study of higher education,

community college research is scant and relatively recent (Cohen, Brawer, & Kisker, 2014). Additionally, masters and doctoral programs focusing on community college education have remained isolated from the higher education at large, resulting in unintended consequences for the field. Because community college institutions historically evolved from high schools (Goodchild, 2013), graduate education programs focused on community college education are often subjugated beneath larger K-12 leadership programs or more generalist higher education programs, creating a branding and identity crisis among faculty who specialize in this research (Katsinas & Kempner, 2005). More importantly, the separation of community college education programs and general higher education programs no longer reflects current realities in which two and four-year institutions' populations and missions have merged. Institutional isomorphism – in which disparate organizations gain similar structures over time (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) – is creating new linkages between community colleges and four-year institutions and pressuring both types of institutions to adopt practices of the other (e.g., Dougherty & Reddy, 2013; Eddy, 2010a; Kisker, 2007).

We argue that, given the isomorphic pressures on both community colleges and four-year institutions, historic divisions between community college leadership programs and general higher education programs are no longer serving the needs of new scholars and practitioners in the field. Therefore, graduate programs of higher education should parallel this isomorphism by integrating an understanding of community colleges and institutional diversity in meaningful ways throughout a graduate curriculum now focused on four-year institutions. In the following we review the historical development of the study of community colleges and its current weaknesses in the field, the ways in which two and four-year institutions have changed in recent years, and provide recommendations for a new approach to higher education that integrates the study of community colleges into general higher education curricula.

HISTORIC DIVISIONS IN THE STUDY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Today, higher education graduate programs are divided between community college leadership education and more generalist graduate programs in administration, student affairs, or policy (Card, Chambers, & Freeman, 2016). The historic separation of community college education from the broader study of higher education is related to the development of community colleges themselves. After evolving from K-12 schools, community college missions became tied to equity and access in the 1950s and 1960s, which led to more complex institutions that included vocational education, workforce training, and transfer pathways to four-year institutions (Cohen et al., 2014; Goodchild, 2013). In the 1960s, individuals within the field recognized the unique needs administrators who sought to lead community colleges now required (Goodchild, 2013). Through the initiatives sponsored by the Kellogg Foundation, community college leadership programs were developed, which established the professionalization of the field and focused on the practical skills required to lead complex community college institutions (Floyd, Haley, Eddy, & Antczak, 2009).

More recently, the retirement of the first generation of community college leaders has set off an impending leadership crisis (Shults, 2001). Once again, the Kellogg foundation sought to understand this challenge and supported the *Leading Forward* initiatives, which assessed the nature of community college programs and provided recommendations for competencies of community college leaders (Amey, 2007). This project culminated in the development of the American Association of Community College (AACC) Leadership Competences which further emphasized the practical and applied nature of the field and recommended community college graduate programs equip institutional leaders with knowledge of organizational strategy, resource management, communication, collaboration, community college advocacy, and professionalism (AACC, 2005).

As a result of this evolution, the study of community colleges has become separated from larger discussions of the study of higher education. Recent guidelines from Council for the Advancement of Higher Education Program (CAHEP) on master's programs in higher education administration specifically exclude "student affairs and community college specializations" (CAHEP, 2010, p. 2) and do

not list community colleges as either "core knowledge" within the field or "appropriate to a well-rounded higher education administration" program (CAHEP, 2010, p. 3). Two recent examples of work on defining graduate education programs, *Advancing Higher Education as a Field of Study* (Freeman, Hagedorn, Goodchild, & Wright, 2013) and *Training Higher Education Policy Makers and Leaders: A Graduate Program Perspective* (Wright & Miller, 2007) have treated community college leadership and administration programs as separate objects of study, devoting chapters exclusively to community college education while integrating student affairs, administration, and policy studies into comprehensive or generalist program discussions. Calls for guidelines on core doctoral coursework have similarly excluded community colleges as a required area of study for higher education generalists. For example, within Hendrickson's (2013) framework, community colleges appear just twice, alluded to within a history course as institutional diversity and as part of the curriculum core in reference to the associates degree. Bray (2007) makes no mention of how the study of community colleges is or should be included in higher education core curricula. These omissions further indicate the dichotomous nature of community college specializations and other areas of emphasis within the field of higher education.

Currently only 24 universities offering specialized graduate education focused on community colleges, out of over 200 higher education programs across the country (ASHE, 2017). Of the 24 community college education programs that exist, 20 programs offer practitioner oriented educational doctorates, referred to as EdD degrees, instead of more theory driven PhD programs (Card et al., 2016; Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2013). Evidence also suggests that fewer institutions are offering any coursework community college education in higher education PhD programs (M. S. Harris, 2007). One traditional option to integrate the study of community colleges (or institutional diversity more generally) into higher education graduate programs has been the required community college course. This course is expected to cover an extensive amount of material including the following: how two-year institutions function; the role they play within the four-year transfer process; an explanation of their unique cultures and how that impacts the organization; and an overview of their diverse student populations with implications for instruction and transfer. However, the percentage of programs offering such a course has shrunk over time (M. S. Harris, 2007), with only about 20% of master's programs and 22% of doctoral programs requiring a course in community colleges (Bray, 2007).

THE CHANGING NEEDS OF PRACTITIONERS AND RESEARCHERS

The division between community college graduate education and research and other aspects of the field focused on four-year institutions represents a disserve to the field and its future researchers and practitioners. Most graduate programs within higher education are offered almost exclusively at large, research intensive universities with the majority of programs at pubic four-year institutions (ASHE, 2017). Yet, new scholars and practitioners will work in and study a wide range of institutions which can provide complexity to their research and practice. Research has shown that student affairs professionals often return to work at institutions that share a similar profile as those in which they enrolled, limiting the exposure of new scholars to different institutional types and leaving individuals unable to understand the impact of institutional diversity on organizational structures and cultures (Liddell, Wilson, Pasquesi, Hirschy, & Boyle, 2014; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). In addition, Duree and Ebbers (2012) found that fewer than half of all community college presidents had a doctorate in higher education with a specific focus on community college education, further raising the need to understand institutional diversity in broad educational contexts.

However, what is particularly problematic about the ways in which higher education practitioners and scholars are educated is that the divisions between community college education and general higher education programs are contrary to the ways in which community colleges and four-year institutions are becoming more similar. Institutional partnerships between two and four-year institutions allow them to share costs and expand enrollments, engage with the business community, and support

communities (deCastro & Karp, 2009). Now community colleges are offering baccalaureate degrees and four-year institutions are offering workforce development education (Floyd, Skolnik, & Walker, 2005; Jacobs & Dougherty, 2006; Levin, 2004; Wagoner & Ayon, 2012). These trends can be described as *isomorphic* as they signify a diminishing of institutional diversity within the system of higher education (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Higher education isomorphism can't be classified solely as inevitable advancement towards more research productive, admissions selective, four-year institutions, a progression often described as academic drift (Clark 1978) or mission creep (Morphew, 2009); instead multiple pressures are pushing isomorphism across both institutional types in a variety of directions. Recognizing how isomorphic changes impact higher education broadly is vital for all future scholars and practitioners. The following uses a framework of institutional isomorphism to highlight organizational changes which are weakening barriers between two and four-year institutions.

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF INSTITUTIONAL ISOMORPHISM

Over the last 30 years, institutions of higher education have become larger, more research focused, and with fewer specialized institutions such as women's colleges (Morphew, 2009; Morphew & Hartley, 2006). Scholars have attributed these changes largely to the desire of colleges and universities to enhance their legitimacy – measured by academic rankings that use research expenditures, student selectivity, and other factors as proxies for prestige (Hazelkorn, 2015). As such, the decrease in institutional diversity has been largely attributed to the idea of *striving institutions* (O'Meara, 2007), which pushes institutions to look more like more prestigious peers over time. Higher education is particularly susceptible to this kind of institutional isomorphism (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), because its "goals (e.g., educating students, knowledge) are hard to measure, technology (e.g., teaching) is unclear, and organizational actors are highly professionalized" (Morphew, 2009, p. 248). Institutional isomorphism is also multidirectional as the higher education system seeks equilibrium and organizations "attempt to achieve parity among or between multiple stakeholders and internal interests" (Oliver, 1991, p. 153). Therefore, institutional isomorphism must be examined not just as an upward trajectory towards larger, more research-intensive institutions but as an outward expansion of structures, processes, and goals.

DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argue that three mechanisms exist to support isomorphism that are theoretically distinct but practically intertwined. The first is coercive isomorphism where external political or cultural pressure is brought to bear upon organizations to create incentives to change. The second is mimetic isomorphism, in which organizations seek models to copy in times of uncertainty. The third isomorphic mechanism is normative, in which members of the organization seek to change it to conform to professional expectations. In examining the relationships between community colleges and the larger higher education sector, each of these isomorphic mechanisms minimize institutional differences and support greater collaboration between the two and four-year institutions. Using DiMaggio and Powell's framework, we explore a variety of institutional changes that are isomorphic by nature, such as two-year institutions adopting curricular practices from four-year institutions. These changes in the forms, structures, organization, and purpose of higher education are minimizing, though not eliminating, differences between community colleges and four-year institutions that ultimately must be acknowledged within the field and within graduate programs therein.

COERCIVE ISOMORPHISM

In 2009, President Obama set forth an ambitious goal that, by 2020, the United States would have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world. Through this political initiative as well as separate but related goals set forth by the Lumina Foundation and Bill and Melinda Gates foundation, a "shift in the national agenda, from focusing primarily on access to highlighting the issue of degree completion" (Roksa, 2012, p. 201) is taking place. While these political pressures emphasized the role of community colleges, the transfer relationship to four-year institutions was also seen as an

important mechanism for the completion agenda (Kelly & Schneider, 2012; Kelly, Schneider, & Bailey, 2012). Previously, Kisker (2007) documented many community college programs and structures that support transfer to four-year institutions including on-site tutoring at the community college provided by the four-year institution and academic acceleration rather than remediation to support transfer. New articulation agreements and programs spurred by the completion agenda also created new university and community college partnerships to facilitate transfer (Senie, 2016). These agreements and programs require four-year institutions to overcome large and small organizational challenges related to admissions, academic policies, class times, and orientation dates (Tobolowsky & Cox, 2012). Furthermore, there are increasing calls for research into transfer-receptive cultures at four-year institutions, which have extensive repercussions for institutions' organization and structure (Handel, 2011; Jain, Herrera, Bernal, & Solorzano, 2011). The national political pressure on institutions from these various sources have coerced community colleges and four-year institutions into a variety isomorphic actions.

In addition, students are driving coercive organizational isomorphism among community colleges and universities through complex enrollment patterns between these institutions. Community colleges enroll nearly 40% of all undergraduate students within the United States (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2017) and nearly 50% of all students enrolled in four-year institutions have previously attended a two-year institution (Shapiro, et. al., 2017). However, transfer pathways between two and four-year institutions are complicated: only 24% of community college students who indicated a desire to transfer actually enroll in a four-year institution six years later (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In addition, research has found patterns of lateral transfers (Bahr, 2009), reverse transfers (Friedel & Wilson, 2015; Winter & Harris, 1999), and co-enrollment (Wang & Wickersham, 2014) between two and four-year institutions creating a student swirl among community colleges and universities. Given this complexity, some researchers have called for call for alternative classifications of higher education institutions not just by the type of credentials awarded but through a more multi-faceted approach related to program and student characteristics (Skolnik, 2011). For example, Bahr (2013) found that community colleges could be described by the kinds of students who enrolled, classifying institutions as transfer intensive, workforce development intensive, high-risk intensive, and mixed use. While there is limited research on transfer-receiving institutions (Handel, 2011), similar typologies and studies of transfer-receiving institutions demonstrate the need for a more integrated and thoughtful approach to studying the relationship between community colleges and the rest of the higher education sector.

Coercive pressures from performance funding of higher education have also pushed both two and four-year institutions into more isomorphic arrangements. Performance funding is used by 23 states to tie either state budget allocations or additional, bonus funding to student retention, graduation, and job placement (Dougherty & Reddy, 2013). In some cases, performance funding can be a small allocation of only one or two percent, but in Tennessee, performance funding now accounts for 80% of budget allocations at many community colleges (Dougherty & Reddy, 2013). At both two and four-year institutions, performance funding was found to push institutions towards restrictive admissions, creating more selective institutions which once had more open-access policies (Lahr et al., 2014). These policies shaped the ways in which institutions set admissions requirements and distributed financial aid to attract more qualified students in place of those less likely to graduate (Lahr et al., 2014). In addition, performance funding weakened other missions of community colleges, particularly around workforce development and developmental education (Dougherty & Reddy, 2013). Performance funding has also been viewed as damaging institutional cooperation both among community colleges and between two and four-year institutions because individual institutions compete for limited resources based on performance metrics (Lahr et al., 2014). In these instances, rather than sharing innovative practices and designing programs which support student success throughout the system, institutions may copy programs and gravitate towards changes that have been previously adopted by other institutions, which in turn supports institutional isomorphism (Dougherty & Reddy, 2013).

MIMETIC ISOMORPHISM

Mimetic pressures towards isomorphic practices can be seen most profoundly in community colleges offering the community college baccalaureate (Floyd et al., 2005). While the political and regulatory environment has allowed community colleges within 15 states to offer the baccalaureate, it is up to individual institutions to choose to offer these degrees, and most have done so in areas of workforce need such as nursing and STEM education (Floyd, 2006; Floyd et al., 2005; McKinney, Scicchitano, & Johns, 2013). Offering a baccalaureate degree at community colleges can lead to shifts in institutional identity, as resources become constrained by multiple missions and new regulations and norms are created with which the organization must grapple (Levin, 2004; Wagoner & Ayon, 2012). Offering baccalaureate degrees leads to an institutional mission creep, as "it is not unreasonable to suggest that community colleges that received accreditation for baccalaureate programs would change their identities to adopt the norms of other baccalaureate institutions accredited by the same body" (Wagoner & Ayon, 2012, p. 90). Specifically, institutions may need to increase credentials requiring of teaching faculty, change the type of students who enroll at the institution, or shift a community college's culture to reflect these changes (Levin, 2004; McKinney & Morris, 2010). Community colleges may also struggle to maintain old missions as they adopt and adapt practices from four-year institutions (Levin, 2004).

Mimetic forces can also be seen in the ways in which community colleges have taken on other aspects of curriculum and student services that have been traditionally housed within four-year institutions. The development of the honors college within community colleges attempts to extend a high-quality and rigorous academic experience to underserved populations; yet these programs can impact the equalitarian and access missions of community colleges, creating second-class students and faculty (Floyd & Holloway, 2006). Programs to increase student engagement at community colleges have led to community colleges, particularly in rural areas, having on-campus housing (Moeck, Hardy, & Katsinas, 2007) which has been traditionally available and studied exclusively at four-year institutions.

Increasing vocational education at four-year institutions also demonstrates the mimetic nature of isomorphism. New programs designed to provide non-credit experiences to students are increasingly coming from universities (Fouts & Mallory, 2010). Labor market alignment mechanisms (Cleary, Kerrigan, & Noy, 2017) require two and four-year institutions to balance competing interests of faculty, students, industry, policymakers, and others to create strategies and programs that provide students specific skills needed to meet workforce demands. Such programs take the form of internships, career assistance, and curricular changes at four-year institutions to better support labor market needs. In addition to this kind of career education, universities' non-traditional academic and non-academic programs are expanding access in ways similar to community colleges. MOOCs and other online learning platforms are expanding institutions' reach to students who would not otherwise enroll at the university (Freitas, Morgan, & Gibson, 2015; O'Connor, 2014; Sandeen, 2013).

NORMATIVE ISOMORPHISM

Normative isomorphic pressures are also blurring the boundaries between community colleges and four-year institutions as each respond to neoliberal economic forces. Neoliberalism is broadly defined as an orientation toward the free market, and the overriding assumption that the economic efficiency is the primary means by which social relations should be organized (Giroux, 2002). This assumption is difficult to challenge because "within neoliberalism's market-driven discourse, corporate culture becomes both the model for the good life and the paradigmatic sphere for defining individual success and fulfillment" (Giroux, 2002, p. 429). Neoliberalism as a political ideology manifests itself within higher education in a variety of ways including the erosion of social service spending and therefore lack of public financing for institutions; the belief in economic efficiency and, therefore, the increasing reliance on adjunct faculty; and the orientation towards education as a private good to be purchased and students as consumers (Saunders, 2010). These changes have effected both two

and four-year institutions creating education trends that transcend institutional type and can be felt throughout the higher education sector.

The normative assumptions of neoliberalism have some specific manifestations that support isomorphism within four-year institutions. Mission statements and strategic plans at both two and four-year institutions convey the importance of workforce development, the role of business and industry, and the economic rationales for undergraduate education (Ayers, Quinn, & Stovall, 2009; Gaffikin & Perry, 2009). While community colleges have traditionally had strong ties to local industry to support vocation, career, and technical education, these connections are increasingly evident at four-year institutions as well (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The Business-Higher Education Forum launched in 2012 and represents over 20 partnerships between companies and universities to support efforts such as continuing education and post-baccalaureate programs in data sciences, internships and practicum in cybersecurity fields, and to strengthen skills-based approaches to STEM education at four-year institutions (Fitzgerald et al., 2014). Additionally, business and industry are increasingly involved in designing degree programs for undergraduates and graduates specifically tailored to industry needs (Fitzgerald et al., 2014). University-industry partnerships (which had traditionally focused on research) are expanding to include curricular reforms and new programs at four-year institutions which mimic workforce education housed in community colleges.

Expectations that institutions of higher education must be entrepreneurial and seek resources (Slaughter & Leslie, 1997) are also shifting both two and four-year institutions into partnerships which support financial stability. Collaborations to facilitate resource-sharing, such as joint purchases of technology, shared physical space, and joint library systems require community colleges and four-year institutions to have more complex and similar administrative structures and relationships (deCastro & Karp, 2009). Partnerships are allowing community college and four-year institutions to focus attention on recruiting students and increasing retention in order to maximize tuition dollars (Alstete, 2014; Eddy, 2010a; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2010). For example, aligned and joint degree programs among engineering and community colleges (Hoffman-Johnson, 2007) show the robustness of programs aimed at smoothing out differences and problematic transition points between community colleges and four-year institutions. Other partnerships between these sectors include the university center which provides a four-year institution curriculum on a community college campus, as well as other colocation models allow four-year institutions to deliver baccalaureate degrees locally (Lorenzo, 2005).

IMPLICATIONS FOR GRADUATE HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Hagedorn and Purnamasari (2013) write that within graduate education programs focused on community college education "change is inevitable, in part because of the need to reflect changes happening in the community colleges themselves" (p. 171). However, it would be wrong to isolate the need for curricular changes to just those students enrolled in community college leadership programs. Isomorphism within two and four-year institutions are changing the nature of both institutions alike. Graduate education programs that study higher education must integrate an understanding of community colleges into higher education programs that can promote a deeper understanding of institutional diversity and isomorphic trends simultaneously. Such curricular changes will infuse an understanding of institutional diversity into all graduate coursework within the field and support the socialization of future scholars and practitioners to move beyond reductive representations of the higher education field and prepare them for a changing higher education landscape. In the following section, we provide specific recommendations to support alignment and consistency within general higher education curricula that honors the isomorphic changes in these two education sectors.

To begin though, it is important to recognize that program diversity within higher education is generally beneficial. By providing multiple pathways into the field and degree programs which are unique,

higher education scholarship can continue to grow and evolve in authentic and meaningful ways as it has done for the last 120 years (Freeman et al., 2013). It is also important to note that community college leadership programs have provided historic access to higher education and doctorate programs for under-represented scholars and practitioners (Hagedorn & Purnamasari, 2013). Pushing all community college leadership programs towards selectivity and exclusionary practices that could jeopardize the diversity of practitioners in the field is counterproductive. Rather we argue that the needs of students and new practitioners in all specializations of higher education should be at the forefront of curricular and programmatic reforms. Across several studies, surveys of higher education graduates have provided an abundance of recommendations to better prepare new professionals such as incorporating more practical experiences through internships, field-based curriculum, and real-world case studies involving the types of institutions in which they will seek or have employment is consistently mentioned (Brown, Martinez, & Daniel, 2002; Hammons & Miller, 2006; McNair & Phelan, 2012). Graduates from student affairs programs cited that an understanding of institutional diversity was particularly important as new professionals were often frustrated and confused by the organization of institutions that were different from their graduate institutions (Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). There has also been a call for more appropriate and supportive mentorship by faculty, and the ability to apply theoretical constructs to real-world problems through case studies and other methodologies (Austin, 2002a, 2002b; Freeman, Chambers, & Newton, 2016; Hammons & Miller, 2006; Renn & Jessup-Anger, 2008). These studies demonstrate the need for higher education generalist programs to adopt specific practices of community college leadership programs which support hands-on and real world experiences for all students (Amey, 2007).

In addition to these structural changes, we propose curricular reforms to graduate programs of higher education that support a greater understanding of the ways in which isomorphism in the two and four-year institution has and will impact the work of scholars and practitioners in both sectors. Using the curricular frameworks from Bray (2007), Card et al. (2016), and Hendrickson (2013) we align selected core courses of higher education to specific questions, resources, and activities that are relevant to unique aspects of community college. Table 1 provides these key intersections between general higher education curriculum and community college scholarship in order to better support integration of these fields.

Higher education program courses have many opportunities to integrate texts and research on community colleges. For example, in history coursework the Cohen et al. (2014) book on *The American Community College* comprehensively reviews the development, history, and watershed moments that shaped contemporary community colleges and could be used to supplement other texts focused on four-year institutions. Finance courses may also want to integrate research on community college finance with attention to the work of Palmer (2005), Romano and Palmer (2016), Bers, Head, and Palmer (2014), Mullin, Baime, and Honeyman (2015), and Katsinas and Palmer (2006) that provide a more in-depth discussion of state level finance pressures, changes, and performance based funding initiatives. Policy coursework can provide an understanding of how federal and state policy changes impacted different sectors of higher education and the symbiotic relationship between each sector. Development education (formerly called remedial education) is a good example of how decisions made at the 4-year level, in particular the decision to reduce non-college level course work, had a direct impact on the pressure for community colleges to grow developmental education offerings. More recent attention to community colleges in the Obama Administration has resulted in research on state level implementation of efforts to increase the number of college going and completing citizens as well as private philanthropic work (Lester, 2014). Finally, coursework focused on leadership or the globalization of higher education provide excellent opportunities to require a comparative analysis of these topics between community colleges and four-year institutions.

Table 1. Recommendations for Community College Integration

Current Course or Program Element	Intersection with Community Colleges	Resources and Activities
History of Higher Education	History of community colleges	Gateway to Opportunity? A History of the Community College in the United States (2011) by J. M. Beach
Organization and Administration of Higher Education	Emphasize on institutional diversity and partnerships between two and four-year institutions Comparative analysis between four-year institution and local two-year institution	The American Community College (2013) by A. Cohen, F. Brawer, and C. Kisker Comparative analysis between four-year institution and local two-year institution
Student Development	Examination of non-traditional and adult learner needs at community colleges	Widening Participation, Higher Education, and Non-Traditional Students (2016) by C. Marshall, S. Nonan, and D Newton Require interviews with non-traditional students enrolled at two or four-year institutions
Globalization and Internationalization of Higher Education	Community college missions/development in other countries	Globalizing the Community College: Strategies for Change in the Twenty-First Century (2001) by J. S. Levin
Leadership	Comparisons of leadership roles at community colleges Role of faculty credentials, contingent faculty, and other issues	Community College Leadership: A Multidimensional Model for Change (2010) by P. Eddy and G. Boggs
Finance	Community college finance, budget models	Community College Finance: A Guide for Institutional Leaders (2015) by C. Mullin, D. Baime, and D. Honeyman Comparative analysis between four-year institution and local two-year institution
Internship/Practicum	Provide experiences for students to engage in community colleges	Require full or partial placement at community college Interviews, panel discussions with community college leaders

Community colleges educate a diverse student population with more part-time, older, and more historically underrepresented students from non-White racial/ethnic backgrounds (Cohen et al, 2014). The contemporary research on diverse student populations (Harper, 2012; Museus, 2014; Museus & Kiang, 2009; Quaye & Harper, 2014) and increased attention to men, masculinity and race (Harper & Harris, 2010; F. Harris & Harper, 2008; Wood & Turner, 2010) provide rich opportunities to examine

the intersectionality of student identities and the relationship between organizational structure and cultures and student success. While student development theory and research is essential to any higher education program, all too often the theories are devoid of context. Community college research can help to identify the differences between student support services, academic advising, faculty racial/ethnic composition, student population demographics, and academic programs and how those differences can facilitate, or not, student success. Moreover, activities that bridge theory and practice, such as requiring interviews of non-traditional students to learn about their educational pathways, experiences, and goals, can help scholars and practitioners gain a better understanding of the concepts.

Many higher education programs include a course on organizational theory either combined or separate from a course on leadership. These theories and concepts are central to higher education practice and areas of inquiry in research on colleges and universities. Frequently, however, the research on leadership and organizations has focused on private competitive institutions and on college presidents. Even a cursory look at the higher education leadership literature will yield only a few studies on non-positional leadership (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Community college leadership has mirrored the trend of presidential leadership but the focus has often been more on collaborative leadership styles (Eddy, 2010b) and more community efforts or – as Levin (2007) referred to them – street level bureaucrats. Moreover, community colleges grapple with the traditional academic side of the institution and the non-credit workforce development, a unique organizational model (D'Amico, Morgan, Roberson, & Houchins, 2014). Through the community college research, faculty teaching in higher education programs have an opportunity to integrate and expand conceptualizations of leadership and use more nuanced organizational models or provide an emphasis, as we have here, on the isomorphic tendencies and institutional similarities between these sectors.

Another focused area of community college research that would benefit all higher education programs and students is that of the scholarship of teaching and learning or what is now referred to as the learning sciences. For the last decade, researchers have turned their attention to the lack of student success in developmental education revealing factors associated with a lack of student completion and retention as well as using new methods on large scale datasets (Crosta, 2014; Wang, Wang, Wickersham, Sun, & Chan, 2017). In addition, other researchers with more ethnographic methodologies have helped to reveal the relationship between faculty pedagogy and student success (Cox, 2015). Other areas of the community college further emphasize the importance of including learning theory in higher education programs. Vygotsky's (1978) cognitive apprenticeship model is often put into practice in career and technical education in community colleges. For example, certified nursing assistant programs and phlebotomy require active learning in local medical clinics to support skill development. These studies could be added to the reading lists and discussion of courses on teaching and learning to illustrate adult learning theory and the complexity of diverse student populations. More importantly, considering different higher education programs in community colleges expands assumptions about what learning is occurring in higher education and how that learning should be occurring.

Throughout higher education curriculum, engaging in resources focused on community college scholarship, such as journals like *Community College Review* or *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* or research centers and organizations such as the Community College Research Center at Columbia University and the American Association of Community Colleges can help move community colleges towards a more central place in higher education scholarship. Organizations such as the Council for the Study of Community Colleges as well as the Association for the Study of Higher Education regularly have many presentations on community college research. No longer is community college research relegated to a few scholars or areas of inquiry.

As Freeman et al. (2016) write, "this seems to be a critical time to clarify comprehensively the historic and evolving purpose of the study of higher education . . . now is the time to engage in a dialogue on the purposes of the field" (p. 267). Pushing community colleges to be part of the defined curric-

ular guidelines for generalist graduate programs within higher education would help community colleges solidify and broaden the field while gaining legitimacy to anchor policy arguments and support greater resources within their institutions. Yet, these opportunities should also be part of larger strategic planning goals within institutions (Lattuca & Stark, 2009). Implementing these recommended changes to the curriculum should consider the types of learners within graduate programs, the instructional resources including faculty expertise, financial support for curricular changes, and the role of assessment and evaluation in understanding the impact of these changes (Freeman et al., 2016).

CONCLUSION

While the study of higher education began with the need for specialized training for junior college administrators in the 1920s (Goodchild, 2013), the field has expanded and is often focused on the remediation and transfer aspects of community colleges – roles which subordinate two-year institutions in service to four-year institution's mission and goals. As a result, the importance of understanding community colleges can often be overlooked, and the paths to studying community colleges as institutions are being constrained. In this article, we call for a more integrated approach to the study of community colleges within graduate programs of higher education to combat reductive understandings of these institutions and to legitimatize this scholarship beyond specialized degree programs. The integration of community colleges into broader academic programs reflects the need for all scholars and practitioners to understand the ways in which two and four-year institutions are demonstrating isomorphic tendencies by operating in concert with each other to serve largely similar populations of students albeit at different points within their academic career. By recognizing these organizational realities, graduate programs of education can modify a broad range of existing curricula and academic experiences to authentically incorporate community college perspectives into other disciplines within higher education. Through this, future scholars and practitioners will be better prepared for the multifaceted complexities of higher education institutions of tomorrow.

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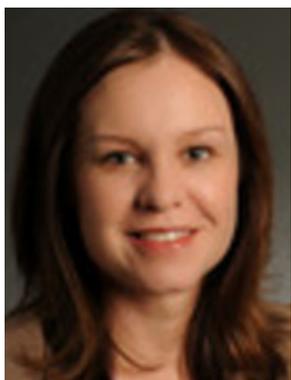
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