



2013 Brock International
Prize in Education Nominee

Linda M. Thor

Nominated by Vernon C. Smith



Dr. Linda M. Thor

**Chancellor, Foothill-De Anza Community College District
Brock International Prize in Education Nominee 2012**

Dear Juror,

It is an honor for me to present **Dr. Linda M. Thor** as a candidate for your consideration for the Brock International Prize in Education.

As an innovator and leader in Community Colleges, the largest sector in higher education, Dr. Thor has disrupted the field and created long-term change that is shaping education across sectors now and in the future. These efforts have become a “proof point” that access, quality and the cost of education need not be limited to current thinking. All great ideas simmer slowly, and when understood, are widely applied to the benefit of others in unique ways. The innovations encouraged and led by Linda Thor are now changing the face of education. Please consider the following as a starting point:

- **Continuous Quality Improvement for Colleges** –From her experience in occupational and technical education and the lessons she learned as the President of West Los Angeles Community College, Linda Thor knew that education could benefit from the learning of the Total Quality Management and Learning Organization movements. She embraced the methodologies and practices from business and industry, and adapted them to the college environment. She re-envisioned the student experience as something that should be “astonishing,” and that a college could anticipate and meet or exceed the expectations of students. Linda was a founding member of CQIN, the Continuous Quality Improvement Network, which benchmarked business for best practices. Her leadership at Rio Salado College started with the creation of a culture of continuous improvement that resulted in the Arizona Governor’s Award for Quality/1993 Pioneer, the Arizona Baldrige equivalent.
- **Online/Internet Education**– Back in 1995 (a very long time ago in higher education history) Linda Thor had a strong hunch. She believed that leveraging Rio Salado College’s experience, and what it knew about delivering distance education courses to adults and non-traditional students, that it would be possible to use the World Wide Web to open college access to tens of thousands of students. She was right. From the original 16 online/internet courses that were developed in 1995, within a decade, the college was offering over 500 internet courses. With over 45,000+ students, Rio Salado College is the largest online community college and a nationally recognized leader in online learning. Linda moved to have online courses start nearly every Monday, permanently breaking the agrarian academic calendar, and showing the way to create convenience, flexibility and student supports that were not previously considered, but now are the norm where one-third of college students are enrolled in an online/hybrid class.
- **Dual Enrollment** – In order to build strong partnerships with local high schools and districts, to open the possibility of college to students who may not have considered themselves “college material,” and to accelerate the time to degree, Dr. Thor built dual enrollment as a robust bridge to secondary education. Students were able participate in college courses and curriculum during the high school day, while earning both high school and college credit. Linda fought the legislative and political battles and encouraged dual enrollment as a hallmark program nationally. As one of the largest and first programs to receive national accreditation through the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP), Linda helped create the standards for quality programs. The dual enrollment program grew to nearly 7,000 and over 50 high schools and districts in the Phoenix Metro area. Dual enrollment has broken

down the unnatural barriers between the secondary and post-secondary systems and is seen as part of the solution for the college completion agenda by policy makers, foundations, and educators nationally.

- **Textbook Savings** – The average college textbook costs well over \$120. That is more than the cost of tuition in many cases. It is also a barrier to many students, especially in community colleges. With the ability to leverage digital technologies and the experience of providing online classes, Dr. Thor led the effort to create a unique partnership with Pearson Custom Publishing to produce customized textbooks for courses with content specific to Rio Salado courses. The result is the Rio Salado Textbook Savings Program, which will offer substantial savings over the price of traditional new and used textbooks. By December 21, 2007, new textbooks for more than 30 courses were available with average savings of 51% off the cost of the original new textbook which expanded over 150 courses. This innovation was recognized by the Maricopa Community Colleges as Innovation of the Year in 2007 as its League for Innovation in the Community Colleges awardee. As Chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza District, Dr. Thor has continued to push for the reduction of textbook prices and has supported the use of free and OER (Open Educational Resources) to drive the cost of textbooks down so that they are not a barrier to education.

The examples of innovative thinking and leadership continue. I fear that my efforts to fully describe over 30 years of true leadership that have directly impacted over a million students are inadequate to truly communicate the depth and breadth of the foundational innovations that Linda Thor has led, and how they have disseminated and scaled to the rest of education.

I encourage you to study and appreciate the contributions that Dr. Linda M. Thor has made as you review her vitae to selected readings, not only because they demonstrate how she embodies the spirit and description of the Brock International Prize in Education, but because the ideas and innovative approaches found herein will generate new ideas and thinking that will continue to “astonish” students and educators now and in the future.

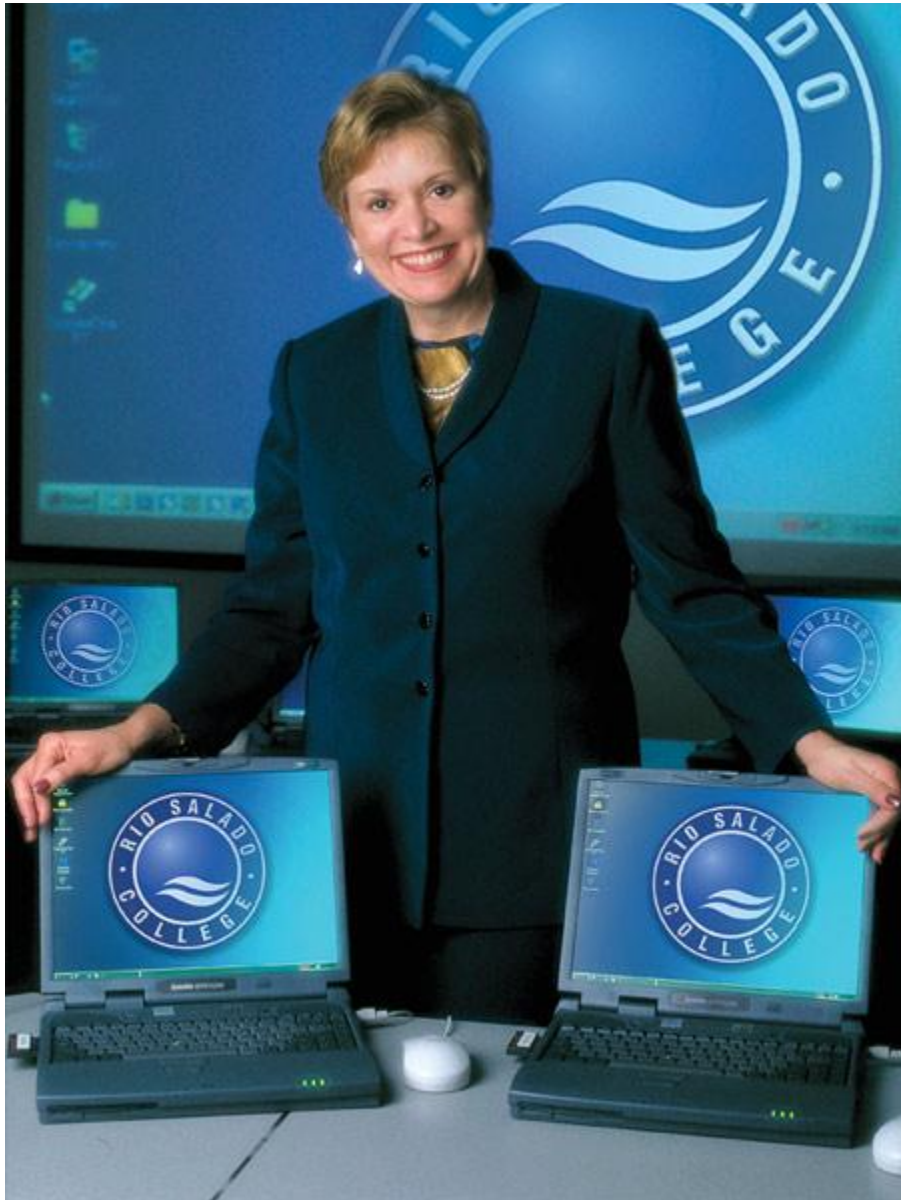
Respectfully yours,



Vernon C. Smith, Ph.D.
Provost and Chief Academic Officer
MyCollege Foundation
vernon@mycollegefn.org

Linda M. Thor

Brief Biography



Linda M. Thor was born in LA to a working class family. In fact, she readily admits that college wasn't in her plans.

"I was bored to death in high school. I was a good student, but I did not want to go to college. But my mother, who had a huge influence on my life, made me a deal. She said if I went to college for one year and absolutely hated it, I could drop out and she would never bring it up again. So I went – and I have been going back every day of my life since."

Linda received a Bachelor's in journalism from Pepperdine University. While there she founded the student chapter of Women in Communications, Inc. and became class valedictorian. She continued her

education at California State University, Los Angeles where she received her Master's in Public Administration. Her Doctorate soon followed from her alma mater Pepperdine University, in Education and Community College Administration.

In 1986 at the age of 36 Linda became the youngest college president in the state of California. Out of 107 college presidents, only 12 were women. She is reputedly the only female college president to have given birth while "in office." Because of her unique position early in her career, Linda has championed the cause of women in education wherever she can. Empowering by showing them the potential of higher education.

She moved to Arizona to become the President of Rio Salado College in 1990. Again she was one of a very few female college presidents. She remained president at Rio Salado for 20 years, in a field where presidency tenure averages only four years. During her time there she oversaw a 252% increase in full-time enrollment, serving her students through distance learning, customized degrees with corporations and government, and accelerated programs such as dual enrollment for high school students. Each program designed to make higher education more accessible, less expensive and of a higher quality for the student. She transformed her institution from one that originally struggled to find its niche market, into a first-class nationally ranked and award winning college specializing in customized partnerships, eLearning and accelerated learning formats.

Dr. Diana Oblinger, President of EDUCAUSE, the association for information and technology in higher education had this to say about Linda: "Under her guidance, Rio Salado College has been a national leader in the use of technology to make higher education more accessible and responsive to the needs of students and communities."

Through her commitment to community education she changed the face of corporate education, training and workforce development through innovative programs and partnerships. She helped establish over 40 Educational Service Partnerships with business, government and industry (US Airways, USAA, Cox Communications, American Express, AZ Department of Corrections, Maricopa County Sheriff's Office, AZ Department of Public Safety, etc.), enabling tens of thousands of working adults to be full-time employees and simultaneously obtain a college education most without cost to the student/worker.

Linda is passionate about the importance of higher education and lifelong learning. She believes in accessible and affordable educational opportunities for all students. Her high energy and commitment to students shows in all she does. Her particular strengths are finding new or underserved student markets, forging community partnerships and tapping into new technologies. She is an innovator in education and community partnerships, a collaborator that fosters and builds on community strengths with a long history of innovation. Her commitment to students is reflected in a commitment to her employees.

"She inspires employees to explore new pathways to ensure student success." --Dr Anna Solley, President, Phoenix College

Dr. Linda M Thor is not only an outstanding leader, example, and champion for higher education, she is a proven innovator.

Linda M. Thor



Meet her in these Short Video Clips as she talks about her career and some of the innovations she has led.



On Coming to Maricopa as a College President

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPdTcaml1l0>



A Pioneer in Online education

http://arizona.jobing.com/video_details.asp?segment=15301&i=48528



Custom textbooks

http://arizona.jobing.com/video_details.asp?i=48528&segment=15309



Lifelong learning

http://arizona.jobing.com/video_details.asp?segment=15304&i=48528



Flexible start dates for Online Courses

http://arizona.jobing.com/video_details.asp?segment=15297&i=48528

Linda M. Thor
Curriculum Vitae/Résumé

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CAREER SUMMARY

FOOTHILL-DE ANZA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
DISTRICT

CHANCELLOR, 2010-Present

Serves as Chief Executive Officer of one of the most prominent community college districts in the nation, serving some 65,000 students each year in the Silicon Valley. A nationally recognized innovator in education, Thor is the sixth chancellor since the district's founding in 1957. She succeeds Martha J. Kanter, who now serves as under secretary of education in the administration of President Barack Obama.

MARICOPA
COLLEGES

PRESIDENT, RIO SALADO COLLEGE, 1990-2010

Serves as Chief Executive Officer of a countywide community college, which serves some 48,000 credit and 12,000 non-credit students annually. One of the ten colleges that comprise the Maricopa Community Colleges in greater Phoenix, Rio Salado is a "college without walls" that specializes in serving working adults through distance learning, customized degrees with corporations and government, and accelerated programs such as dual enrollment for able and ambitious high school students. It has attracted national attention for its exemplary and award-winning programs, such as online post-baccalaureate teacher preparation, accelerated dental hygiene and online clinical dental assisting, adult literacy/GED, Sun Sounds Radio Reading Service for the print-impaired, KJZZ-FM and KBAQ-FM public radio, and its prison programs. It has provided leadership in the implementation of successful business practices in community colleges and was the recipient of the Arizona Governor's Award for Quality/1993 Pioneer. During her tenure, full-time equivalent student enrollment has increased 252%.

LOS ANGELES
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
DISTRICT

PRESIDENT, WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE, 1986-1990

Served as Chief Executive Officer of a 10,000-student culturally diverse community college located on 70 acres in Culver City with satellite centers at the Airport and Marina del Rey. The fully accredited comprehensive college offers 25 transfer and 19 occupational programs. During her tenure, headcount enrollment increased 48%, a facilities master plan was completed and funding obtained, and major new programs were implemented.

SENIOR DIRECTOR, OCCUPATIONAL & TECHNICAL EDUCATION, 1983-86

Responsible for developing and administering technical training programs under a \$14 million Employment Training Panel contract, \$3.7 million in Job Training Partnership Act projects, contract education and similar programs. Administered the LACCD's \$3.2 million Vocational Education Act funds.

DIRECTOR, HIGH TECHNOLOGY CENTERS AND SERVICES, 1982-83

Responsible for developing and administering high technology programs, including training under a \$3 million grant from the California Worksite Education and Training Act.

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES, 1975-81

Directed the communications activities of the college district and served as official spokesperson. Planned, coordinated and directed programs to keep internal and external publics informed; recruit students; promote programs; assist representatives of the news media; and advise staff on PR matters.

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER, 1974-75

Assisted in or developed programs, publications and other activities to improve support of the District by internal and external publics.

LEMOT
EDUCATIONAL
SERVICES

WESTERN STATES MANAGER, 1972-74

Acted as liaison between the company and school districts, instructors, affiliated universities and students. Coordinated regularly scheduled classes, weekend seminars and independent study.

PEPPERDINE
UNIVERSITY

DIRECTOR, PUBLIC INFORMATION, SCHOOL OF CONTINUING
EDUCATION, 1971-72

Responsible for promoting continuing education classes, seminars, workshops and independent study designed largely for educators.

ADJUNCT
FACULTY

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, Graduate School of Education, 1988

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES (UCLA), Graduate School of Education, 1990

RIO SALADO COLLEGE, 1993

NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY, College of Education, 2000-2009

EDUCATION

September, 1982
to April, 1986

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Degree: Doctor of Education/Community College Administration

September, 1977
to June 1980

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Degree: Master of Public Administration

September, 1968
to August, 1971

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, LOS ANGELES

Degree: Bachelor of Arts/Journalism (Magna Cum Laude)

CREDENTIALS

Arizona Community College Teaching Certificate (Life)

California Community College Instructor (Life)

California Community College Supervisor (Life)

California Community College Chief Administrative Officer (Life)

HONORS AND RECOGNITION

2012 Morris T. Keeton Award, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

2012 Distinguished Service Award, National University Technology Network (NUTN)

2012 San Jose/Silicon Valley Business Journal 100 Women of Distinction

2011 Associate of Arts (honorary), De Anza College

2011 Doctor of Humane Letters (honorary), Palo Alto University

2008 Ronald McDonald House Charities "Excellence in Education" Award

2007 "Distinguished Alumna Award," California State University, Los Angeles, College of Natural and Social Sciences

2007 "Pioneer Award," Community College Baccalaureate Association

2006 ATHENA Award Finalist, Greater Phoenix Chamber of Commerce

2003 "Paul A. Elsner Excellence in Leadership Award," The Chair Academy

2000 "Shirley B. Gordon Award of Distinction for CEO's," Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society

1998 "Pacesetter of the Year," District VI, National Council on Marketing and Public Relations

1998 "Alumni Professor for the Day," California State University, Los Angeles

1993 For "contributions and leadership in community college education," American Association of Women in Community Colleges, Arizona Chapter

1992 For "outstanding contributions to the cause of improvement in community college leadership," National Institute for Leadership Development

1990 For "outstanding contributions, 1986-90," West Los Angeles College Foundation

1990 For "outstanding contributions and service on behalf of California's community colleges," California Association of Community Colleges

1989 "Outstanding Achievement Award", the Women's Business Network, Los Angeles

1988 "Woman of the Year", Culver City Business & Professional Women

1988 For "exceptional leadership and community involvement and as a pioneer and role model for all women in higher education", Santa Monica College Women's Center

1987 "Alumni Medal of Honor" for outstanding professional and personal achievements, Pepperdine University

1987 Commendation for "distinguished career as a leader in the field of education", Los Angeles County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn

1986 "Delores" Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education, Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology

1977 "Certificate of Achievement," Soroptimist International of Los Angeles

1971 Class Valedictorian (highest GPA) and Dean's List (all terms), Pepperdine University

CURRENT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Bay Area Council Economic Institute Board, 2012-present

League for Innovation in the Community College Board, 2010-present

Joint Venture Silicon Valley, Board of Directors, 2010-present

NOVA Workforce Board, Board of Directors, 2010-present

University Associates-Silicon Valley, Board of Governors, 2010-present

Telecommunications and Technology Advisory Committee, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, 2010-present
 Foothill-De Anza Foundation, Board of Directors, 2010-present
 American Council on Education, Commission on Lifelong Learning, 2008-present
 WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WCET) Executive Council, 2006-2012
 Community College Baccalaureate Association Board of Directors 2000-present
 Peninsula Clergy Network Community Advisory Board, 2011-present
 American Leadership Forum – Silicon Valley –Class of XXIII
 StudentMentor.org Advisory Board, 2011-present
 The SOURCE on Community College Issues, Trends & Strategies Editorial Board, 2011-present
 Capella University Community College Advisory Council, 2011-present
 International Women's Forum Northern California, 2011-present

SELECTED PAST PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

U.S. Department of Education Committee on Measures of Student Success, 2011-12
 EDUCAUSE Board of Directors, 2010-2011
 East Valley Partnership Board of Directors, 2009-2010
 Transparency by Design Executive Council, 2008-2010
 Arizona Quality Alliance, Board of Directors, 2008-2010
 Interfaith Community Care, Board of Directors, 2008-2010
 Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation Board of Directors, 2006-2010
 Nana's Children Mental Health Foundation Board, 2003-2010
 Friends of Public Radio Arizona Board of Directors, 2002-2010
 Continuous Quality Improvement Network, 1991- 2010 (President, 1996-97)
 Arizona Community College Presidents' Council, 1990- 2010(President, 1995-96)
 Arizona Town Hall, Board of Directors, 2005-2009
 Council for Adult & Experiential Learning, Board of Trustees (Past Chair), 1990-2005
 Pew Learning and Technology Program Advisory Board, 1999-2004
 American Assn. of Community Colleges Commission on Learning & Communication Technologies, 2000-03
 League for Innovation in the Community College Project SAIL Advisory Board, 2003
 Valley of the Sun United Way Campaign Cabinet, Colleges Division Chair, 2002
 Sloan ALN Consortium 2001, 2002 Awards Committees
 12 NEWS Local Schools Team, 2000
 Arizona Learning Systems Executive Committee, Secretary-Treasurer, 1998-2002
 Western Governors University Education Provider Advisory Council, 1998-2001
 Arizona Department of Economic Security Venture Team Board (by gubernatorial appointment), 1993-2001
 Arizona Partnership for the New Economy Steering Committee (by gubernatorial appointment), 1999-2001
 Arizona Task Force on Western Governors University (by gubernatorial appointment), 1996-2000
 Chair, Governor's Steering Committee for the "No Wrong Door" Service Delivery Improvement Initiative (by gubernatorial appointment), 1998-99
 Greater Phoenix Economic Council Board of Directors, 1994-99
 Arizona Higher Education Study Committee (by Legislative appointment), 1997-98
 Arizona Learning Systems Steering Committee, 1996-98
 American Council on Education, Commission on Leadership Development, 1995-98
 International Community College Operations Team chair, 1996-98
 City of Phoenix International Women's Day Steering Committee, 1997, 1998
 American Assn. of Community Colleges Commission on Academic & Student Development, 1995-97
 Arizona Governor's Advisory Council on Quality (by gubernatorial appointment), 1992-96
 American Association of Community Colleges Commission on Urban Community Colleges, 1992-95
Community College Times Advisory Committee, 1993-95
 AAWCC Leaders Foundation Board, 1991-94
 CASE Commission on Two-Year Institutions, 1991-93
 Phoenix Community Alliance, Board of Directors, 1990-91
 Arizona Cactus - Pine Girl Scout Council, Board of Directors, 1991-92
 National Institute for Leadership Development Advisory Committee, 1990-94

Woodbury University, Board of Trustees, 1989-90
 Industry Education Council of California, Vice President, 1988-90
 Tri Valley Alliance of Higher Education, Vice President, 1986-90
 UCLA Extension College Counseling Certificate Program Advisory Board, 1986-90
 United Way Western Region Board of Directors, 1988-90
 Culver-Palms YMCA Board of Managers, 1989-90
 West Los Angeles College Foundation Board, Secretary, 1986-90
 Community College Presidents Advisory Committee, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education & Psychology, 1986-90
 Marina del Rey-Westchester Symphony Society Advisory Board, 1987-90
 Technology Exchange Center, Board of Directors, Vice Chair, 1986-99

California Association of Community Colleges

Chairperson, Commission on Public Relations, 1978-79, 1979-80
 Member, Convention Advisory Committee, 1988

California Community Colleges, Chancellor's Office

Member, Contractual Education Task Force, 1985-86
 Member, Employment Training Advisory Council, 1984-85, 1988-89
 Member, Vocational Education Research Review Committee, 1984-85

Women in Communications, Inc.

Member, Professional Qualifications Committee, 1981-82; 1982-83
 Professional Advisor, CSULA Campus Chapter, 1981-82
 Chairperson, Scholarship & Education Fund, L.A. Chapter, 1976-78
 Executive Vice President, L.A. Chapter, 1975-76
 Vice President, Education & Career Services, L.A. Chapter, 1974-75
 Career Conference Chairperson, L.A. Chapter, 1973
 National Chairperson for New Professionals, 1971-72
 National Fourth Vice President, 1970-71

PAST SERVICE TO THE MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Chancellor's Executive Council
 Strategic Planning Advisory Council Tri Chair
 Strategic Planning Support Team
 Women's Leadership Group CEC Representative
 Maricopa Integrated Risk Assessment (MIRA) Committee
 MAT Classification Study Oversight Committee
 Student Information System Executive Committee
 Washington D.C. Representation Selection Committee
 Civic Participation Advisory Group
 Student and Educational Development Advisory Council
 Institutional Advancement Advisory Council
 Diversity Advisory Council, Communications Chair
 Quantum Quality Executive Council
 Budget Development Executive Council
 Apollo Executive Steering Team
 PEW/ACE/Kellogg Roundtable
 Audit and Finance Committee
 Legislative Caucus
 1995 and 2002 United Way Campaign Chair
 Commission on Quantum Quality, Co-Chair
 Management Team, Collaborative Policy Development with Professional Staff Association
 Chandler-Gilbert Community College Presidential Selection Committee

PUBLICATIONS

Co-Author, "The Community College Baccalaureate: Process and Politics," Alternative Pathways to the Baccalaureate, Stylus Publishing, 2012 (publication pending)

Author, "Developing a Culture of Innovation and Change," Innovations in Higher Education: Igniting the Spark for Success, The Ace Series on Higher Education, 2011

Author, "The Right Mix: Exploring the Benefits of Hybrid Courses," Community College Journal, August/September 2010

Co-Author, "Leadership (Views from the Top): Aligning Expectations: 3-2-1," EDUCAUSE Review, January/February 2010

Author, "POV: Transparency by Design: Stepping Into the Light," Community College Week, September 21, 2009

Author, "The Human Side of Change: Employee Care and Empowerment," Arizona Women in Higher Education, September 2009

Author, "Bringing the Best of Business Strategies to Higher Education," EDUCAUSE Review, September/October 2006

Author, "Ensuring Full-Time Quality with Part-Time Faculty," The Leadership Dialogues: Community College Case Studies to Consider, League for Innovation in the Community College, 2004

Co-Author, "Mainstreaming Distance Learning Into the Community College," Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks, February 2004

Co-Author, "Concurrent Enrollment In Arizona: Encouraging Success in High School," *Systems for Offering Concurrent Enrollment at High Schools and Community Colleges*, New Directions for Community Colleges, Jossey-Bass, Spring 2001

Author, "The Rio Salado Experience: Partnerships—and Essential Ingredient for E-Learning in the Workforce," TechKnowLogia, May/June 2001

Author, "Understanding the Appeal of For-Profit Colleges," Community College Week, January 24, 2000

Author, "Keeping Up With the Joneses," Point of View article, Community College Week, May 31, 1999

Co-author, "The Maricopa Community College District: A Culture of Deliberate Transformation," The Multi-campus System, Stylus Publishing, 1998

Co-author, "Managing Change: A Case Study in Evolving Strategic Management," *A Ripple or a Sea-Change? Organizational Change in the Community College*, New Directions for Community Colleges, Jossey-Bass, Summer 1998

Author, "Leadership: The Driver of the System," High Performing Colleges, Prescott Publishing, 1996

Co-author, "Implementing TQM in a Community College: Lessons Learned," Total Quality Management: Implications for Higher Education, Prescott Publishing Company, 1995

Author, "Introducing the Human Side of Total Quality Management into Educational Institutions," Community College Journal of Research and Practice, July-August, 1994

Author, "TQM and Marketing--The Same Approach?" Strategic Marketing for Presidents, American Association of Community Colleges, 1994

Author, "Value-added Education: A President's Perspective," Total Quality Management on Campus: Is It Worth Doing? Jossey-Bass, 1994

Author, "The Reality of Taking TQM to the Academy: Part I--To Dream the Impossible Dream," Adult Assessment Forum, Spring 1993; "Part II--Taking the Next Logical Step," Adult Assessment Forum, Summer 1993

Author, "The Student as Customer," Vision, Maricopa Community Colleges, Spring 1992

Author, "Performance Contracting: Successfully Managing the Risk," *Marketing Strategies for Changing Times*, New Directions for Community Colleges, Jossey-Bass, Winter 1987

Co-author, "Future Promise: Community Colleges Lead Effort to Retrain California's Displaced Workers," California Higher Education, April, 1983

Author, "Effective Media Relations, or How Not to Make the Front Page," New Directions for Institutional Advancement: Advancing the Two-Year College, Jossey-Bass, March, 1982

Editor, Curriculum Design and Development for Effective Learning, a 148-page text/workbook published by Le Mot Educational Services, 1973

SELECTED MAJOR SPEECHES, KEYNOTES AND PRESENTATIONS

Note: A list of more than 100 speeches and presentations is available for review. Following is a sampling.

"Developing a Culture of Innovation and Change," Plenary Speaker, National University Technology Network (NUTN) annual conference, Kansas City, MO-9/18/12

Commencement Address, De Anza College, Cupertino, CA-6/25/11

Commencement Address, Palo Alto University, Stanford, CA-6/4/11

"Developing a Culture of Innovation and Change," Keynote Speaker, Etudes Summit 2011, Long Beach, CA.-5/5/11

"Demystifying Leadership: What the Textbooks Do/Don't Teach You," Keynote Speaker, MAT Annual Conference, Mesa, AZ-5/21/09

"Harnessing Technology for Personal Productivity, Communication, and Data Mining," American Association of Community Colleges National Conference, Phoenix, AZ-4/3/09

"A Red-Letter Season for Blue Ocean Thinking," CAEL International Conference, Philadelphia, PA-11/12/08

"The Web Evolution: So Much Potential, So Many Questions," Keynote Speaker, Sloan-C International Symposium, Carefree, AZ -5/8/08

"All Aboard the Digital Express!" Closing Keynote Speaker, League for Innovation in the Community College Conference on Information Technology, Nashville, TN-11/14/07

"All Aboard the Digital Express!" Keynote Speaker, EDUCAUSE Western Region Conference, San Francisco, CA – 5/7/07

“Women and the Emerging New Economy; Are We Ready?” Keynote Speaker, Women & Work: The Future, Arizona Women’s Education and Employment Symposium, Phoenix, AZ—3/31/06

“Trends in Technology: Astonishing Students in an eLearning Environment,” Speaker, Executive Leadership Institute, League for Innovation in the Community College, Tempe, AZ—12/8/04, 12/8/05 and 12/6/06

“Collaborating with Business and Industry...Near and Far,” Speaker, The Future Is Here Seminar, Washington DC—11/18/04

“Setting the Culture for Service and Innovation,” Norman Clark National Issues Lecture, National Network of Health Career Programs in Two Year Colleges, Tempe, AZ—10/24/02

“Changing the Definition of Higher Education: Implications for Accreditation,” Keynote Speaker, Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, Del Mar, CA—8/25/02

“The Systems Approach to Distance Learning: Astonishing Students and Faculty,” Speaker, Indiana Partnership for Statewide Education conference, Indianapolis, IN—4/3/01

“Leading Innovation and Change at Institutions in Transition,” Keynote Speaker, The College Board institute, San Diego, CA—2/22/01

“The Politics of the Community College Baccalaureate,” Speaker, Community College Baccalaureate Association conference, Orlando, FL—2/8/01

“From PR to the Presidency,” Speaker, Public Relations Association of Southern California Colleges, Loma Linda, CA—1/26/01

“The Community College Baccalaureate: Dealing with Politics,” Speaker, Community College League of California, Los Angeles, CA—11/18/00

“A Day in the Life...,” Speaker, Internet & Society 2000 Conference, Harvard University—6/2/00

“How to Become Change Adept: A Case Study,” Keynote Speaker, 4C/SD spring conference, Arrowhead, CA—4/20/00

“Catalysts for Change: Competition, Consumerism, Customization,” Facilitator, Florida Community College at Jacksonville Leadership Retreat, Jacksonville, FL—3/1/00

“Astonishing Students in Distance Learning,” Speaker, New Learning Strategies Seminar, Charlotte, N.C.—2/29/00

“From Vision to Reality: Closing the Gap,” CEO Technology Institute – Cupertino, CA –12/10/99

“Future Directions for Universities, Four-year Colleges and Community Colleges,” College Board’s College Students 2000 Conference – Washington, D.C. – 12/6/99

“The Changing Role of Community Colleges – What It Means for Your Campus,” State Relations Conference – Phoenix, AZ – 12/2/99

“Emerging Markets and Higher Education Models,” Arizona Governor’s Task Force on Higher Education – Phoenix, AZ – 11/17/99

“The Best Ideas from other States to Expand and Improve Higher Education,” California Citizen’s Commission on Higher Education – Sacramento, CA – 9/22/99

“Oh Yes, You Can!” Keynote Speaker, Consortium for Community College Development -San Antonio – 6/23/99

“Technology With the Personal Touch,” Plenary Session Speaker, Tech Ed99 - Ontario, CA – 4/22/99

“Over the Precipice: The Future of Digitized Education,” Featured Speaker, The Sedona Conference on the Convergence of Education, Technology & Entertainment -Sedona, AZ – 4/9/99

“Technology Supported Learning: Insights from Corporate and Academic Leaders,” Moderator and presenter, CAEL International Conference – Phoenix, AZ – 11/6/98

“Catalysts for Change: Competition, Consumerism and Cost-Effectiveness,” Keynote Speaker, Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications – Reno, NV – 10/15/98

“Change Is In YOUR Future: Competition, Consumerism, Customization,” Keynote Speaker, The Association of Washington Community & Technical College Administrators Summer Conference - Yakima, WA - 7/29/98

“Responding to the Growth Challenge: What Works?” Plenary Session Panelist, WICHE Policy Forum - Huntington Beach, CA - 10/27/97

“Community College Trustees as Legislative Advocates,” Panelist, Legislative Academy, Association of Community College Trustees - Dallas TX - 10/16/97

“Community Colleges - Empowered or Imperiled?” Panelist, Pepperdine University Community College Forum - Culver City, CA 10/9/97

“Tips for Upward Mobility: Creating Career Credibility,” Speaker, National Council on Marketing and Public Relations National Conference - Albuquerque, NM - 3/18/97

“The Quality Quest: Transforming the Future,” Keynote Speaker, The California Quality Consortium - Los Angeles, CA - 10/8/95

“Teaching and Learning in Nontraditional Settings,” Videoconference Panelist, College Board/PBS Videoconference - 3/2/95

“Commuter Students: Who’s In the Driver’s Seat?” Moderator, American College Personnel Association Videoconference - 11/7/94

“Quality Principles and Empowered Learning: Current Practices and Future Directions,” Plenary Session Speaker, American Association for Higher Education - Washington D.C. - 6/12 - 15/94

“Quality is Contagious: CQI and Academic Affairs,” Featured Speaker, Benchmarking for Quality in Higher Education - Orlando, FL - 3/17/94

“Is It Just Another Fad or Is It Here To Stay: TQM and Academic Leadership,” Keynote Speaker, Third International Conference for Community College Chairs, Deans and Other Instructional Leaders - Phoenix, AZ - 2/26/94

“The Human Side of Quality: Vision, Values and Empowerment,” Keynote Speaker, American Association of Women in Community Colleges – Portland, OR -12/9/93

“TQM for Community Colleges,” Keynote Speaker, National Council of Community College Business Officials (NCCCBO) - Chicago, IL - 11/9/93

“TQM: Recognizing Women’s Leadership Style,” Keynote Speaker, Way Up Conference - Phoenix, AZ - 10/29/93

“How to Inspire Quality Driven Creativity and Innovation in the Workplace,” Plenary Workshop, Council of North Central and Two Year Colleges Conference Workshop - Phoenix, AZ - 10/4/93

“Why Colleges Need TQM, An Overview,” Keynote Speaker, The Association of Washington Community and Technical College Administrators Summer Conference - Spokane, WA - 8/2/93

“Using TQM in Higher Education,” Plenary Session Speaker, Western Association of College & University Business Officers – Anaheim, CA – 5/10/93

“The Human Side of Quality: Employee Empowerment,” Keynote Speaker, League for Innovation Conference on Quality, Irvine, CA - 2/1/93

“A Future Where Possibilities May Become Realities,” Featured Speaker, Maricopa Community Colleges Management Breakfast - Phoenix, AZ - 4/25/91

“The Three P’s of Student Recruitment: Perception, Packaging and Participation,” Keynote Speaker, National Council on Resource Development Conference - Snowbird, UT - 4/30/87

8/12

Linda M. Thor

Selected Articles

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Foothill-De Anza Community College District receives award for working to keep textbook prices low

Wilson, M. (2010, Dec 02). Foothill-de anza community college district receives award for working to keep textbook prices low. McClatchy - Tribune Business News, pp. n/a. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/815586440?accountid=12597>

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Abstract (summary)

Funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the collaborative takes multiple approaches to promoting the adoption of open textbooks among community college faculty. Since its founding in 2008, the collaborative has identified and cataloged online more than 500 open textbooks suitable for use in community colleges.

Full Text

Dec. 02--The Foothill-De Anza Community College District was one of four recipients nationally honored for its innovative use of technology in higher education.

The WCET Outstanding Work Award acknowledged the college district's role in establishing and operating the Community College Open Textbook Collaborative, which aims to lower the cost of textbooks.

The collaborative has been working for two years with colleges across the nation to encourage faculty use of free and low-cost digital textbooks. The so-called "open textbooks" come at a much lower cost than printed texts, or at no cost to students.

"We are proud of the collaborative's progress and honored to have our work acknowledged with this coveted national award," district chancellor Linda Thor said in a prepared statement. "It recognizes the innovative approach we have taken to find a unique solution to the common problem of high textbook costs, which are a barrier to students' success in college. We are proud of our progress in increasing use of open textbooks."

The collaborative defines open textbooks as being free or nearly free, easy to obtain, customizable, printable, usable on different technology platforms and easy to use even for students with disabilities. The awards were presented on Nov. 12 at WCET's annual conference.

"We believe that helping faculty acquire the knowledge and resources they need to use, customize and redistribute high-quality open textbooks not only

empowers them as teachers, but enhances learning opportunities for students and helps them graduate earlier," said Judy Baker, executive director of the Community College Open Textbook Collaborative and dean of the technology and innovation division at Foothill College. "We began the collaborative because our research showed that a large percentage of community college faculty members are interested in adopting open textbooks, but were unlikely to move forward without additional support."

Funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the collaborative takes multiple approaches to promoting the adoption of open textbooks among community college faculty.

Since its founding in 2008, the collaborative has identified and cataloged online more than 500 open textbooks suitable for use in community colleges. Nearly 100 of these open textbooks have already undergone extensive peer review, and many have been reviewed for accessibility standards.

Partners working on the collaborative include colleges, government agencies, educational nonprofits and other educational organizations.

For more information about the Community College Open Textbook Collaborative, visit www.collegeopentextbooks.org.

Credit: The Cupertino Courier, Calif.

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Indexing (details)

Subject	College faculty; Awards & honors; Community colleges; Colleges & universities; Textbooks
Title	Foothill-De Anza Community College District receives award for working to keep textbook prices low
Author	Wilson, Matt
Publication title	McClatchy - Tribune Business News
Publication year	2010
Publication date	Dec 2, 2010
Year	2010
Publisher	McClatchy - Tribune Information Services
Place of publication	Washington
Country of publication	United States
Journal subject	Business And Economics
Source type	Wire Feeds
Language of publication	English
Document type	News
ProQuest document ID	815586440
Document URL	http://search.proquest.com/docview/815586440?accountid=12597
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Last updated	2010-12-03
Database	ABI/INFORM Complete

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Leading the way: Linda Thor takes reins as new chancellor for Foothill-De Anza district



Written by Traci Newell - Town Crier Staff Writer

TUESDAY, 30 MARCH 2010



Photo Elliott Burr/Town Crier

Linda Thor assumed the role of chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District Feb. 16.

opportunity and innovation in meeting the educational needs of a diverse student body and community.

Climbing the ladder

Thor entered the professional arena in her early 20s, working as public information officer for the Los Angeles Community College District. At the tender age of 25, the chancellor promoted her to director of communications – the only female director in the district offices at the time.

“Opportunities were beginning to open up for women,” Thor said. “The chancellor was very consciously opening up doors for women and minorities.”

In the ensuing 12 years, Thor earned five promotions, ultimately advancing to president of West Los Angeles College. At 36, she was the youngest

Linda M. Thor rose through the ranks of academia to become the sixth chancellor of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District. She took the reins last month, culminating a career climb that included adding a number of cracks to the proverbial glass ceiling for women in community college administration.

After serving 20 years as president of Rio Salado College in Tempe, Ariz., Thor’s arrival heralds a new chapter in Foothill-De Anza’s storied legacy and mission to provide a learning environment that fosters excellence,

community college presidents in the state, not to mention one of the few women serving in such a capacity.

"Being one of the very few women in administration in the community college system at that time, I felt some real responsibility to do well and hopefully open doors for others in the process," she said.

During her four-year stint at West Los Angeles College, Thor secured state funding for major capital construction projects, saw enrollment increase 48 percent and introduced a slew of innovative programs.

Thor left Los Angeles for Rio Salado College, a pioneer in using technology effectively to serve working adults. Through distance education, customized degree and certificate programs for corporations and government, and accelerated learning programs – such as dual enrollment for ambitious high school students – enrollment burgeoned during her tenure, increasing an estimated 252 percent.

Juggling work and children

Thor and her husband, Robert, who have been married for 35 years, have two children. Son Erik is 29, daughter Marie is 22. Thor quickly learned strategies for balancing motherhood with a demanding career – and sometimes her worlds overlapped. She gave birth to Marie during her first year as a college president.

"It turned out to be a really positive event on the campus," Thor said. "As I would walk around, students, some young mothers, would come up and talk to me. I remember commencement that year – as students crossed the stage, they would pat my tummy."

Thor credits her children and her experiences as a mother for helping her to understand the new generation of students.

"I think having children has been really, really helpful in terms of being able to relate to the needs of young people, and certainly has kept me in tune with technology and social networking," she said.

Her children also brought harmony to her often-busy schedule.

"I think when you have children, you have no choice but to have balance in your life," Thor said.

Thor's children played an instrumental role in her most recent career move,

encouraging her to share her gifts and talents with a larger student population.

"(They told me) I could take the experiences and the knowledge that I had gained in the previous 25 years and apply it to a bigger institution," she said.

Onward and upward

Thor applied for the position at Foothill-De Anza after hearing that her predecessor, Martha J. Kanter, resigned in June to become U.S. under secretary of education, overseeing postsecondary education for the Obama administration.

Thor said she was reluctant to leave Arizona for just any community college district – it had to dovetail with her passions. During her years in administration, she developed a true appreciation for technology and how it can serve students.

"I was attracted to the fact that Foothill-De Anza is the national leader in the use of Open Educational resources, had been one of the early providers of online learning and is sitting in the midst of Silicon Valley," she said.

Since beginning her term Feb. 16, Thor has been busy meeting with the district community, receiving briefings on college programs and dealing with day-to-day business.

"Her experience, energy and values are the perfect complement to where Foothill-De Anza is today, and where we need to be tomorrow," wrote Foothill President Judy Miner in an e-mail to the Town Crier. "She masterfully blends respect for our traditions with a vision of continuous improvement for teaching and learning."

Thor is also in the process of doing her homework on the district's history.

"Certainly I am taking the time to fully understand the history, values, culture and unique aspects of this district, because I want to build on that, not disrupt it, she said.

Thor anticipates helping the district build its current technology offerings, both in support of students and for the sake of efficiency.

"Research indicates that the millennial students' preferred choice of delivery for higher education is a combination of in-person and technology-

supported learning," she said.

Another goal is to expand the district's sustainability programs. Thor plans to increase the use of solar panels, which she hopes will yield financial, educational and environmental benefits.

"Through the educational process, I want to better prepare this community for green jobs and green living," she said.

Hope for the future

Thor expressed disappointment in the current state of California's community college system.

"The California higher educational system that I grew up with was truly open door and was accessible to everyone who wanted to take advantage of it," she said. "The fact that community colleges are now turning away thousands of students is heartbreaking."

But she remains confident that the Foothill-De Anza district will recover from its recent budget woes, which forced cuts in programs, classes and staff.

The district is working to create new revenue streams. In addition to installing solar panels, the board of trustees will vote April 5 on a recommendation to engage a polling company to evaluate community interest in a small parcel tax.

The district has added a grants office at Foothill to compete for funds at the federal and state levels.

Foothill-De Anza Foundation officials have offered to ramp up support for the community colleges.

Thor's overall mission for impending budget cuts is to restructure programs to save money but preserve the quality of instruction.

"We are cutting back on everything we can that doesn't negatively affect the instructional program," she said. "We are really trying to do as little harm to students as possible."

Despite the challenges ahead, Thor said seeing students at commencement makes it all worthwhile.

"I love to see the students celebrating their success with their families,"

she said. "That is when all of the problems and challenges we have to deal with during the year become worth it."

Contact Traci Newell at tracin@latc.com.

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**HYBRID CLASSES COMBINE
ONLINE AND IN-PERSON
LEARNING TO PROVIDE OPTIONS
FOR STUDENTS, COLLEGES**

A Rio Salado College student works with an instructor in the college's accelerated clinical dental assisting program, a combination of in-person classroom workshops and online coursework.

THE RIGHT MIX

Similar to the online revolution of the mid-1990s, hybrid learning classes are redefining how community college students access higher education. My perspective is based on experiences at two very different institutions: Rio Salado College, a noncampus college based in Tempe, Ariz., that serves working adults using nontraditional formats, and Foothill De Anza Community College District, composed of two large comprehensive colleges in California's Silicon Valley that serve traditional and nontraditional students, including working adults.

BY LINDA THOR

Research on the value of hybrid courses to community colleges is difficult to compile because definitions of hybrid courses vary so widely (see sidebar, page 41). However, I'm increasingly convinced that blending online and face-to-face learning, when done in a well-integrated fashion that capitalizes on the advantages of each, offers a practical and effective way to meet the learning needs and expectations of the multiple generations of students who populate our colleges.

A recent student survey by the Center for Community College Student

Engagement found that learners who received blended instruction reported being more engaged than those who took their classes exclusively online. And a recent meta-analysis of research on online learning conducted by the U.S. Department of Education concluded that students in hybrid and fully online courses outperformed those who received only face-to-face instruction. Unfortunately, that study could not determine whether the greater effectiveness was due to the delivery mode or the extra learning time afforded students in hybrid and online courses.



Rio Salado

As president of Rio Salado College from 1990 until February 2011, I had the opportunity to shape a new kind of community college. Rio Salado was established more than 40 years ago to bring the college experience to populations that had gone unserved or underserved by higher education, including working adults with families and people living in rural areas who could not regularly commute to a college campus. Initially, Rio Salado offered instruction in person at hundreds of community locations and through multimedia formats such as telecourses.

The college began rapidly expanding its reach in 1980, when it launched its first online courses using a proprietary course management system.

**"ALL THE BENEFITS OF
ONLINE EDUCATION
ACCUE TO STUDENTS
IN HYBRID COURSES."**

RioLearn, which also offered a full complement of student support services. At the time, there was no momentum for hybrid (part online, part in-person) courses.

That changed about 10 years ago when the college concluded that students in certain on-line career programs would benefit from an in-person component to gain "hands-on" practical or clinical skills. Today, Rio offers on-line teacher education courses supplemented by in-person and virtual practicum, as well as in-person sessions with master teachers. Likewise, students in the college's accelerated clinical dental assisting program complete their academic coursework on-line, but also participate in weekend clinical experiences under the supervision of participating dentists, followed by rigorous in-person clinical internships

in Arizona. Rio will expand its commitment to hybrid learning by launching RioPASS, a new fast-track robust program that provides a prescriptive pathway to associate degrees for students who have few or no college credits. The program offers the convenience of online learning for people who are busy during the week, but adds the community and camaraderie of in-person class meetings on the weekends.

Foothill-De Anza

Today, I am chancellor of a large California community college district

transitional, low-risk learning experiences for faculty and students who may be interested in shifting to online, reports Judy Baker, dean of Foothill Global Access. This is more typical than Rio's reverse trajectory of moving from fully online to some hybrid courses.

Potential Benefits

Hybrid courses offer community colleges some compelling potential benefits. Not the least is the opportunity to meet on their home turf the increasing number of students who grew up with technology fully inte-



encompassing two colleges that offer a mix of in-person, on-line, and hybrid courses—options driven by the choices of individual faculty members. Foothill and De Anza represent the more typical case of colleges in which there is no institutional imperative for a particular type of course delivery, but there is a bias for teaching excellence.

Like Rio Salado, Foothill College was an early entrant into online education, thanks to entrepreneurial faculty efforts starting in 1985. It continues to offer a robust online program through Foothill Global Access. At Foothill, hybrid courses often serve as

grated into their lives as well as those who adopted technology later but are now completely comfortable using it to gather information, acquire knowledge, and interact with others.

By shifting some attendance off campus, hybrid courses can help an institution reduce its carbon footprint and maximize facility use, which is particularly important when student demand for higher education is so great.

All the benefits of online education accrue to students in hybrid courses. These include convenience, flexibility, and increased opportunity for reflex-

tion and self-directed learning. At the same time, hybrid delivery allows students to experience the face-to-face contact with an instructor and social interaction with other students that are still important to many learners.

Faculty members report that well-structured hybrid courses can stimulate exciting levels of student engagement and participation in ways similar to fully online courses. Online, no one can sit silently in the back of the class. The online medium offers opportunities to engage students in innovative ways that are not as feasible or effective on campus.

Hybrid courses also can promote active learning by providing students with convenient Internet access to a wealth of up-to-date resources. Further, both students

and faculty can digitally document the learning process.

Sanjivall College computer science instructor Mike Murphy, who had not taught online before, recently began using Web video and audio conferencing software applications for his Cisco networking class. Although he continues to teach every session live in a classroom on campus, his students now can see and hear the lessons he is showing the class from his desktop on their desktops. Live on a hybrid—outside of the classroom.

The response has been enthusiastic. Many of Murphy's students are Silicon Valley professionals who face busy

Possible Drawbacks

Hybrid courses are not without potential drawbacks.

While they lessen demand for classroom space, hybrid courses can increase demand on campus computer labs and the technology infrastructure. One of the most significant challenges hybrid courses present for community colleges is providing appropriate technical support to students and faculty, particularly those who are new to online instruction.

Students need to clearly understand the technical and participatory require-

"A WELL-DESIGNED HYBRID CLASS CAN HELP INSTRUCTORS MAKE THE MOST OF THEIR CLASSROOM TIME..."



and faculty can digitally document the learning process.

A well-designed hybrid class can help instructors make the most of their classroom time by enabling electronic completion of such tasks as exchanging tests, papers, and other documents; dispensing information about grading; and critiquing student work. Students also can easily share their work with each other.

For institutions still hesitant about online learning, the hybrid model offers an attractive way to respond to the growing student expectations for a technological component to their education. And for faculty who do not wish to teach fully online, hybrid courses can open the door to new and innovative teaching strategies they may not otherwise have considered

schedules and travel on the job. Now, they can go back and review material when they need it, and those who are traveling can participate in class live.

"It gives them the best of both worlds," Murphy says. "I know it helps with retention, because if they ever change during the course, they can still continue participating."

Murphy does not require students to attend his class in person, but he said that most do whenever they can. "They get a lot of interaction in class," he explains, "and interaction with each other is at least as important as what I do."

ments of hybrid courses ahead of time to avoid frustration later. Unfortunately, not all colleges clearly communicate this information to prospective students, who may find themselves enrolled in courses for which they are not equipped or prepared.

Because so much of Rio Salado's instruction is offered online using the college's proprietary course management system, expert technical support for students and faculty is readily available day and night. Besides having the appropriate technical support, it's also important to have a stable course management system and to provide

faculty who have not taught online before with professional development to learn what works best pedagogically in hybrid instruction.

Teaching a hybrid course for the first time requires faculty to climb a steep learning curve for which they need adequate time, resources, and support. They need the computer equipment, software, course development time, training, and instructional design services necessary to develop, maintain, and manage the delivery of high-quality instruction. Creating a hybrid course involves more than simply replacing a fixed portion of on-campus meeting days with online activities; the two components must be integrated and support each other.

At Pothill College, faculty who teach hybrid courses have access to the same resources as those who teach fully online, but are not required to use the college-supported course management system. Like online

instructors, they can use the campus multimedia lab, attend workshops, and enlist the help of an instructional designer. Unfortunately, some instructors are not aware of these services and may not have the latest information about best practices, training opportunities, technical support, copyright, and legal requirements regarding accessibility and protecting private information. Baker says faculty outreach is critical to ensuring a high-quality hybrid program.

Lessons Learned

It is my experience that community college leaders can improve the success of distance learning offerings by recognizing and clarifying the differences between online and hybrid courses.

Following are some of the key lessons I've learned as a leader who supports instructional and technological innovation in service to students:

- Developing hybrid courses requires

as much expertise, time, and resources as developing fully online courses, and faculty need institutional support to do it well.

- Online components must be fully integrated and connected with the on-campus components so they work together to achieve success.
- Colleges must ensure that their students receive clear instruction about online and on-campus participation requirements and what to do when they need technological help.

Finally, whether a course is offered in person, online, or through hybrid delivery, the skill of the instructor in facilitating student learning remains the single most important factor of all.

Laura Truss is chancellor of Pothill De Anza Community College District, June 14, 2016, dean of Pothill Global Access at Pothill College, also contributed to this article.

Aligning Expectations: 3-2-1

To highlight “views from the top”—both from the top of the institution and from the top of the IT organization—and to explore how the IT organization can best align with and support the institutional mission, this Leadership department column asks three questions of the president and three similar questions of the CIO.

Linda M. Thor, President

What 3 things should any CIO know about leading an institution?

First, the CIO needs to understand and fulfill the president's expectations, particularly as they relate to fulfilling the institution's vision and mission. Next, please—no surprises! Surprises can be especially disconcerting with issues that involve a financial stake. The solution is for the CIO to provide regular briefings and updates to the president on all technology-related matters. Finally, the CIO should bring the president ideas for improvements, ideally on a continuous basis. These could be information about new technologies or ways to streamline existing technologies. They could also take the form of innovations that could be implemented to reduce costs.

What 2 things does a president need from the CIO?

The CIO should learn to anticipate the president's needs. This would include the preparation of routine briefings about expenditures and equipment, plus updates about anything that could significantly affect the institution. Second, I would also encourage all CIOs to think more strategically about their role throughout the institution. For example, the CIO can suggest ways to positively influence teaching and learning through technology innovations. If there is going to be a technology update or conversion, what is the timeframe of the rollout so that students, faculty, and staff can be notified and adequately prepared? The president needs to know well in advance.

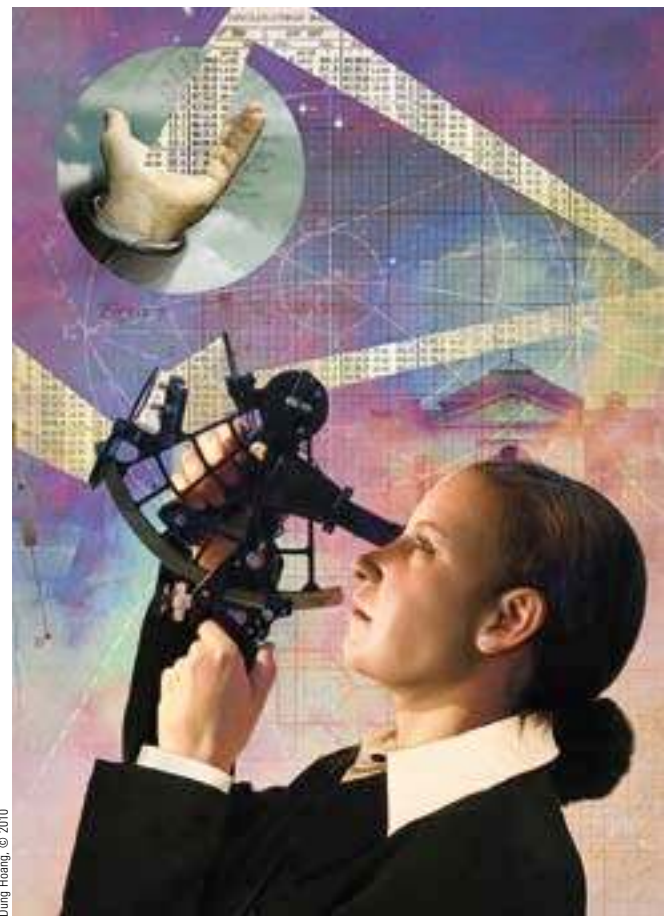
What is the 1 thing you would change in your institution regarding information technology, if you could change only 1 thing?

In an ideal situation, there would be better operability of technologies for more integrated communication across the entire institution. For example, personal productivity could be enhanced with seamless calendaring between remote sites or sister colleges. This requires both hardware and software solutions.

Edward C. Kelty, CIO

What 3 things should any president know about information technology?

Presidents should know at what level their IT department is functioning. Is it operational (i.e., just keeping things running), or is it a strategic partner (i.e., helping to transform the institution), or is it somewhere in between the two? If an IT department leans toward the operational end of the scale, a president shouldn't expect it to act like a strategic partner. If the president



Dung Huang, © 2010

desires to move the IT department from an operational function to more of a strategic role, that will necessitate an investment of time, resources, and people. And like most investments with solid returns, the transition to a strategic IT department is a process that does not happen overnight.

The second thing the president should know is that it is important to model appropriate uses of technology for increasing personal productivity, for communicating, and for making data-driven decisions. This in turn sets the tone for the employ-



By **LINDA M. THOR** and **EDWARD C. KELTY**

ees of the entire college or university. Regarding personal productivity, I'm referring to things as simple as knowing how to filter e-mail, using IM, or being proficient with a mobile device for prompt and rapid communication.

Third, it's important for the president to understand the funding requirements of an IT department. Effective information technology requires the appropriate capital and operational allocations. Additional services and responsibilities cannot be added to an IT department without some corresponding resource allocations or a reduction of previously supported activities.

What 2 things does a CIO need from the president?

The CIO needs a clear direction regarding what the president expects of the IT department now and into the future—and in what format and how often the president wants updates on those directions. This may seem simple, but unless it's discussed, both parties could have different expectations, leading to unnecessary friction and misunderstandings.

The second thing the CIO needs is for the president to understand the IT department well enough to have realistic expectations about what the IT department can and cannot do—not technically but on a higher level. Does the IT department have the ability to adapt and change to take on new initia-

tives? Does the IT department have the depth and breadth to support change without disrupting existing systems? Without this understanding, presidents won't know when they can use their IT department to advance initiatives or when to look for other resources.

What is the 1 thing you would change in your institution, if you could change only 1 thing?

There will always be things that can be adjusted; however, at the moment, there's no one big thing within the institution that I think requires substantial change. Several external factors—such as the economy and the reductions in state funding—are a concern. But I hope that in the coming year, the economy will start to stabilize so that we can continue to focus 100 percent of our efforts on teaching and learning. ■

Linda M. Thor (thorlinda@fhda.edu), President of Rio Salado College, will become Chancellor of the Foothill-DeAnza Community College District in mid-February. **Edward C. Kelty** (Edward.Kelty@RioSalado.edu) is CIO at Rio Salado College.

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From the Editor

[Welcome to the Spring 2007 Edition of Expressions.](#)

DAC Award for Excellence: Rio Salado College**Dr. Linda Thor, President, Beatriz Cohen, Faculty Chair, Counseling**

The Rio Salado College Inclusiveness Program is a systemic effort for planning and implementing Inclusiveness Education at the College. This systemic approach always involves participation of Administration, Faculty, and Staff, thereby impacting all members of the College community. Dr. Linda Thor and Ms. Beatriz Cohen have exemplified this commitment to Diversity Education across the spectrum of all employees, as well as the Rio student body.



Dr. Thor initiated the Diversity Program in 1991, at which time the coordination of the program was assigned to Beatriz Cohen, Faculty Chair for Counseling, assisted by a committee that represented different employee groups and constituencies. This program has thrived over the intervening years under the same leadership, and because of Dr. Thor's continuous support and Beatriz's guidance of the committee's activities and events, Rio Salado consistently delivers regular, meaningful and qualitative Inclusiveness/Diversity Education to all its employees and students. This exemplary initiative has become a flagship program in the District.

Examples of ongoing activities include the following:

- Mandatory Inclusiveness Training for all new employees -- There is a Diversity/Inclusiveness component in The Rio Way training for new employees, an intensive program that is delivered entirely through the use of the College's internal resources. The speakers are faculty, administrators, and staff.

- Monthly Brown Bag programs on Diversity-related themes, open to all employees of Rio Salado College and the District Office. These Brown Bags often feature well-known speakers from the local community, and are frequently attended by members of the Governing Board. Streaming video of these events is available to students through the College website.
- Online Diversity/Inclusiveness workshops for faculty
- Faculty participation in the District's *Infusing Diversity into the Curriculum* Program.
- An annual online Diversity contest for students
- An online Diversity Center for students and employees offers a variety of educational resources such as links to valuable information, along with streaming video of the monthly brown bags for employees and students who cannot attend the in-person events. http://www.riosalado.edu/ci/Diversity_center/
- College Inclusiveness Award -- The College promotes and maintains an environment that values every employee and student. Inclusiveness is one of the Core Values of the College. To demonstrate this, the College Rewards and Recognition program provides an Inclusiveness Award which is given to employees who contribute to the creation of an environment that reflects Diversity sensitivity and Diversity competence in the performance of their duties

The Rio Salado Inclusiveness Program creates dynamic learning environments through training programs and resources, with faculty, administrators and staff participating both as trainees and as trainers. This ensures that students are treated with respect and sensitivity by all employees with whom they come into contact at every level, including Faculty instructors, Student Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, etc.

As a result of the multiple components of this program:

- Employee demographics at Rio Salado have become more diverse. In the past year, 40% of the employees who were hired identified themselves as ethnic minorities.
- Attendance at non-mandatory Diversity/Inclusiveness program activities (such as Brown Bags) is excellent, and has increased steadily since the program's inception. Furthermore, participant evaluations of these events are always extremely positive.
- Large numbers of students submit entries for the annual online Diversity Contest.
- The Rio Way mandatory new-employee orientation inculcates Diversity and Inclusiveness values in all new employees.

Clearly, there is an overall culture of Diversity and Inclusiveness at Rio Salado College.

Strategic Directions: Creating Dynamic Learning Environments, Recruiting and Retaining Quality and Diverse Employees,

Developing a Strong Organizational Identity

~ Ten colleges specializing in university transfer, continuing education, career and job training programs ~
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point of view

Transparency by Design: Stepping Into the Light

Increasingly, we live in a transparent society where openness is expected and accountability is demanded. The word "transparency" is associated with seeing things more clearly when cast in the proper light. A Google search for the word produces more than 25 million links devoted to its practice in medicine, high tech, real estate, fiscal policy and just about every other industry or ideology. Even President Barack Obama's campaign web site promoted a platform of "restoring trust in government and improving transparency."

Applied to higher education, transparency demonstrates that institutions are willing to step into the light of public scrutiny by providing current and future students with solid data. But until recently, online learning providers who serve non-traditional student populations have not had a collaborative means to showcase their learning outcomes.

That has changed with the launch of Transparency by Design, a groundbreaking initiative that will transform adult learners into savvy consumers when it comes to distance education and competency-based programs of study. The initiative's public and private members comprise a consortium of regionally-accredited distance education institutions. Transparency by Design was born out of The President's Forum, which is a group of both traditional and non-traditional institutions sharing information about successful operation in an online environment.

WCET, a division of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), was chosen to provide quality assurance, overseeing the validation and verification of the data reported.

What is also different about this initiative is that it includes program-specific outcomes. Current and potential students can visit the recently launched website at www.collegechoices-foradults.org, click on any of the affiliated institutions, and review outcomes for fields of study and degree programs that

interest them. No standardized method of measurement has been adopted by participants; however, the information itself is transparent. It typically reveals factors such as demographics, student



LINDA M. THOR

PRESIDENT
RIO SALADO
COLLEGE
TEMPE, ARIZ

engagement and alumni satisfaction.

The following are five reasons why joining an initiative such as Transparency by Design makes good sense for community colleges:

First, transparency leads to open and informed decision-making. Community colleges are, by definition, colleges of and for the people. Transparency acknowledges that individuals have more options than ever before when selecting their college of first choice. Remember, this is the era of Facebook and MySpace, Twitter and texting. More than 50 percent of social media users are adults over the age of 25 who choose to divulge details of their lives to people they may never even meet. For them, it's all about building community, and it is natural to expect this same openness from their educational providers.

Second, accountability should begin internally. Entities such as the Spellings Commission have established expectations for both public and private colleges and universities to highlight learning outcomes. However, self-policing is always the preferable route. The commitment to expose program-level learning outcomes takes courage—but it also demonstrates a college or university that takes responsibility for continuous improvement and academic quality and rigor.

Third, community colleges can demonstrate leadership in establishing industry standards. Community colleges need to shoulder more responsibility for transparency and accountability because they represent the largest sector of higher education providers. They are essentially teaching and learning institutions and should not falter in sharing their often-overlooked successes and effectiveness.

Fourth, collaboration benefits everyone. The information from Transparency by Design participants can pave the way for the success of other major higher education initiatives. The most recent example is President Obama's American Graduation Initiative to increase community college graduation rates and close achievement gaps. Another example is the Lumina Foundation's goal to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60 percent by the year 2025.

Finally, transparency leads to self-improvement. Transparency invites comparison, and therefore sharpens our management skills as we confront questions about our identity. Are we truly who we say we are in our websites and literature? How well do we deliver the promises made in those marketing campaigns? Progress can only be achieved when areas of improvement are identified.

As a non-traditional institution serving primarily adult learners, my college, Rio Salado, became the nation's first community college to commit to Transparency by Design. I urge my colleagues with distance learning programs to visit www.transparencybydesign.org, engage in dialogue with the charter members and then consider joining our ranks. ▲

Comments: editor@ccweek.com

Linda M. Thor has served as president of Rio Salado College since 1990. The college served 36,000 distance learning students last year out of a total student population of nearly 60,000.

Community College Week

Published by Autumn Publishing Enterprises, Inc.

Publisher
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Editor
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Contributing Editor
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Senior Writers
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Additional production services provided by
Autumn Publishing Enterprises, Inc.

Advertising Director
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Community College Adviser
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COMMUNITY COLLEGE WEEK (ISSN 1041-5726) is published biweekly, 24 issues per year, by Autumn Publishing Enterprises, Inc., PO Box 1325, Fairfax, VA 22036, (703) 976-3535. Single subscription: \$52 per year; two years: \$90. Canadian and foreign rates furnished upon request.

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Letters to the Editor
should be addressed to:

editor@ccweek.com

FOR SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES ONLY
PERIODICALS POSTAGE PAID
AT FAIRFAX, VA 22036
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to:
Community College Week
PO Box 1367
Silver, TN 38375-0367
Phone: (800) 475-4371

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Community College Week wants to hear your views on our news stories, feature articles and guest opinion columns, as well as other matters affecting two-year institutions. In our Point of View section, education professionals find a forum to discuss and debate today's issues facing community, technical and junior colleges.

We welcome:

- Letters to the editor, which should be brief.
- Insightful commentaries, which can range up to a maximum of 1,000 words on topics of interest to community colleges.

IMPORTANT: Unsigned letters can't be considered for publication, so be sure to include your name, address, phone number and e-mail. Please add your title and college, if applicable.

Community College Week reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, style and space.

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RIO SALADO NAMED AMERICA'S GREENEST CAMPUS

Rio salado named america's greenest campus. (2009, Oct 15). US Fed News Service, Including US State News, pp. n/a. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/472779102?accountid=12597>

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Abstract (summary)

None available.

Full Text

TEMPE, Ariz., Oct. 14 -- Maricopa Community Colleges' Rio Salado Community College issued the following news release:

Rio Salado College has been named America's Greenest Campus by Climate Culture on Wednesday for having the highest average of carbon reduction per person. The college also was awarded \$5,000 to be put toward green initiatives.

Rio Salado College beat out nearly 500 colleges and universities across the country in the America's Greenest Campus (AGC) contest, which started in April. All of the participating schools combined to save \$4.5 million in energy costs and reduce their collective carbon output by 18.6 million pounds, which is equivalent to the annual amount of carbon emitted by 1,900 cars.

In effect, the award recognizes Rio Salado for having the smallest carbon footprint among all the entrants. Rio Salado's official carbon footprint, as documented for the American College and Universities Presidents Climate Commitment, is .84 tons of CO₂e.

The miniscule footprint is the result of Rio Salado's efficient learning formats, which include 550 online courses, in-person classes on-site at corporations and government agencies, and accelerated formats.

America's Greenest Campus is the first nationwide contest among colleges to reduce the carbon footprints of their students, faculty, alumni and staff. AGC partners include Climate Culture, SmartPower, Sierra Student Coalition, National Association of Environmental Law Societies and U.S. Department of Energy.

"Environmental viability is part of the culture at our college," said Rio Salado President Linda Thor. "We want to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs."

Rio Salado College is planning to use the money to help fund the Community Garden Project at its main campus, 2323 W. 14th St., Tempe. The community garden will be open to Rio Salado students pursuing a degree or certificate in its Sustainable Foods Program and Rio Salado employees. Food from the garden will be used in the Cafe @ Rio.

Classes will emphasize the movement toward sustainable food systems, including researching food sources, purchasing locally, and building relationships with local producers. As students progress through the program, they will complete fundamental culinary course work, focus on real food and prepare for hands-on learning experiences in the Cafe. The Cafe will work toward a goal of zero-waste.

To learn more about Rio Salado's efforts, visit <http://www.riosalado.edu/about/sustainability/Pages/participation.aspx>. For more information please contact: Sarabjit Jagirdar, Email:- htsyndication@hindustantimes.com.

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Indexing (details)

Title	RIO SALADO NAMED AMERICA'S GREENEST CAMPUS
Publication title	US Fed News Service, Including US State News

Publication year	2009
Publication date	Oct 15, 2009
Year	2009
Publisher	HT Media Ltd.
Place of publication	Washington, D.C.
Country of publication	Malaysia
Journal subject	Public Administration
Source type	Newspapers
Language of publication	English
Document type	WIRE FEED
ProQuest document ID	472779102
Document URL	http://search.proquest.com/docview/472779102?accountid=12597
Copyright	Copyright © HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
Last updated	2011-08-04
Database	ProQuest Research Library

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SURPRISE OKS PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE RIO SALADO CAMPUS AT NEW CITY HALL

Surprise oks partnership to create rio salado campus at new city hall. (2008, Feb 29). US Fed News Service, Including US State News, pp. n/a. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/469503654?accountid=12597>

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Base URL to 360 Link:

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Abstract (summary)

None available.

Full Text

The city of Surprise issued the following news release:

The Surprise city council approved an innovative partnership Thursday that will see a portion of the new City Hall complex open as a campus for Rio Salado Community College.

The Maricopa Community College Board of Directors approved the agreement Tuesday, December 11, 2007.

"This is a creative approach to increasing educational opportunity for our residents," says Surprise Mayor Lyn Truitt. "and

"Education is the key to our city's future," says District 3 Council member John Williams. "This partnership provides two and even four-year degree options in the heart of our community." "This is a creative approach to achieving the Surprise Vision of making ours a city of educational excellence," says Surprise Assistant City Manager Doug Sandstrom.

"Residents can now be assured that in the near future they will receive access to the high quality learning opportunities they need and deserve without leaving their community," said Rio Salado Community College President Linda Thor.

The agreement calls for the construction of a single-story, 26,000 square foot "City of Surprise Communiversity - Center for Higher Educational Excellence" as part of the new City Hall complex, which is already under construction at Surprise Center.

Rio Salado will pay up to the estimated \$8.5 million cost of the building, and use the space for classrooms and other educational facilities, such as computer labs. The city will administer the construction of the building, which will be jointly planned and designed, according to the agreement.

The agreement calls for the city to be able request access to the College space for city sponsored events, according to the agreement. "It is a win for everybody: the city, the College and especially our residents," Sandstrom says.

The College will own and maintain the building for at least five years, and the city expects to take ownership some time after that, depending on the need for city office space in the future, Sandstrom says.

"We will buy it from the College at an agreed upon replacement cost at the time that we identify the need for additional space, which we estimate at 10 to 15 years, and we will give a one-year notice," Sandstrom says. The agreement also calls for the city to assist in relocating the College elsewhere in Surprise, preferably in the same general area.

Rio Salado President Linda Thor noted that her college, through its Lifelong Learning Center on Smokey Drive, has maintained a strong presence in Surprise since 1996. That facility recently tripled in size due to an expansion funded through the general obligation bonds approved by voters in 2004.

"Rio Salado has really enjoyed seeing the City of Surprise thrive and become a magnet for economic development," stated Dr. Thor.

"We are excited about partnering with a group so committed to excellence," Sandstrom says of Rio Salado and the Maricopa Community Colleges. "Rio Salado has already made a significant contribution to community life, and we are gratified they are

joining us in investing for the future."Contact: Ken Lynch, 623/222-1400, 623/222-1420, ken.lynch@surpriseaz.com.

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Indexing (details)

Title	SURPRISE OKS PARTNERSHIP TO CREATE RIO SALADO CAMPUS AT NEW CITY HALL
Publication title	US Fed News Service, Including US State News
Publication year	2008
Publication date	Feb 29, 2008
Year	2008
Dateline	SURPRISE, Ariz.
Publisher	HT Media Ltd.
Place of publication	Washington, D.C.
Country of publication	Malaysia
Journal subject	Public Administration
Source type	Newspapers
Language of publication	English
Document type	WIRE FEED
ProQuest document ID	469503654
Document URL	http://search.proquest.com/docview/469503654?accountid=12597
Copyright	Copyright © HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
Last updated	2011-07-22
Database	ProQuest Research Library

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document 1 of 1

THOR, PRESIDENT OF RIO SALADO COLLEGE RECEIVES 'EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION' AWARD

Thor, president of rio salado college receives 'excellence in education' award. (2008, Oct 20). US Fed News Service, Including US State News, pp. n/a. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/469089553?accountid=12597>

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http://uw6km9mk7x.search.serialssolutions.com?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2004&ctx_enc=info:ofi/enc:UTF-8&rft_id=info:sid/ProQ%3Aqql&rft_val_fmt=info:ofi/fmt:kev:mtx:journal&rft.genre=unknown&rft.jtitle=US+Fed+News+Service%2C+10-20&rft.volume=&rft.issue=&rft.spage=&rft.isbn=&rft.btitle=&rft.title=US+Fed+News+Service%2C+Including+US+State+News&rft.is

Abstract (summary)

None available.

Full Text

Maricopa Community Colleges issued the following news release:

Dr. Linda Thor, President of Rio Salado College, the largest (in terms of headcount) of the 10 Maricopa Community Colleges, was awarded the 2008 Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) "Excellence In Education" award last week at the RMHC U.S. Scholarship Breakfast.

The event raised more than \$250,000 to help Arizona high school students attend college, making it one of the largest fundraising programs of its kind in the state.

Each year the "Excellence in Education" award is presented to collegiate educators that have shown exemplary commitment to education, innovation and leadership in the community.

"This collegiate administrator has demonstrated exceptional performance toward improving the quality of teaching and learning for students," said Nancy Roach, executive director of the Phoenix Ronald McDonald House. "She is a truly outstanding educator whose distinguished leadership is impacting our Arizona youth."

Thor has served 22 years as a college president and 18 at Rio Salado College in Tempe. Under Thor's leadership, Rio Salado, known as "the college without walls," has become a national leader in online education. The innovative college provides uniquely accessible and affordable courses to those who might not otherwise be able to pursue a higher education. Online classes start every Monday and students can take advantage of online tutoring and support services seven days a week while they earn associate degrees and certificates. The college has developed a reputation for innovation and has been profiled in the The New York Times, the Chronicle of Higher Education, University Business, and other major publications.

Over the past 12 years Rio Salado has earned a national reputation for academic excellence and for taking the lead in the explosive growth of eLearning. Nearly 30,000 of its 61,000 students enroll annually in online classes.

RMHC U.S. Scholarship Program offers scholarships to Arizona high school students from communities that face limited access to educational and career opportunities. Since its inception, the program has awarded over 1,000 scholarships to students.

Thor admits she has a deep affinity for the program's goal to provide Arizona high school seniors scholarships.

Thor wasn't always college bound. Bored with high school and with a well-paying job as a high school graduate, Thor considered continuing her summer job and not going to college. With prodding from her mother, Thor enrolled with the promise if she didn't like it she could quit.

"Obviously college was a good match since I have gone to college nearly every day of my life since then," said Thor.

But it wasn't easy. Thor's father was a police officer and the family couldn't afford the university tuition. But with multiple scholarships, Thor was able to attend college, graduating from Pepperdine University with a Bachelor's degree and continuing on to complete her Master's in Public Administration and earning a doctorate in Education in Community College Administration.

As a college president, Thor relates to many of her students knowing first-hand what it's like to juggle full-time work, home and

family while going to college.

"I told myself if I ever became a college president, I would help working adults who are trying to balance family, work and school," said Thor. "I have devoted the majority of my career to making a college education convenient and accessible, especially for working adults."

Rio Salado officially opened in 1978, catering to non-traditional college students. In 1996 it launched its first online courses and currently offers nearly 450 online classes. It is the only community college in the country which offers weekly start dates.

"I am very proud that this year Rio Salado will serve nearly 60,000 students for whom a traditional college education is not an option," Thor said.

For registration or more information call 480-517-8540 or go to www.riosalado.edu/registration.

To apply for a RMHC U.S. Scholarship, visit www.rmhc.org. Students must be a high school senior; enroll and attend an institution of higher education or a vocational or technical school; reside in central or northern Arizona; be less than 21 years of age and be a legal United States resident. Additionally, the student must submit a complete application and all required documentation by February 16, 2009. Contact: E.J. Anderson, 480/517-8472, ej.anderson@riomail.maricopa.edu.

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Indexing (details)

Title	THOR, PRESIDENT OF RIO SALADO COLLEGE RECEIVES 'EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION' AWARD
Publication title	US Fed News Service, Including US State News
Publication year	2008
Publication date	Oct 20, 2008
Year	2008
Dateline	TEMPE, Ariz.
Publisher	HT Media Ltd.
Place of publication	Washington, D.C.
Country of publication	Malaysia
Journal subject	Public Administration
Source type	Newspapers
Language of publication	English
Document type	WIRE FEED
ProQuest document ID	469089553
Document URL	http://search.proquest.com/docview/469089553?accountid=12597
Copyright	Copyright © HT Media Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
Last updated	2011-07-24
Database	ProQuest Research Library

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Bringing the Best of Business Strategies to Higher Education

Check out any edition of the Amazon.com or the *New York Times* nonfiction bestseller lists, and you'll always find a few business books in the mix. Right now, for instance, corporate America is searching for wisdom about the impact of globalization, reading through the pages of Thomas Friedman's *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*, which deals with the amazing transformations occurring in our digital society. Could these be lessons that can benefit higher education as well as business?

For years, CEOs in the private sector have sought to improve their performance and ultimately their bottom lines by borrowing strategies from others. A universal favorite is the late Peter Drucker, whose books spanned seven decades and spawned some quite interesting management theories. In the 1980s, Tom Peters and Robert Waterman emphasized "MBWA"—Management By Wandering Around—in the runaway bestseller *In Search of Excellence*. And since the 1990s, Stephen Covey has delivered concepts that can be practiced in one's personal as well as professional life through books such as *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and *Principle-Centered Leadership*.

Transferable Business Strategies

So, how do the concepts behind these and more recent business books and management models relate to those of us in the world of higher education? I would argue that we need to be paying more attention to these strategies formerly reserved for the corporate sector. There is tremendous opportunity for educators

to find relevance in both established and contemporary best practices in business.

Just like business, higher education in the twenty-first century is facing numerous factors that are influencing, for better or worse, organizational effectiveness. These include globalization, changing demographics, mass customization, and often, flattened financial resources. In addition, colleges and universities need to examine every possible solution to combat the encroachment on their "territories" by the hungry corporate providers that have entered the educational marketplace in recent years. Colleges and universities will need to reach beyond their own horizons when contemplating the best ways to educate the tech-savvy Generation Y, or Millennial, students.

Let's take a closer look at how a few of the more current business strategies could be transferable to educational institutions. For example, leaders might ask themselves: Have we been treading the same waters but not making headway in enrollment management? Is e-learning the panacea that will elevate our institution to the next level? Leaders asking such questions might gain useful insights from the book *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...and Others Don't*, by Jim Collins. Of particular interest is his Hedgehog Concept, which leads an organization through a fairly simple yet thought-provoking process for identifying its mission—what an organization does best—and then capitalizing on that mission.

If a college or university wants to be less introspective and more focused on a global perspective, then leaders should turn the pages of Friedman's book, men-

tioned above. Friedman describes a world in which global telecommunications have leveled the playing field. His book offers much food for thought, with its discussion of "lions," "gazelles," and a world in which the weak fall further behind. Are there applications for higher education? Absolutely.

Of course, many colleges and universities do benefit from the collective thinking of business and industry. My institution, Rio Salado College in Tempe, Arizona, which is one of the Maricopa Community Colleges, has long made it a practice to borrow from the best. Over the years, we have aligned ourselves with the principles of *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*, by Peter Senge. In so doing, we have given ourselves permission to explore innovative ideas from books and organizations—even when those concepts would seem, at first glance, to be far removed from the world of education.

Drawing from a multitude of models instead of a single one constantly provides us with fresh perspectives while at the same time reminding us of our steadfast organizational values that will always be important. For example, we searched for parallels when executives at the Disney Institute described for us the incredible lengths they go to achieve customer satisfaction through their "cast members" (translation: employees). Later we graduated to "customer astonishment," as so aptly defined by Darby Checketts in *Customer Astonishment: 10 Secrets to World-Class Customer Care*. Through this model, we learned about creating loyalty through the "WOW" factor. We've also studied business strategies for change manage-

ment and succession planning to keep the momentum at our institution going long after our current leadership has moved on. And now we've decided to swim in the Blue Ocean.

The Blue Ocean

"Blue Ocean" is a term coined in a book recently published by the Harvard Business School Press: *Blue Ocean Strategy: How to Create Uncontested Market Space and Make Competition Irrelevant*. The authors, W. Chan Kim and Renée Mauborgne, have the business world—and Rio Salado College—rethinking the entire concept of

Red Ocean is Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey. The Blue Ocean is Cirque de Soleil.

At Rio Salado, we strive to swim in the Blue Ocean because of our culture of innovation. Founded in 1978 as a non-traditional college without a campus, Rio Salado is used to rewriting the rules. We specialize in meeting the educational needs of working adults.

Where Collaboration and Competition Coexist

Here are two interesting ways Rio Salado is swimming in the Blue Ocean. First, we

partners so that it is industry-specific. For example, entry-level airline reservationists receive college credit in airline operations. Call-center employees in the insurance industry earn college credit for quality customer service/insurance. Students/employees receive a college education on-site at their places of employment, at the employers' expense. Many of these workers become the first in their families to earn college credits. About 15,000 workers a year are educated in this new model of higher education. That's Blue Ocean.

At the same time, we compete—but on our own terms. Ten years ago, we were an early entrant into the e-learning market when we placed our first twenty-five courses online. But we realized that the e-learning market would soon be flooded. So we didn't simply place our courses online; our Blue Ocean strategy was to place the entire college online, for students' convenience. Through the click of a mouse, the full spectrum of student support services became available, including registration, academic advising, career counseling, tutoring, a 24/7 technical helpdesk, an instructional helpdesk, and an electronic library.

But we still weren't satisfied. So we did our own market research, which led to our innovative twenty-six start-dates a year. The longest a student has to wait to begin most online courses is two weeks, and traditional semesters have been eliminated. Plus, these classes can be accelerated. And when we needed a new course support, management, and delivery system, we collaborated with Microsoft and Dell Computers to produce RioLearn, which is scalable up to 100,000 students, placing us in a league of our own against the competition.

In the process of analyzing each new business strategy, Rio Salado has gained the required confidence to break out of the standard educational mold and embark in Blue Ocean waters. Can similar business strategies work for other colleges and universities as well? We think the answer is a resounding "yes."



Linda M. Thor is President of Rio Salado College.



Illustration by Steve McCracken, © 2006

competition. Simply put, an organization is either swimming in the Red Ocean or the Blue Ocean.

Red represents the existing markets, where the waters are bloodied by cut-throat competitiveness. Blue is a new market, where the waters are peaceful because competition is irrelevant. Red is where the rules are understood, and competitors try to outperform each other. Blue represents uncharted water where the rules are waiting to be rewritten. The Red Ocean will always be important, but the Blue Ocean is where the next generation of growth and profit will occur. The

collaborate. And second, we compete. That may sound like a paradox, but let me explain.

Rio Salado has long accepted that in the new economy, alliances are the way to get things done. Some years ago, we spotted an unmet need for a new learning format that would allow adults in the workplace to obtain occupational certificates and degrees. Since then, we have developed a market niche by partnering with the biggest and best employers in the state.

Our Blue Ocean strategy has been to customize the curriculum with our

THE CHRONICLE

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October 6, 2006

The Few, the Proud, the Professors

By ELYSE ASHBURN

At one Arizona community college, a tiny cadre of full-time faculty members manages thousands of adjuncts and students

Students at Rio Salado College here in the East Valley have better odds of winning on a long shot at the nearby Turf Paradise racetrack than they do of landing a spot in a full-time faculty member's class.

The college's 46,800 for-credit and about 14,000 noncredit students make it the second largest of the 10 colleges in the vast Maricopa County Community College District. But the 28-year-old institution has only 33 permanent faculty members, 27 of whom are full-time.

The tiny full-time faculty is not the result of recent administrative ax-wielding; the college has more full-time instructors now than in the past. Rather, that core is small by design. When Paul A. Elsner, then-chancellor of the Maricopa system, started what was then called the "college without walls" in 1978, he envisioned a nimble, cost-effective institution that would take education out to the people.

Nearly three decades later, Rio Salado is almost entirely virtual, with classes taught primarily by a corps of 1,000 adjuncts scattered across the Phoenix metropolitan area, the state, and, in a few cases, the world.

Rio Salado can do this, in part, because it focuses on working adults and is only one of 10 public community colleges that serve the Phoenix area.

The full-time faculty members at Rio Salado say the setup allows them to work effectively across disciplines, to exert significant control over the curriculum, and to develop close relationships with college leaders. They find themselves in the inner sanctum of the college, and in a sense, have assumed the role of administrators at more traditional institutions.

It's an efficient arrangement. It costs 36 percent less to educate a student at Rio Salado than it does, on average, at Maricopa County community colleges. And organizations like the Lumina Foundation for Education and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation have held it up as a model for the future.

But some who study the professoriate, looking from the outside in, say it is a future to be avoided. They argue that institutions that rely primarily on adjuncts, like Rio Salado, benefit a privileged few at the expense of personalized education, and of hundreds of instructors who have little hope of landing a full-time position.

"They are not really faculty members," Joe T. Berry, an adjunct-labor specialist at the University of Illinois at Chicago, says of the college's full-time teachers. "They are faculty supervisors. You need to call a horse a horse."

Overcoming Skepticism

A six-story glass building that looks more Microsoft campus than college campus houses most of Rio Salado's 458 full-time employees.

It is here that the close-knit group of full-time faculty members, all of them on the equivalent of the tenure track, teach, study best practices in their fields, design courses, manage the hundreds of adjuncts assigned to them, and help administrators hash out the future of the college. Many of them are "faculty chairmen," positions similar to department chairmen, though Rio Salado does not have traditional academic departments.

"The thing that sets our full-time faculty apart is the leadership aspect," says Karen L. Mills, vice president for academic affairs.

As chairman of the foreign-languages faculty, Vernon C. Smith spends much of his day on administrative tasks: answering e-mail, attending meetings, and keeping in touch with the 103 adjuncts he oversees.

His lot is not unusual at Rio Salado, where each full-time faculty member takes on the role of an entire department at a typical community college. "It's sort of like the faculty at Rio Salado get to move to the heart of the profession — the abstract realm," Mr. Smith says.

Most full-time instructors are responsible for hiring, training, and evaluating the adjuncts in their fields. The adjuncts are brought on at numerous points throughout the year, depending on enrollment. (Most courses at the college have sections starting every two

weeks.)

The college has only one full-time instructor in most fields. So if a collegewide committee needs a representative from a particular academic area, there is typically only one person to turn to.

The full-time faculty members are also responsible for developing the content for the courses at Rio Salado in their field. Courses are standardized, so that each adjunct teaches the same material and administers the same tests. And the chairmen can "lurk" in their adjuncts' classes to make sure they are grading assignments and giving feedback in a timely manner.

Because of the demands on their time, most of the full-time faculty members teach only one course at a time, so the bulk of the teaching falls to the 1,000 or so adjuncts that the college employs. Mr. Smith, for example, is wrapping up a course he started teaching this summer and has started teaching a second course, which will run through the fall.

"I think some people in higher education look at Rio and say, 'This is everything wrong with higher ed,'" Mr. Smith says. "It scares a lot of people, frankly."

Craig D. Flanery, staff liaison for the community-college committee of the American Association of University Professors, says Rio Salado's ratio of adjuncts to full-time faculty members is the highest of which he has heard. About 66 percent of faculty members at community colleges nationwide are part time, according to the American Association of Community Colleges. At Rio Salado, almost 97 percent are part time.

In recent years, the association has been concerned about colleges' growing use of part-time instructors and full-time, nontenured faculty members. The group believes that the practice, among other things, impedes research and professional development and is a threat to academic freedom, because nontenured professors have no job security.

"If you have an overuse or abuse of part-time contingent faculty, it does really impact academic quality," says L. Lacy Barnes, chairwoman of the association's community-colleges committee and a full-time psychology instructor at Reedley College, a two-year institution in California.

Officials at Rio Salado say they are aware of such concerns and have taken steps to ensure that their part-time instructors get the support they need. The college opened an instructional help desk in

1999 to help faculty chairmen answer the hundreds of routine questions that part-time instructors have each month. The help desk now operates around the clock.

The college also has all-faculty meetings twice a year, and full-time professors say they are in frequent contact with part-time faculty members during the time between. In addition, faculty chairmen hold workshops for instructors throughout the year, and field phone calls daily. About a third of the full-time faculty members started at Rio Salado as adjunct faculty members, so they know what it is like to be on the other side of those conversations.

Monica R. Zontanos, director of adjunct-faculty services, says the college has only about 1-percent turnover among part-time instructors, who make about \$2,200 a course, depending on the number of students. "If you have good faculty, that's where the rubber meets the road, especially in an online class, where they are the college," she says.

Full-time faculty members earn about \$40,000 to \$88,000 a year, depending on whether they have doctorates and the number of years they have worked at the college. About half of them do have doctorates, including a few from nontraditional institutions like the for-profit Walden University and Kennedy-Western University, which is not accredited. Four also have degrees from the University of Phoenix.

Several part-time instructors, like Tristan M. Marble, say college leaders have given them ample opportunity to grow professionally. Ms. Marble, an adjunct who teaches anthropology, has helped her faculty chairwoman develop courses in the last few years, something Rio Salado officials say is not unusual.

"I love doing the research and course development," says Ms. Marble, who has worked at the college for about 10 years. "I am always thinking, What do students want out of this class? What can they learn about themselves?"

Jordan E. Senne, a biology adjunct who joined the college about a year ago, says she talks to the chairman of her department, Robert Semmler, every two to three weeks, and that he takes her opinion seriously. Ms. Senne, who also works 30 hours per week as a barista at Starbucks, hopes to one day be a full-time faculty member like Mr. Semmler.

She says that over all, Rio Salado runs more efficiently than other colleges she has worked at in Arizona and Texas, and that students, and part-time instructors in turn, are viewed more like valued

customers.

"Ironically, it sort of reminds me of Starbucks," she says.

Not Business as Usual

The faculty chairmen have time to talk to part-time instructors one on one in part because the job of screening applicants and scheduling classes is handled by the college's adjunct-faculty-services department, which Rio Salado's president started in the mid-1990s.

"If I had to sit here and schedule classes, and screen applicants, and do the orientation, I would drown," says Patricia S. Case, sociology and anthropology faculty chairwoman and the college's faculty-development coordinator.

Instructors' day-to-day duties are also simplified by RioLearn, a course-management system designed specifically for the college through a partnership with Dell Inc. and the Microsoft Corporation.

Both systems reflect the efficiency-minded management of Linda M. Thor, the college's long-serving president. Ms. Thor, 56, has a taste for M&M's and tends to sprinkle her conversation with the titles of best-selling business books.

In 1990 she left the presidency of West Los Angeles College, where she was the youngest college president in California, to take the top job at the Maricopa County district's upstart college. Faculty members at Rio Salado credit her with building an innovative culture where both high-quality education and top-notch service are valued.

If faculty members come up with a new program or a creative way to present material, "Rio will find a way to do it," says Laura Helminski, chairwoman of communication and reading.

Ms. Thor also embraces the idea of students as customers, though she knows it is not popular in many higher-education circles. After all, she has built her reputation taking risks.

"Back in the 90s, when Rio Salado would introduce a new innovation, everybody would throw up their hands and say, You can't do that," Ms. Thor says. "Now we find that when we do something, instead of being embattled, we're being imitated."

That is part of why her current business-management obsession is Blue Ocean Strategy, a book that argues that too many businesses operate in "red oceans," competitive markets bloodied by the battle

for customers, rather than focusing on "blue oceans," potential markets with few or no competitors.

Rio Salado must push into untapped or underserved markets, Ms. Thor says, if it is to continue its remarkable growth — full-time-equivalent enrollment has more than tripled during Ms. Thor's tenure, reaching 13,314 last academic year — at a time when other Maricopa community colleges are seeing their enrollments decrease slightly.

Going into an untapped market is what Rio Salado did in 1996, when it became a pioneer in online education. "The normal reaction is to market more and for everybody to fight over the same students," Ms. Thor says.

The University of Phoenix, whose national headquarters are visible from Ms. Thor's office, does compete with the college in the online and adult-student market, but Rio Salado officials say that to a large extent, the institutions attract different students because the University of Phoenix offers bachelor's and master's degrees and because tuition at the university is higher than that at Rio Salado.

Now college officials are looking at better ways to attract Hispanic students, like developing more online courses in English as a second language; to counteract the district's high dropout rate, drawing on their success with dual-enrollment courses and general-equivalency-diploma programs; and to boost the supply of registered nurses nationwide.

The college recently hired two staff members whose sole task is to identify additional needs in the Maricopa County district and beyond that can be met the "Rio Way," through online programs and community partnerships.

A. Frank Mayadas, director of the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's grant program for online education, says that to reach more students and raise efficiency, states and large community-college systems should consider opening colleges designed to operate like Rio Salado. "Maricopa County has a good deal with the setup they have," Mr. Mayadas says. "It's something others should look at."

Still, ambitious Rio Salado officials have run into some roadblocks in recent years as the college seeks to expand. In 1997, for example, Ms. Thor began urging the Arizona Legislature to allow community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees in education and applied sciences, a change that state universities strongly opposed.

In the intervening years, lawmakers in about a dozen states have

changed their statutes to allow the practice, but in Arizona, Ms. Thor and other community-college presidents lost the fight again this past spring, when a bill that would have authorized two-year colleges to offer select bachelor's degrees died in committee. The change was opposed by Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, Northern Arizona University, and the state Board of Regents.

"In many ways, I'm weary of the battle," she says.

The college has also met some resistance from other community colleges, as it tries to expand its fledgling online nursing program into other states. Anne McNamara, the college's nursing-department faculty chairwoman, said that, for example, Rock Valley College, in Illinois, has said it wants to develop its own online nursing program, rather than having the state turn to an out-of-state provider. Other colleges in several states have been concerned that Rio Salado would dip into their pool of potential nursing students.

But Ms. McNamara says that with the nursing shortages in many states, particularly in rural areas, there are plenty of students to go around. "I'm saying to them, I don't want your 25 percent," she says. "I want to help the hospitals meet the 75-percent demand."

The online program, which includes a clinical practicum, is already offered in four areas in Arizona, including Phoenix and Tucson, and in Wyoming, through partnerships with local hospitals where students can log their 1,000 required clinical hours. Ms. McNamara is pursuing partnerships and the authority to operate in Illinois, New Mexico, and Rhode Island, though she anticipates the process may take several years.

Still, the college's biggest enemy may be its own success, Ms. Thor says. After years under one roof, the college, whose full-time staff has doubled in less than 10 years, will soon expand into a second building nearby. And administrators agonize every time they add a new full-time faculty position.

"Part of the way we are, who we are, is that we can all get in one room — and we do — and work things out and get together behind an initiative," Ms. Thor says. "If we reach a point where that can't happen, then we change forever who we are. It's a real dilemma for us."

HOW RIO SALADO COLLEGE STACKS UP

The two-year colleges listed below are similar in size to Rio

Salado College in terms of full-time-equivalent students, and are located in Western or Southwestern metropolitan areas with relatively high growth.

Rio Salado College (Tempe, Ariz.) (13,300 students)	
Full-time faculty	27
Adjunct faculty	About 1,000
Full-time to adjunct ratio	1 to 37.04
Los Angeles Valley College (Valley Glen, Calif.) (11,700 students)	
Full-time faculty	240
Adjunct faculty	About 250
Full-time to adjunct ratio	1 to 1.04
Central New Mexico Community College (Albuquerque, N.M.) (14,500 students)	
Full-time faculty	331
Adjunct faculty	754
Full-time to adjunct ratio	1 to 2.28
Mesa Community College (Mesa, Ariz.) (15,000 students)	
Full-time faculty	337
Adjunct faculty	960
Full-time to adjunct ratio	1 to 2.85
NOTE: Numbers are for the 2005-6 academic year. Student-enrollment numbers reflect full-time-equivalent students.	
SOURCE: Colleges' institutional-research offices	

<http://chronicle.com> Section: The Faculty Volume 53, Issue 7, Page A10

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The Chronicle of Higher Education 1255 Twenty-Third St, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20037

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This chapter presents a brief history of concurrent enrollment initiatives and then gives an overview of activity in Arizona, including research on student achievement, as well as tracking studies. In spite of growth in the number of programs and successes in student achievement, not everyone in the state understands and appreciates the benefits of the program; the final section of this chapter describes some of the realities of politics and necessary compromises.

Concurrent Enrollment in Arizona: Encouraging Success in High School

Donald E. Puyear, Linda M. Thor, and Karen L. Mills

Studies of concurrent enrollment programs show that not only do they accelerate the attainment of a baccalaureate degree but they also create a comfortable transition to college. In addition, concurrent enrollment students perform as well as, if not better than, students who enter college at the traditional age. The literature substantiates that participation in concurrent enrollment need not be restricted to academically high-achieving students.

Overview

The patterns of concurrent enrollment programs are diverse. For instance:

- A concurrent enrollment course can be taught as an enhancement to or augmentation of a regular high school course. Unlike the regular high school students in the course, the concurrent students must do extra work to earn college credit.
- A high school teacher—generally recognized as an adjunct to the participating postsecondary institution—teaches a course, using the college curriculum or syllabus at the high school during the regular high school day, and the class is entirely composed of concurrent enrollment students or has a combination of concurrent and regular high school students. It is not unusual for this type of concurrent enrollment course to be linked via interactive television to other high schools, allowing those other students the opportunity to participate in college classes.
- A college course is taught at the high school during the school day, but the teacher is a postsecondary teacher who is not also a high school teacher.

- A college course is taught at a location other than the high school (often the college campus) but is limited to high school concurrent enrollment students.
- A college course is taught at a location other than the high school (often the college campus), and concurrent enrollment high school students are mixed with other college students.

Whatever the name and delivery model, today's concurrent enrollment programs are increasingly used to enrich a high school student's curriculum, accelerate his or her academic program, and provide that student with a smooth transition for entry into college.

The exact beginnings of concurrent enrollment are vague, but some attribute the original concept of eliminating the repetitive curriculum by awarding joint high school and college credit for a single course to J. W. Osborn. Osborn (1928) wrote about the repetition in curriculum between some high school courses and introductory college courses. About thirty years later, in 1956, his concerns were finally addressed with the development of the advanced placement (AP) examination—a single standardized test used to determine students' proficiency in certain subject areas (Greenberg, 1992).

Collins (1980) credits Jamestown Community College in New York with being the first institution to launch the practice of having high school students enroll in college courses for the purpose of receiving dual college and high school credit. In 1978, the community college invited the top eleventh-grade students to enroll in two college courses during the summer prior to their senior year. However, slightly preceding the Jamestown initiative was Project Advance, which came out of Syracuse University. According to an impact study for the university (Edmonds, Mercurio, and Bonesteel, 1998), Project Advance originated in 1973, when seven local high school principals and superintendents met with university staff members to develop a program that would “challenge high school seniors, many of whom had completed all of the requirements for high school graduation by the end of the eleventh grade” (p. 1). Although not documented in the literature, it is interesting to note that educators in the state of Connecticut boast of a concurrent enrollment program that existed as early as 1955. And Saint Louis University indicates that in 1959 they responded to pleas from the Saint Louis University High School to address the redundancy in curriculum between the last year of high school and the freshman year of college.

The literature is as rich with information about the history of how and when concurrent enrollment programs began as it is with dialogue about whether or not the programs should be provided, and whether or not students are performing at the collegiate level. This chapter, however, sets aside opposing arguments and opinions and focuses only on the research that supports the provision of concurrent enrollment.

The *Virginia Plan for Dual Enrollment* (1988) provides the best description of the relevance of concurrent enrollment programs nationwide by stating that these programs promote rigorous educational pursuits and encourage learning as a lifelong process while recognizing that high school students who accrue college credit are more likely to continue their education beyond high school than those who do not.

Although growth in the number of concurrent enrollment partnerships reflects a vibrant and far-reaching movement, presenting the demographics of this collaborative initiative is not unlike giving it a name or explaining how it works. It is dynamic in nature. Wilbur and Lambert (1995) provide perhaps the best attempt at presenting a national perspective. Their database includes information on more than 2,300 collaborative programs (not limited to concurrent enrollment), coordinated by the 861 institutions responding to the survey. The partnerships involve every kind of postsecondary institution and represent every region of the country. For concurrent enrollment specifically, the directory lists seventy programs in twenty-nine states. The postsecondary partners in these programs are both community colleges and four-year universities—public and private, large and small, well known and lesser known. A small number of the programs focus on very specific topics—for example, the International Academy at the University of Louisville's College of Arts and Sciences offers students the opportunity to explore world cultures and international affairs. Some of the institutions have programs that are offered only during specific times of the year, such as the Summer Youth College at Foothill College in California and the five-week residential summer college program at the University of Delaware. And some of the institutions work with a single high school partner, whereas others, like Syracuse University, work with a multitude.

In addition to history, research, and directories, an overview of concurrent enrollment programs would be incomplete without at least brief mention of the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). This alliance is an association of higher education professionals who administer cooperative programs that link their institutions to secondary schools. It was created to establish and promote quality initiatives and national standards for concurrent enrollment programs, to research and disseminate information about such programs, to encourage strong relations between partner institutions (high school to college and college to college), and to support its membership through professional development and communication on issues of common concern. More information about this organization can be found by visiting their Web site (<http://supa.syr.edu/nacep>).

Concurrent Enrollment Activity in Arizona

Statewide reports show that all ten of the community college districts in Arizona are now participating in some model of concurrent enrollment partnership—a situation that has developed fairly recently.

Rio Salado College, in the Maricopa Community College District (MCCD), is the largest provider of concurrent enrollment programs in the state, and one of the largest in the country. Prior to 1992, their concurrent enrollment activities were limited to a single private school. But then, in the early 1990s, public high schools began to express strong interest in concurrent enrollment arrangements for their students. Therefore, Rio Salado College, along with community colleges throughout the state, found themselves addressing not only the logistics but, more important, the legalities of working with public high schools in concurrent initiatives.

Legal enablement of concurrent enrollment endeavors were substantiated within legislative statutes, which stated that high school governing boards could award Carnegie units and apply college courses toward high school graduation requirements as long as certain course stipulations were met. Additionally, a ruling by the then attorney general Bob Corbin stated that concurrent enrollment courses taught on the high school campus could be counted by the high school toward their average daily membership (ADM) calculations. ADM is the high school equivalent of FTSE (full-time student equivalent) and serves the same purpose of establishing base budget allocations. Therefore, not only did high schools aggressively pursue concurrent enrollment arrangements with postsecondary institutions, but they also became increasingly interested in having the programs be provided on the high school campus. Arizona's community colleges were committed to responding to the increasing number of requests for concurrent enrollment partnerships. However, they wanted to do so with some assurance of built-in quality. And so, the Arizona Council of Academic Administrators developed minimal standards that allow individual colleges to exceed these guidelines whenever appropriate. These standards state that (1) credit will be granted by the community college, (2) courses offered will have been evaluated and will have met the official college curriculum approval process—to include outline, competencies, grading policy, and attendance requirements, (3) students admitted to a college course will follow established admissions assessment and placement policies, (4) faculty members must have community college certification and must be selected and evaluated by the college, using approved college procedures, and (5) any text used must be college-approved.

During 1993, Rio Salado College began exhaustive efforts to track, study, and analyze every aspect of concurrent enrollment. The following summarizes what was learned from that research. Approximately one-third of the seniors who opted to enroll in a math class would not have taken the class had it not been offered for concurrent credit. Without this course, they would have chosen the “early out” option, which would have sent them home from school at 11:30 A.M. Most of the seniors taking dual enrollment classes did not need the high school part of the credit; they had met the minimum graduation requirements and wanted the college credit. Concurrent enrollment was increasing the motivation of freshmen and sophomore

students—they were looking forward to working through a curriculum that would allow them to meet placement and prerequisite requirements for college-level classes. High school faculty members reported that classroom management became easier as students no longer complained about stringent class expectations and approached their college classes with a mindset that involved more study and attention.

One of the most compelling studies regarding the achievement of concurrent enrollment students comes from the MCCD Chemistry Instructional Council. Twenty questions are included in every final exam to see if selected chemistry classes are being taught uniformly across the district, including concurrent enrollment sections, and to see if letter grades are being assigned appropriately. The study is conducted annually and continues to document that all courses, including concurrent enrollment courses, are taught uniformly at a collegiate level and that assigned grades are appropriate.

Also within the Maricopa District are colleges that provide ACE (Achieving a College Education) and ACE+ programs. These programs are college campus-based programs, and ACE students are placed in classrooms with other high school-aged, concurrently enrolled students. It is important to note that ACE/ACE+ students are recruited from all quartiles of achievement during their sophomore year in high school. A 1997 report prepared for the Phoenix Think Tank (Finch, 1997) states that more than 90 percent of the high school participants in ACE/ACE+ programs graduate from high school, compared with a rate of 49 percent for the seven high schools that feed into the program. Additionally, 83 percent of the ACE/ACE+ participants go on to attend postsecondary institutions both in and out of state.

Another Arizona college conducted a survey of previous concurrent enrollment students who had just completed their first year of college (Finch, 1997). Questionnaires were sent to four hundred students, asking for feedback on their preparedness for subsequent college coursework and their current academic status, and copies of transcripts were requested as well. Respondents had earned an average of 25 credit hours during their first two semesters at local and out-of-state colleges and universities, including Columbia, Notre Dame, Pepperdine, University of Washington, Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, and Sacred Heart. The most frequently declared programs of study included engineering, education, business/economics, biology, design fields, computer fields, nursing, music, law, journalism, mathematics, theater, and general studies.

Other findings from the survey indicate that concurrent enrollment students performed better during their first semester or year at the university than did typical community college transfer students. For Arizona State University (ASU), specifically, studies show that MCCD students dropped in median grade point average (GPA) from 2.85 to 2.32, whereas concurrent enrollment students entered with a median GPA of 3.22 and finished at 3.41. This was not a controlled sampling; the students may have had very

different abilities or levels of preparation. Students who were concurrently enrolled for high school credit only and elected to take the advanced placement test out-performed their national counterparts. For those students scoring grades of 5 and 4 (the highest grades), respectively, on the AP test, the national average was, respectively, 13 percent and 18 percent, whereas the percentage for high school students in the concurrent enrollment class (not enrolled for college credit) was, respectively, 14 percent and 27 percent. In addition, respondents to the survey reported advantages in their ability to think analytically, formulate ideas, use quantitative skills, function independently, and assess their own work (Finch, 1997).

A recent study conducted by the University of Arizona (U of A) found similar results. Of 2,351 Fall 1997 Arizona-resident freshmen, 29 percent had earned community college credit through some form of concurrent enrollment. Between high school and the U of A, these students experienced an average drop in GPA of .56, compared with .78 for those with no community college credit and .53 for those with AP credit. The university determined that “when differences in high school grade point averages and SAT scores were accounted for, both AP and [concurrent] community college credit were associated with better university grades. This held true when changes in students’ grade point averages between high school and university were calculated as well as in the regression analysis” (Richardson, 1999, p. 2).

The growth spurt in concurrent enrollment between 1993 and 1998 could not have been predicted. According to a status report from the state board of directors for Arizona Community Colleges (Puyear, 1998), just under nine thousand (unduplicated headcount) high school students statewide enrolled in concurrent enrollment classes during the Fall 1996 semester. Extrapolation places this figure at well over twelve thousand for Fall 1999. The types of courses provided in the Arizona programs range from general studies to the humanities and fine arts, and from the social and behavioral sciences and the natural sciences to literacy and critical inquiry. The primary model for program delivery was high school-based, with a community college–certified high school instructor providing the instruction during the regular high school day. However, there were college districts that sent college faculty members to the high school campus to teach the course as an augmentation of a high school course, or to provide the course at a location other than the high school, to a mix of high school and non–high school students. Some colleges charge tuition and fees to concurrent enrollment students and provide financial stipends to the high schools in amounts equivalent to adjunct faculty salaries. Other colleges employ what is called a balanced-exchange financial arrangement, in which the college invoices the high school for tuition and fees, and the high school invoices the college, in the same amount, for instruction and facility usage. Invoices are exchanged but money is not.

Not everyone in the state understands the benefits of the concurrent enrollment program; program proponents have faced some significant chal-

lenges in the state legislature and sometimes in their own districts. On October 28, 1999, the newspaper *Arizona Republic* ran a front-page article entitled “Colleges May be Double Dipping.” The article espoused that “the state is paying twice for high school students to take dual enrollment classes that earn them college and high school credit . . . [and that] college professors are questioning whether the classes even provide a college level of instruction” (Jones, 1999, p. A-1). The article states that both the high school and the participating community college receive funding for the same students in a concurrent enrollment arrangement and that “double dipping has the Arizona Tax Research Association (ATRA) and the governor’s office looking at how dual enrollment programs are funded” (p. A-1). In addition to this commentary in the press, several other activities have contributed to a year-long political battle. These have included the airing of a debate on the state’s public television station between a key ATRA representative and a community college president about funding and quality concerns in concurrent enrollment programs. Along with the negative perception of double dipping, at issue was the practice of having mixed classes—students enrolled for concurrent college credit in the same class with students enrolled only for high school credit—and whether or not a distinction between a high school-level and a college-level curriculum could be made in certain occupational courses, such as keyboarding. In addition, some community college faculty members objected to high school teachers, rather than full-time college instructors, teaching these courses.

Along with all of the press and media attention, the state representative who served as the chair of the House Education Committee “opened a file,” which is the first step in initiating legislation on funding issues related to concurrent enrollment. Legislative research analysts requested follow-up meetings with college and high school administrators for purposes of sorting through what were misperceptions and what were realities. A legislative roundtable composed of the previously noted state representative, a high school concurrent enrollment teacher, college presidents, a parent, a high school district governing board member, community college faculty members, an ATRA representative, and others convened to determine whether legislative regulation was truly needed. The ultimate outcome of this public debate was the introduction of four bills into the Arizona 2000 legislative session. Although the thrust of the first three bills was to reduce, even eliminate if possible, state funding for concurrent enrollment and establish a state-level compliance officer for these partnerships, it was only the fourth bill that received any real consideration. This bill was initiated by the Arizona Community College Association and called for the formation of a joint legislative study committee on concurrent enrollment to do three things. First, the committee was to conduct an evaluation of current guidelines and determine minimum standards necessary to ensure the highest level of quality instruction; second, it was charged with identifying and reviewing the current state funding formula and examining the long-term cost benefit of concurrent enrollment programs to

Arizona; and third, it was to examine the effect of dual enrollment courses on student success in school, high school retention rates, and the number of students who go on to postsecondary education. Two of the bills died and one was held, but the bill calling for the establishment of a study committee passed both the House and the Senate and was signed by the governor.

Simultaneous with these legislative activities, community college officials throughout Arizona attempted to address issues and concerns at both the state and local levels in order to avoid future legislative action. The Arizona Community College Presidents' Council formed a committee to propose revisions to the state board rule governing concurrent enrollment. One significant change would be the requirement that students be enrolled in four regular high school courses while taking a concurrent enrollment course, unless they are seniors who can at that point satisfy graduation requirements by taking fewer than four more high school courses. This stipulation is intended to address the "double dipping" concern, as high schools incur the costs but do not receive additional funding for students who remain on their campuses beyond four periods a day. The second change focuses on the quality issue of "mixed classes" and would require that all students in a dual enrollment class be enrolled for college credit unless designated as advanced placement or honors students. Obviously, the quality recommendation addresses only part of the concern; the issue surrounding the appropriateness of providing some of the occupational courses is still being discussed. However, there is a consensus that not all high school students are college-bound and that students who earn some college credit while still in high school have the potential of increased marketability upon entering the workforce.

Concluding Thoughts (Necessary Compromises)

Concurrent enrollment issues have consumed large quantities of high school and community college administrators' and staff members' time over the last five years, but these programs will be stronger and of higher quality as a result. There was, in fact, some inconsistency in the way different colleges went about setting up concurrent enrollment courses. There were, as well, variations in the financial arrangements between colleges and even between a given college and different high schools. These inconsistencies and variations in basic procedures created a climate of doubt regarding the manner in which the concurrent enrollment programs were being administered. Refinement of state board rules to address these inconsistencies is therefore necessary. Those responsible for educational policy must ensure that concurrent enrollment programs are administered in such a manner that the benefits to individual students and to the state are not clouded by questionable practices. It must be clear that concurrent enrollment courses are of high quality, meet rigorous academic standards, are taught by fully qualified faculty members, and are consistently administered.

A recent session of the Arizona town hall addressed higher education in the state. The town hall strongly endorsed the concept of concurrent enrollment programs as a positive step toward bridging the gaps between secondary education and higher education. Town hall participants saw this and other collaborative efforts between high schools and colleges as essential if the state is to successfully address the challenges of the emerging information-based economy.

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DISTANCE LEARNING COLLEGE LAUNCHES CLINICAL DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM

Applied Program Department, Rio Salado College, Tempe, AZ

Distance learning has changed the way many people obtain their college education. One of the newest workforce training programs available through this delivery system is a clinical dental assisting program developed by Rio Salado College, one of the Maricopa Community Colleges in the Phoenix metropolitan market. The six-month program, which begins in early March, offers students the convenience of learning their craft anytime and anyplace.

Rio Salado has partnered with the Arizona Dental Association (AzDA) to offer this course of study enabling students to practice entry-level clinical dental assisting. The 10 courses are offered through formats that include print materials, videocassettes, and distance lab skills kits. Courses must be taken in a specific chronological order. They are followed by a paid internship undertaken with an AzDA dentist.

Sample courses include Clinical Dental Assisting I and II, Infection Control and Hazard Communication, Dental Materials, and Dental Radiographic Imaging.

A unique aspect of the program is that "hands-on" skills are taught through innovative "distance labs." The systems for efficient and effective delivery of distance labs that are currently in place made for a natural transition of that technology to the AzDA Clinical Dental Assisting Program. Labs are assembled and delivered to the student. Most of the equipment and materials are retained by the student, such as specialty scissors for contouring bleaching trays, a typodont with replaceable teeth for learning anatomy and

performing various lab skills, film placement instruments for exposing radiographs, and a stethoscope and sphygmomanometer. Students return completed lab projects by mail for instructor assessment.

Just prior to the paid internship, students take their CDA280 Clinical Dental Assistant Practicum in a state-of-the-art dental clinic where they learn to expose radiographs, perform chairside skills, operate sterilizers and perform many other procedures requiring close instructor supervision and/or the dental clinic environment.

Lab work using distance learning technology is not something new at Rio Salado. For two years, the college has offered Human Anatomy and Physiology in a CD-ROM format, with a lab component that allows students to rotate muscles and bones 360 degrees for thorough observation.

The clinical dental assisting program is currently available only in Arizona and total cost of tuition and lab fees is approximately \$1,990.

A Successful Partnership

This is the second time in three years that the college has partnered with AzDA for workforce development. A few years ago, dentists statewide were facing a critical shortage of highly trained dental hygienists. The collaborators teamed up with Delta Dental Insurance to launch the Rio Salado School of Dental Hygiene.

Through the partnership, they donated \$1.2 million to the college to create a state-of-the-art dental hygiene training facility. The



Barbara Traines, CDA, program developer and manager

college then created an accelerated program that can be completed in 15 months instead of the usual 24 months.

Upon completion of this program of study, 100% of the 31 students in the first graduating class passed the Dental Hygiene National Board exam. This success rate placed the college in the top 20 of 213 dental hygiene programs in the nation.

This program not only earned a proclamation from Arizona's Governor, but also resulted in a formal presentation by college President Linda Thor to Vice President Al Gore and members of the Clinton cabinet.

Program Developer and Manager

The program developer and manager is Barbara Traines, CDA, BA who has been an instructor in the Maricopa Community Colleges dental programs for almost 20 years. She has served as president of the Arizona Dental Assistants Association and has recently completed seven years of service on the



Clinical Dental Assistant Practicum students learn chairside skills under close instructor supervision in a state-of-the-art dental clinic.

Radiation Health and Safety test construction committee for the Dental Assisting National Board. Throughout the years she has served on committees appointed by the Arizona Board of Dental Examiners addressing dental assisting rules and regulations.

Most recently, she has been appointed to represent dental assistants on the "Licensure by Credential" committee by the state board. Her years of teaching in dental hygiene and assisting programs have prepared her to meet the challenge of "thinking outside the box" or, as she says "creating a new box" in developing the AzDA Clinical Dental Assisting Program.

Rio Salado's Distance Learning Track Record

With 300 individual courses, 200 Internet courses, and 25,000+ duplicated enrollments this year, Rio Salado's distance learning program is recognized as one of the largest in the country.

Most Rio Salado distance learning students reside in Maricopa

County and prefer attending college this way in order to beat traffic and spend more quality time with their families or on the job.

Rio Salado's use of distance learning and technology to deliver courses has caught the attention of major media such as the *New York Times*, *Business Week*, *Converge Magazine*, and National Public Radio. Two years ago the college placed first in the nation in the "Most Innovative Use of Technology" category in a Paragon Awards Competition sponsored by the National Council of Marketing and Public Relations. The Rio Salado web site at [HYPERLINK http://www.rio.maricopa.edu](http://www.rio.maricopa.edu) was recently named one of the outstanding higher education sites in the nation by the North American Web Association.

Known as the "college without walls," Rio Salado serves more than 50,000 credit and non-credit students annually, using a combination of traditional, accelerated, customized and distance learning formats.

Record: 1

Title: Understanding the Appeal of For-Profit Colleges.

Authors: Thor, Linda

Source: Community College Week; 01/24/2000, Vol. 12 Issue 12, p7, 3/4p

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: *PROPRIETARY schools
*UNIVERSITIES & colleges
*COMMUNITY colleges

Geographic Terms: UNITED States
NAICS/Industry Codes611210 Junior Colleges
611310 Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools

Abstract: Focuses on the characteristics of for-profit colleges and public or community colleges that attract higher education students in the United States. Marketing approaches and bottom-line orientation of for-profit colleges; Cost of education at community colleges; Credibility of community colleges.

Full Text Word Count: 1061

ISSN: 10415726

Accession Number: 2831929

Database: Academic Search Elite

Section: Special Report: Proprietary Colleges
News Analysis

UNDERSTANDING THE APPEAL OF FOR-PROFIT COLLEGES

TEMPE, Ariz. -- More than 70 million adult learners currently are seeking educational opportunities for career advancement or personal growth.

Increasingly, they are turning to for-profit colleges and non-traditional higher education alternatives. Should public colleges be surprised that these students are seeking more flexible options when our traditional educational system is often deemed too rigid to keep up with their needs?

Many of these for-profit colleges have demonstrated tremendous foresight in target marketing, innovation and expediency. There are some important lessons we can all learn from studying our for-profit cousins.

As I see it, proprietary colleges have been particularly insightful in several areas:

One. They are experts at identifying unserved or underserved student markets. Many for-profit

colleges were born out of a desire to reach specific target markets, rather than trying to be all things to all students.

Lacking a readily accessible pool of students, and being hungry, they went hunting for unserved or underserved students. They found them in overlooked demographic groups such as working adults with families, reentry students and employees who needed hands-on, industry-specific training or retraining.

By tapping market niches that were not adequately served, these colleges filled a void. Then, as demographics changed, many of these previously unnoticed market segments, such as baby boomers, began transforming the face of higher education. The by-product was a huge growth surge for the University of Phoenix and other for-profits that once had been considered the young upstarts of the industry.

By staying close to the student markets they serve, these same for-profits also have taken note of the consumer-oriented attitudes their older students have adopted. This makes it easier for the private colleges to transform themselves into student-centered organizations.

Corporate universities were born out of a similar recognition. Unable to find the right public education partner that would offer industry-specific training, retailers like Eddie Bauer and high-tech giants such as Intel decided they could present the material themselves, and do a better job. So they did the unthinkable and became their own institutions of higher education.

Two. Today's successful for-profit colleges are keenly aware that only one in five higher education students is 18 to 22 years old, attends full-time and lives on campus. The reality of today's society is that the "typical" student begins or completes a degree at a later age, and sandwiches it in between home life, family and a job.

They bring a spirit of innovation to learning. For-profits, being bottom-line oriented, quickly learn there is no point in competing by duplicating an established system. What they need is a competitive edge.

So armed with their individual visions, but without the start-up resources needed to construct bricks-and-mortar campuses, many for-profit colleges have utilized unconventional approaches to reach students.

For instance, few would have imagined that students would be willing to exchange campus life for courses taken in a shopping mall classroom. But the Caliber Learning Network did. This innovative partnership between Sylvan Learning Systems and MCI Corp. has resulted in impressive growth.

Few could have foreseen the paradigm shift that resulted in colleges coming to the students, rather than making the students come to the colleges. However, emerging organizations like Jones International Ltd. have made inroads in distance learning through broadcast media and

online education.

By being creative in their delivery formats, many for-profits have been responsible for the breakdown of traditional geographic barriers that once hindered access to learning opportunities. They have made the global classroom a reality.

Three. Finally, for-profits demonstrate quick response time to market forces and trends. Because they are profit-driven, these organizations move quickly.

For example, DeVry Institute of Technology took advantage of the explosive growth in the industry and created state-of-the-art technical training centers across the country.

In response to a critical workforce development need, the new Michigan Virtual Automotive College was formed. This unusual public-private partnership is aligned with the Big Three U.S. automakers for industry training.

In another development, for-profit colleges have often taken the lead by establishing flexible and convenient solutions for adults, such as allowing them to accelerate their coursework.

Could it be that there are still untapped markets that are not currently being served by higher education? Are new technologies emerging that could produce more effective delivery modes?

My guess is that the for-profits colleges will be among the first to identify who or what they are and then find ways to develop them.

Having praised the for-profits for what they do right, can there still be many functions which public colleges are better equipped or more willing to undertake? Let's examine our collective strengths.

I'm encouraged when I look at four particular areas where we truly excel.

First, community support means that public colleges will usually be able to deliver learning opportunities at a more affordable price. Our fiscal base is firmly in place, and we are indeed a bargain for students who need to conserve financial resources -- which includes just about everyone these days.

Furthermore, corporations know it is in their best interests to support our financial structure. Through donations and programs of giving, we can build and strengthen relationships with leading organizations.

Second, we have a track record that brings us credibility. As established, tax-supported institutions, public colleges tend to enjoy a certain prestige and name recognition that is still developing among many of the newer proprietary colleges.

Third, public colleges appeal to the community at large by maintaining the broadest curriculum possible. Therefore, we are able to offer a wider spectrum of courses, ranging from accounting to

zoology.

And finally, our community roots run deep. We give back to our communities by offering an array of cultural activities, concerts, festivals, sports and forums. These outreach activities don't necessarily earn a profit, but they do contribute to the health and vitality of our regions.

Proprietary colleges are a healthy, viable alternative for an industry that must look well beyond the traditional system if it is to meet the educational goals of today's lifelong learners. These for-profit institutions are prospering despite criticism and controversy.

It's more than possible for us in public education to appreciate and even emulate their contributions, while taking pride in the legacy that we have established for our own learning communities.

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By Linda Thor, Dr., PRESIDENT, RIO SALADO COLLEGE, TEMPE, ARIZ.

Adapted by Dr.

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## Still in school

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### Abstract (summary)

None available.

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### Full Text

Linda Thor, a straight-A student and class valedictorian, was so bored with high school that she didn't want anything to do with college.

So her mother made a deal with her. If she tried college for a year and still didn't like it, she could quit.

"I haven't stopped going to college," said the president of Rio Salado College who earned a doctor of education degree in community college administration.

Thor is one of a few female college presidents nationwide.

"As a legislator, I guess I was more fascinated by her reputation nationally and internationally as one of the most creative people in the education field," said Catherine Eden, now vice president of public affairs and marketing for Rural/Metro Corp. in Scottsdale. "Her reputation, as strong as it is in Arizona, I think, is stronger outside of Arizona."

Thor grew up in Los Angeles where her father was a burglary detective for the Los Angeles Police Department and her mother was a homemaker. She had a stable childhood, only moving once in her young years, and that was to the house next door.

The only thing remotely exciting in high school she remembers was a journalism class and the only reason she took it was because she adored her English teacher. She quickly became editor of her school newspaper and was offered a journalism scholarship to Pepperdine University, which hired her as soon as she graduated as its director of public information.

Thor later moved to the Los Angeles Community College District, a nine-school system where she received five promotions within the first 12 of her 16 years there.

She attributes her rapid ascent to being noticed by the chancellor of the system, Leslie Koltai, who became her mentor.

"My assumption was that she had the ability to lead," said Koltai, adding that she was very able and perceptive. "She is the kind of an individual who can compete with the other sex."

Tom Fallo, superintendent and president of El Camino Community College District in Torrance, Calif., moved up the ladder along with Thor at the Los Angeles college system.

"She was a natural for the leadership positions," he said. "She is bright; she's energetic, enthusiastic and able to present herself so very well. She's on the cutting edge of whatever she's doing."

In 1981, Thor asked business and industry leaders what type of training was needed for their workers.

What she discovered was she needed to be offering worksite training - a revolutionary idea in the early 1980s. She took the idea to the board, which told her that would be fine, but she had to find the financing.

Thor came back with \$3 million from the California Worksite Education and Training Act, the largest grant her district had ever received. That funding grew to \$24 million, coupled with federal, state and private contracts.

During the four years she ran that program, she worked with 600 employers and trained 8,000 workers. At the same time, she was

raising a toddler and working on her doctorate preparing for a new role.

At the time, she vowed that if she ever became a college president she would make it easier for students to work and go to school full time.

But when she was named president of one of the schools in the Los Angeles district, the board balked.

They feared not being able to find a replacement who could find that kind of money, so they compromised. Thor took her worksite training program to her new college.

She walked into a college that had experienced a 44 percent decline in enrollment within the previous four years. The governing board gave her five months to increase enrollment by 20 percent.

Thor strolled the campus asking employees what they would do if they were president. The switchboard operator said she received many calls asking for paralegal courses. A gardener told her students were always asking for directions to the admissions building.

Thor implemented a paralegal course, the fastest-growing occupation at the time, and put a huge yellow helium balloon on top of the admissions building with signs around the campus saying "follow the yellow balloon."

Enrollment increased 33 percent.

When school started, there was a traffic jam in the parking lot. And Thor was right in the middle of it all, cheering.

By the time she left in 1990, Thor had seen enrollment grow from 6,400 students to 10,000.

Today, as president of Rio Salado College - known as the college without walls - Thor continues to team up with businesses to offer training programs at corporate offices and distance learning programs.

Increasing 26 percent in enrollment last year, Rio Salado is the third-largest college of the 10-college district in Maricopa County.

"It's important to me that whatever I do makes a difference, that what happens in this college under my leadership makes a difference," she said.

LINDA THOR

Name: Dr. Linda Thor

Title: President

Company: Rio Salado College

Age: 49

Residence: Ahwatukee

Spouse: Robert Huntsinger

Children: 2

Education: Bachelor of arts in journalism and doctor of education in community college administration, Pepperdine University; master of public administration, California State University at Los Angeles.

Associations: Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Council for Adult & Experiential Learning, Continuous Quality Improvement Network for Community & Technical Colleges, Arizona Department of Economic Security Venture Team.

UP CLOSE

Time you were most free: "When I was a full-time college student."

The biggest hypocrite you ever met: "The fair-weather friend whose loyalties bend with the political winds."

Describe yourself as a child: "So shy that I went all the way through school without ever raising my hand to answer a question."

Describe a moment in your life when you had to have the most courage: "Deciding to leave my home state and a successful career in anticipation of a better life for my family in Arizona. "

Most meaningful possession: "My collection of Don Quixote figurines."

Pet peeve: "Road lizards who are fanatical about getting one car length ahead of you."

Greatest regret: "Not allowing enough time to play."

Heroes in real life: "Students who achieve in spite of significant barriers."

Motto: "Make a positive difference."

Most marked characteristic: "I am told I have a distinctive laugh."

Greatest achievement: "My children."

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## Indexing (details)

|                                |                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Subject</b>                 | Colleges & universities;<br>Awards & honors;<br>Personal profiles;<br>Presidents                                                        |
| <b>Location</b>                | Phoenix Arizona                                                                                                                         |
| <b>People</b>                  | Thor, Linda                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Company/organization</b>    | Name: Rio Salado College<br>NAIC: 611310                                                                                                |
| <b>Classification</b>          | 8306: Schools and educational services,<br>2120: Chief executive officers,<br>9160: Biographical, 9190: United States                   |
| <b>Title</b>                   | Still in school                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Author</b>                  | Gonzales, Angela                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Publication title</b>       | The Business Journal                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Volume</b>                  | 20                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Issue</b>                   | 29                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Pages</b>                   | B49                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Publication year</b>        | 2000                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Publication date</b>        | Apr 21, 2000                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Year</b>                    | 2000                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Publisher</b>               | American City Business Journals                                                                                                         |
| <b>Place of publication</b>    | Phoenix                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Country of publication</b>  | United States                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Journal subject</b>         | Business And Economics                                                                                                                  |
| <b>ISSN</b>                    | 08951632                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Source type</b>             | Trade Journals                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Language of publication</b> | English                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Document type</b>           | News                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>ProQuest document ID</b>    | 225066106                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Document URL</b>            | <a href="http://search.proquest.com/docview/225066106?accountid=12597">http://search.proquest.com/docview/225066106?accountid=12597</a> |
| <b>Copyright</b>               | Copyright American City Business Journals<br>Apr 21, 2000                                                                               |
| <b>Last updated</b>            | 2010-06-10                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Database</b>                | ABI/INFORM Complete                                                                                                                     |

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**Record: 1**

**Title:** Keeping up with the Joneses.

**Authors:** Thor, Linda M.

**Source:** Community College Week; 05/31/99, Vol. 11 Issue 22, p4, 2p

**Document Type:** Article

**Subject Terms:** \*TECHNOLOGY  
\*EDUCATION  
NAICS/Industry Codes923110 Administration of Education Programs  
611710 Educational Support Services  
611699 All Other Miscellaneous Schools and Instruction

**Abstract:** Looks at the role technology plays on education. How community colleges keep up with all the changes in technology; Factors paramount to distance learning's success; Lessons learned by community colleges from the information superhighway.

**Full Text Word Count:** 1170

**ISSN:** 10415726

**Accession Number:** 1914668

**Database:** Academic Search Elite

**Section:** point of view

## KEEPING UP WITH THE JONESES

Once upon a time, not so long ago, community colleges enjoyed a specially carved niche in the world of higher education. Our 18-to 22-year-old students came to us in a traditional classroom environment, and our biggest competition was the sister college across town. Now our comfort level has eroded.

Our student populations definitely are older, and college is not necessarily the focal point of their daily lives. We've seen our turf invaded by private enterprise such as Jones Knowledge Group and Caliber Learning Network.

In addition, there are the consortiums, virtual universities and foreign colleges. They have entered the adult education market with a dazzling array of delivery formats ranging from the shopping mall approach to satellite up-link, downlink and multi-point video conferencing.

With so many educational options available to the nation's 2 million-plus distance learning students, it's no wonder that many public colleges are finding it increasingly more difficult to compete. For those bold enough to merge high-tech with higher education, the big question remains: "How can we possibly keep up with all the changes in technology?"

My answer may surprise you.

As president of a college that has embraced technology for 20 years, I've witnessed a major transformation in our thinking. Over the years, our perspective has shifted from being enamored with technology, to recognizing it for what it is--the tool or enabler that delivers learning opportunities. However, our No. 1 commitment is to education itself.

Along the way, we have tried many innovative learning tools, from the Internet to integrated technologies. And while we have found value in all of them, we can state with some certainty that keeping up with the latest technologies isn't really as important as some think.

Paramount to distance learning's success are the college's resources, planning and management -- in other words, a proper infrastructure that can support the end users. It is the soundness of that structure that determines our level of progress, rather than the technologies we choose to incorporate.

What we have learned is that technologies change. But a solid infrastructure that supports the faculty, staff and students in using these various technologies will last for years. It's the vessel that also will allow your college to navigate the still largely uncharted waters of distance learning.

In this capacity, we agree with Sir John Daniel, the well-known vice chancellor of the British Open University. Despite the fact that his university serves 150,000 people globally and has the world's largest distance learning student body, he believes the primary emphasis should be on "soft" technologies, such as people and processes, rather than on equipment, or "hard" technologies.

Your own infrastructure should consist of cross-functional teams that interact frequently. They may consist of faculty members, student service advisers, course developers, technical experts, admissions and records representatives, marketers and so on. However, an integrated approach keeps everyone working together for the best interests of our No. 1 customer: the student.

Here are some other lessons we have learned in our journey along the information superhighway:

- Radical paradigm shifts, such as distance learning, must be faculty-driven.

Distance learning courses modify the faculty role from primarily content expert to that of facilitator, mentor, coach, cheerleader and "guide on the side." Without faculty buy-in, your college will never launch or maintain a successful distance learning program, regardless of the technologies you use.

Once faculty members adopt a sense of ownership, they become enthusiastic supporters and leaders in processes such as research and development, a vital component of distance learning success. In true distance learning, faculty report they actually develop a deeper level of communication and connection with students than often is possible in the classroom.

- A spirit of innovation makes the technology learning curve fun. A former faculty president was planning the end-of-the-year faculty retreat. She wanted to create a shared experience that would

be competitive, with a sports component, in a really safe environment.

She also wanted to put her faculty in a learner mode and watch them measure their own progressive learning curves. So she took 20 full-time faculty to the local shopping mall where they visited "Gameworks," a Steven Spielberg-owned arcade that features virtual reality games for grown-ups.

Armed with \$30 worth of tokens, each person played his or her virtual games of choice, ranging from jet skiing to motorcycle riding and even "shooting the rapids" in paddle boats. In other words, these faculty, whose average age was just over 40, not only became kids again but learners also.

The results? During a debriefing, the techno-savvy faculty shared ideas for redesigning online courses, such as where to insert more clicks for help. They discussed learner motivation and overcoming inhibitions about using unfamiliar technologies.

They even noticed the quality of service offered by the Gameworks staff, and translated that into concepts for how to assist both real-time and distance learning students. In short, the faculty voted that retreat format to be much more effective and dynamic than the traditional meeting and small-group, breakout sessions.

Colleges must face the realities of our marketplace. Just because a certain technology is available does not necessarily mean it is something your students really want or need. Before deciding to use a specific technology, your college needs to determine whether it is sustainable. For example, can students easily download materials? Will they require extensive user support? Can the college offer that support seven days a week?

Distance learning courses must be customized for the specific medium. Adapting a course to a distance learning format, such as the Internet, means much more than simply placing the class content online. You can't recreate the traditional classroom on the Web, because the dynamics have changed.

In an asynchronous environment, the presentation of course materials directs the learning process. That is why effective distance learning courses have an "edutainment" quality to them. They are educationally sound, yet engaging. Visual and auditory elements that capture the attention of students are more likely to increase retention.

- Partnerships can be invaluable in expanding your distance learning program. Many vendors who are on the cutting edge of technology would welcome the chance to partner with colleges for the purpose of piloting or even co-evolving their product lines. You possess the resources they need: the ability to help them test-market hardware and software in an affordable manner.

You can seek out opportunities to meet like-minded potential partners at regional and national professional conferences. In addition, many faculty have had success taking existing commercial materials and wrapping courses around them. By supplementing the material, they make the course content fit the needs of their particular student population.

In summary, you don't have to become a technology guru to keep up with the Joneses, et al. It's more important to concentrate your initial efforts on strengthening your own internal network of end-user support.

True distance learning success begins from within, rather than from without.

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By Linda M. Thor, Dr., President Rio Salado College Phoenix, Ariz.

Adapted by Dr.

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Ways & Means

The third year of the Clinton Administration's direct-loan program for students was one that its supporters would probably prefer to forget.

The program's operation stumbled in academic 1996-1997, and the fallout is apparent. For the first time since direct lending began in 1994, colleges in the guaranteed-loan program are reporting levels of satisfaction higher than those in the direct program.

Direct lending provides federal loan funds directly to students through their colleges, bypassing the banks that dominate the traditional guaranteed-loan system.

An annual customer-service survey by Macro International, a company hired by the Education Department to evaluate direct lending, found that in the program's third year, 64 per cent of the colleges in it said they were satisfied. But 82 per cent of colleges in the guaranteed-loan program gave it similarly high ratings.

In 1994-95, 89 per cent of direct-loan colleges told Macro they were happy with the program; 83 per cent did so in 1995-96. Meanwhile, satisfaction among colleges in the guaranteed-loan program has risen. In 1994-95, 68 per cent of colleges in that program reported that they were happy with it; in 1995-96, the figure was 79 per cent.

David A. Longanecker, Assistant Secretary for postsecondary education, called the drop in satisfaction levels for direct lending a "momentary reaction" to problems that the colleges encountered last year because of a new contractor's computer difficulties.

In March 1997, Electronic Data Systems ran into problems when it took charge of the system with which the government originates direct loans. As a result, some colleges did not receive any loan funds; others received the funds but were not told to whom they were supposed to go.

The department also had to shut down its direct-loan consolidation program for four months, as the company worked to resolve computer problems that had left 80,000 borrowers waiting to consolidate multiple loans into a single direct loan.

Dr. Longanecker said he expected direct lending to get stellar ratings once again, now that those problems have been resolved.

Chalk up a rare legislative victory for opponents of affirmative action.

The South Carolina House of Representatives voted last week, 74 to 37, in favor of a bill that would force state-government agencies to drop racial-preference programs, such as admissions and scholarship policies at several public colleges.

Most bans on affirmative action have been the result of judicial action or ballot initiatives, not legislation. Indeed, the South Carolina measure faces tough going in the Democratic-controlled state Senate.

Government & Politics



A 2-Year College in Arizona Bills Itself as a New Model for Public Higher Education

Rio Salado attracts students and business support, but clashes with universities over state policies

BY PATRICK HEALY

TEMPE, ARIZ. **W**HEN Linda Thor looks out of her window in the president's office of Rio Salado College here, she can see the rugged slopes of the South Mountains. But what she points out first is a nearby pair of ordinary brick buildings that house the University of Phoenix—the competition.

College officials nationwide are fretting about the for-profit customizer of higher education as it opens shop in state after state and aggressively markets its job-oriented degree programs as the best buy for college students. But Dr. Thor, whose ambitions for her community college make some educators similarly edgy, is not worried. She wants to beat the university at its own game, in its own back yard.

"We're more like the University of Phoenix than we are like other community colleges," she says. "From the beginning we were charged with being an educational change agent. Our chancellor says to me, if Rio is not controversial, I'm not doing my job."

On that score, Dr. Thor has excelled. But her predilection for swift change has drawn opposition from some officials at other colleges and has left her with mixed results, which she ticks off like a checklist: Opening collegiate programs in high schools (a success); pushing the state to allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees (in limbo); and lobbying universities to grant credit for vocational courses (partial progress).

AHEAD OF THE CURVE?

More broadly, because of its booming enrollment and low overhead, Rio has become a standard for college innovation. If predictions come true that colleges will soon treat students like customers and education as a commodity that can be adapted to what the market demands—in other words, that colleges will become more like the University of Phoenix—then Rio will have been ahead of the curve.

"Rio makes instruction very consumable and puts it in the right place at the right time," says Tessa Martinez Pollack, president of Glendale Community College, which, like Rio, is part of the Maricopa Community College District. "I think it will stimulate non-Rio-like colleges to adapt to yet another, different education model—and that can be kind of threatening to its sibling institutions."

Rio turns 20 this spring, and a youthful spirit indeed infuses the enterprise. The college has only 19 full-time faculty members, many of them young educators who get along without the burdens of structure (no typical departments) and jockeying for tenure (all of the positions are tenure-track). The "product" speeds down the assembly line: Many classes begin every other week—over the Internet or at some of Rio's 129 locations in the region—and conclude after just six or seven weeks.

Within the fast-paced environment, instructors try to smooth the way for students and build a spirit of camaraderie. A "beep-a-tutor" program lets students in math and Spanish classes call in and get extra help from other students. Rio also tries to group the same students in more than one class, and it allows a student to submit the same paper for, say, English and psychology, to be evaluated for composition and content, respectively.

"There's a real sense of teamwork

here," says Sylvia Romero, a computer saleswoman who is studying to work in public relations. "We encourage each other not to drop out. Work comes easier than when you do everything on your own."

Dr. Thor and other top officials—part of a full-time staff of 211—are often out making calls on companies like America West Airlines and American Express, asking them what training and collegiate programs their workers need, and then tailoring the educational product for them.

"We are very market-driven, and the fact that we are focused on convenience and accessibility and relevancy and partnership has to be a contributor to our success each year," the president says.

For a results-minded person like Dr. Thor, two measures of success make her especially proud. Enrollment grew robustly from 1996 to 1997, at a time when some colleges in the system were recording losses; the head count stood at 24,717 last year. And the college has the lowest cost-



Linda Thor of Rio Salado College: "Our chancellor says to me, if Rio is not controversial, I'm not doing my job."

of-education rate in the system: about \$2,770 per full-time student, compared with an average of \$4,636.

Part of the cost containment comes from a reliance on about 520 adjunct faculty members, who are given books and curricula by the college, and are trained and evaluated by Rio's full-time instructors. While many colleges are increasingly criticized for depending on adjuncts, Rio officials say they recognize the importance of part-time instructors and give them more support than many other colleges do. Taking on so many adjuncts is also important because Rio wants the ability to draw veteran professionals as instructors and to vary course offerings as students' needs change.

"We like helping real workaday people who want to develop skills and find better jobs," says a computer instructor, Jim Gardner, who is 64 and has experience in sales, engineering, and transportation projects.

TEACHING AT HIGH SCHOOLS

The college also employs several teachers in 18 area high schools, where students can take classes for both college and high-school credit. That has annoyed some officials at other public colleges, because they would lose enrollment-based state appropriations if their students had already received academic credit from Rio.

"A lot of high-school students are like community-college students—they're older and have jobs—and I think Rio has picked up that client base as a market, which sort of chops into the university pipeline," says Paul A. Elsner, chancellor of the Maricopa district.

To attract older students, Rio also gives

academic credit to those who have earned certifications or passed exams in occupation-related fields—even if they took no classes. "I am looking forward to a time when it's not grades that matter—it's going to be certifications of competencies," says Dr. Thor. "That's what students and the employer community will be demanding."

Developing the work force is a major

"I am looking forward to a time when it's not grades that matter—it's going to be certifications of competencies. That's what students and the employer community will be demanding."

goal for Rio officials, who feel that some people and companies need more than certificate- and associate-level programs in occupational fields. Dr. Thor helped lead a year-long effort to persuade legislators to allow community colleges to offer four-year degrees in "applied sciences," such as law-enforcement technology. It was an idea that Arizona universities fought.

A state Senator this month shelved a proposed bill that would have allowed community colleges to offer four-year degrees (*The Chronicle*, January 16). Instead, she called for further review and for community colleges and universities to collaborate more on four-year programs, particularly in vocational fields.

Dr. Thor doubts how much can be achieved through collaboration, however, because the transferability of vocational-education credits from two-year colleges to public universities has been a thorny matter. Rio and other two-year colleges recently devised a plan with Arizona State

University East under which a proposed bachelor's-of-applied-science program at the university would accept 60 hours of courses in general-education and vocational fields from two-year colleges.

Despite her opposition to the 60-hour cap, which she finds "insulting" because students in vocational programs often earn more than that, Dr. Thor plans to press

ahead on the issue, which also troubles many of her peers here and in other states.

Lawmakers and business leaders nationwide are increasingly prodding public universities to grant credit for technical or vocational courses. Many universities have resisted, saying they need to protect their bachelor's degrees. The courses in question do not match up with classes they offer, they say, and do not satisfy requirements for baccalaureate-degree programs.

FIGHT IN SOUTH DAKOTA

"If we're going to assume everything done at the postsecondary level is creditable to a baccalaureate degree, we need to redefine what technical education is—a redefinition that is rigorous," says Robert T. (Tad) Perry, executive director of the South Dakota Board of Regents.

Dr. Perry and other college officials in South Dakota are fighting a bill, passed this month by the state's House of Representatives, that would force public univer-

sities to give as much as 64 hours of credit to graduates of the state's four technical institutes. Dr. Perry argues that instruction at the institutes is not comparable to that in the first two years of a university education; he cites a recent study finding that only 19 of 27 composition classes on some technical campuses were taught by people who were "properly credentialed."

Administrators and students at Rio say a college education, no matter the discipline, should prepare people for work. Universities, they say, should serve students who want to earn degrees in occupational fields by granting credit for vocational course work from accredited campuses.

"It doesn't make sense to require students to redo learning that they already have," says Dr. Thor. "I feel a moral responsibility for a student who is a graduate of this institution to have options."

Sitting in an armchair in her office, where the shelves are lined with computer manuals and quality-improvement guides, the president indeed talks like a guardian of her students. She knows that they face obstacles, but she emphasizes, often with easy humor, her confidence that they will benefit here because higher education eventually will be playing catch-up to Rio.

"When I go to conferences and listen to futurists talk about what higher education will be like in the next century, they always describe a college like Rio," Dr. Thor says. "I always kind of chuckle about that, because we've been so controversial and embattled over the years, that to now hear colleges of the future described like us . . ." With that, she lets out a ringing laugh, the pleasure of which makes her double over in her chair. ■

Clinton Revamps His Science-Policy Team

Neal Lane moves from NSF to White House; Rita Colwell of U. of Maryland takes NSF post

BY PAULETTE WALKER CAMPBELL

WASHINGTON
SCIENTISTS are wildly enthusiastic about the Clinton Administration's revamped science-policy team.

President Clinton said this month that John H. Gibbons, his science adviser and director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, would retire on March 15. Mr. Clinton nominated Neal F. Lane, director of the National Science Foundation, to replace Dr. Gibbons.

To fill the vacancy that would be left by Dr. Lane's move, Mr. Clinton nominated Rita R. Colwell, president of the University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, to head the science foundation. If confirmed by the Senate, as expected, she would be the first woman and the first life scientist ever in that job.

"The Administration's science team is getting stronger and stronger," said Mary Woolley, president of Research!America, which promotes biomedical research. "These appointments, combined with the President's recent commitments to increase spending on science and technology, are real indications that the Administration is making science a high priority."

Dr. Lane said his first order of business would be to work to enact the President's entire fiscal-1999 budget request for science and technology, which would bring the federal investment in academic research and development to \$14.47-billion, a rise of about 6 per cent.

Some scientists say they hope that Dr. Lane will lend political clout to the Office of Science and Technology Policy, which they contend has lost the respect of some lawmakers, researchers, and lobbyists.

Dr. Gibbons—a nuclear physicist with a résumé filled with federal, state, and academic jobs—was seen as the perfect choice to hold the top science post when he was nominated in 1993. In his 13 years as head of the now-defunct Office of Technology Assessment, he had earned a reputation as being competent and knowledgeable on a range of science issues, from physics to the environment to space research.

Notwithstanding the President's current push to expand federal support for science and technology—which many researchers complain comes too late—critics say that Dr. Gibbons has been a lackluster advocate for science within the White House.

"During his first term, Clinton hardly, if ever, mentioned 'science' in his speeches," said Robert Park, director of the Washington office of the American Physical Society and a long-time friend of Dr. Gibbons. "I think many people blame Jack for that. He was simply not able to make science a concern of the Administration, in spite of the obvious interest of the Vice-President in science."

THE IMPACT OF OUTSIDE FORCES

Dr. Gibbons's defenders blame the Administration's apparent lack of interest more on outside forces than on any failure by Dr. Gibbons.

"When Jack Gibbons took that position, he wanted to change the way that science priorities are set, and he wanted to create a larger role for O.S.T.P. in the budget process," said Albert H. Teich, director of science policy for the American Association for the Advancement of Science. "He was well on his way to accomplishing those goals when—two years into his tenure—Republicans gained control of Congress. The ensuing effort to balance the budget by 2002 derailed a lot of his efforts."

Rick E. Borchelt, who for two years served as a spokesman for the science-policy office, attributes much of the disappointment in Dr. Gibbons's tenure among researchers and science lobbyists to their own "expectations."

"In the past, Presidential science advisers have viewed themselves as ambassadors for science," Mr. Borchelt said. "But Jack was asked to be a science adviser in the truest sense, and that mission played to all of his strengths and skills in policy analysis and assessment. Jack never saw his role as one of being a liaison between Capitol Hill and the White House."

Observers say the White House science office also suffered from a leadership void. In 1996, two of Dr. Gibbons's associate directors—for national security and for the environment—departed. More than a year passed before the Senate confirmed a successor for the national-security post, and the environmental post is still filled on an acting basis. Two other associate-director posts—for science and for technology—were filled with permanent directors only this past fall. Before that, the positions

Continued on Following Page

Critics of higher education such as Michael Dolence and Donald Norris (1995) urge educators to transform their institutions so as to align them with the needs of the twenty-first-century learner. However, colleges desiring to survive and thrive in a rapidly changing external environment often discover they must first find a way to make fundamental changes in their institutional culture.

Managing Change: A Case Study in Evolving Strategic Management

Linda Thor, Carol Scarafiotti, Laura Helminski

Organizational culture has been defined by Schein (in Bergquist, 1992) as a “pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (p. 2). Another definition characterizes culture in higher education as “collective, mutually shaping patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions that guide the behavior of individuals and groups and provide a frame of reference within which to interpret the meaning of events and actions on and off campus” (Kuh, Schuh, and Whitt, 1991, p. 19). A common thread, then, is that an organization’s culture includes unique attitudes, values, and practices learned by its members. The authors of this chapter assert that organizations desiring to foster cultures that are both current and aligned with the requirements of a rapidly changing world should adopt an evolving and strategic management model.

To illustrate the concept of evolving strategic management, this chapter presents a case study. It examines how and why Rio Salado College (Rio) in Tempe, Arizona, radically changed its culture and its form as it adopted the Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy, and how and why it later modified its TQM management model to establish, instead, an evolving strategic management approach based on Senge’s (1990) learning organization. Equally important, this chapter also explains the implications of making changes in an institution’s culture, processes, and form, illustrating how a change in one area precipitated other changes.

Rio's first experience, a formal, planned, collegewide movement to implement TQM, ultimately resulted in major changes in the college's culture, practices, mission, and vision. Its subsequent experience, a continuous movement to become a learning organization, involved a subtler, more informal management approach designed to inculcate evolution in the thinking and interactions of all employees rather than to change the college's mission or form. The two experiences together have enabled the college to survive grave internal and external threats, and to find a stance by which it can respond successfully to a future that is arriving at breakneck speed. Although Rio can be classified as a "distinctive college" (Townsend and others, 1992, p. 1) because of its unique nature, its experiences can provide helpful insights to other colleges contemplating how to deal with a rapidly changing environment.

The Original Organization

Rio Salado College was established in 1978 as a unique community college. It was designed specifically to serve Maricopa County's underserved geographical areas and populations through nontraditional means. In other words, its mandate was to meet community needs unmet by the then six community colleges composing the county's community college district. Rio would not have a campus but instead would lease facilities in strategic areas of the county. Also, Rio would employ mainly administrators and adjunct faculty.

From its inception, the college was designed to be an agent of change, an innovator in the use of instructional technology, and a producer of low-cost enrollments. Reflecting its decentralized structure—eight regional offices created to provide instructional and support services to target geographical areas—the college adopted a decentralized, internally competitive, strategic management approach designed to encourage and reward independent action. The approach worked well for twelve years. Each regional office was perceived by its chief administrators and staff as an autonomous minicampus. Each sought to provide comprehensive services and programs to its target population. Each thrived as an independent entrepreneurial unit whose bottom-line goal was to increase enrollment, and growth was rewarded by budget increases.

Throughout these early years, Rio employees demonstrated a pioneering spirit as well as an internally competitive drive, both of which spawned innovation and growth. For example, the college broke away from the traditional sixteen-week semester. Instead, the individual regional offices offered courses and programs on schedules that were convenient for the communities they served. Regional offices also developed a variety of "fast track," accelerated programs customized for special populations such as residents of the nearby U.S. Air Force base. Moreover, the college was the first Maricopa County community college to offer registration by telephone. The Distance Learning program, started in 1978, also took hold. No doubt as a result of these innovations, the college's enrollment grew.

As the college matured, however, its decentralized form and internally competitive culture became increasingly less effective and more problematic. First, although the college had espoused an official mission, the missions of the eight autonomous regional offices soon superseded it in practice. In other words, operationally the college lacked a common, or shared, mission and vision. Second, students were confused by eight autonomous schedules for what was supposedly one college. Third, as state funding for community colleges dwindled, the cost/benefit ratio resulting from decentralization and autonomy became increasingly less tolerable. It was difficult to utilize economy of scale in purchasing because there were few collegewide work processes and procedures. In addition, there were no collegewide training programs to develop collegewide employee capacity; instead, there were eight local programs. Fourth, inadvertently, Rio had perpetuated the perception of itself as a college of second choice. With its decentralization, it could not attract enough students to warrant offering comprehensive education programs; therefore, it focused on providing courses rather than programs. Students attracted to Rio were drawn mainly because they needed a single course in a convenient location.

In addition to problems created by the internally competitive management model, two major changes in the external environment threatened the college's survival. Within twelve years, the number of Maricopa County community colleges had increased from six to ten, each providing services to geographical areas served by Rio. Thus, Rio, the community college that had once thrived by meeting the needs of underserved geographical areas, now saw its market shrink significantly. In addition, over the years, Rio's competitor community colleges had begun to adopt many of the innovations that once had been unique to Rio. As a result, Rio faced fierce competition both externally and internally. Rio Salado College administrators and faculty soon realized that for the college to survive over the long term, it had to make some changes.

The Adoption of Total Quality Management

In 1990, the newly appointed president of Rio Salado College, Linda Thor, encouraged the college leadership to explore the potential of TQM as a vehicle to drive needed internal reform. She believed that much as it had helped corporate institutions, a TQM culture could help educational institutions survive in the coming new century.

Although TQM dates from its use in the 1950s in Japan, this philosophy took hold relatively recently in the United States, in the 1980s and 1990s, when corporations struggled for new ways to survive in a harshly competitive society composed of demanding consumers. Briefly, the TQM philosophy and principles focus all the organization's behaviors and resources on the goal of meeting and exceeding the customer's expectations. Along with its strong customer orientation, several other characteristics highlight TQM: reducing variation and error in processes, viewing each employee as an internal customer,

empowering employees and teams, emphasizing continuous, incremental improvement, encouraging prevention rather than inspection, and using tools and data for problem solving and decision making (Deming, 1982).

The idea of TQM as a strategic management model was for the most part well received at Rio. In early 1991, the president hired an outside consultant to provide extensive TQM training to an initial leadership group comprising selected administrators, faculty, and staff, and to help the college design an implementation strategy. Critical to the successful implementation of TQM was the commitment and involvement throughout the adoption phase by executive management, faculty, and staff leaders. As Merron (1994) notes, the top level of an organization must lead in the commitment and alignment to TQM in order to achieve optimal performance. Middle managers had the greatest misgivings about TQM. In the old competitive structure they held the power in their small decentralized fiefdoms, and they competed against each other for growth and resource allocation. In essence, they believed that they had the most to lose by a change in culture and structure. However, although the TQM philosophy was antithetical to their culture of rivalry, middle managers also realized that the college needed to make some changes. Thus, they supported the implementation of TQM.

Implementation also included adopting a collegewide TQM strategic management model consisting of several formal parts. Overseeing the institution was a TQM Strategic Planning and Steering Team established to ensure that the anticipated internal changes would further the college's vision and mission. Next, official Continuous Improvement Teams (CITs) were created under the auspices of the TQM Steering Team. These involved employees from throughout the organization who were trained to serve as members of teams and who came together to work on process improvement. Within each CIT, members were assigned specific roles such as "coach" and "process owner," and each CIT followed a prescribed improvement cycle. Finally, a Quality Coordinator served as liaison between the TQM Steering Team and the CITs.

Equally important to successful TQM implementation was a major, formal, collegewide training component. At an early stage, the college decided that it would be necessary to move as quickly as possible from external trainers, or the consultants who were hired in 1991, to internal trainers. Internal trainers reduced costs, but more importantly they helped to infuse the new philosophy into the institutional culture. For that reason, these training teams, each with five to seven individuals, were drawn from the ranks of working administrators, faculty, and staff, not from an existing training department. Their job, essentially, was to adapt the corporate TQM philosophy and principles to meet the academy's needs.

Significantly, when the leadership of Rio Salado College adopted the TQM philosophy, they also realized that to make the TQM approach work to its fullest capacity, the college's operating structure would have to change. They saw that the old, internally competitive, decentralized structure could not be a sound foundation for a management philosophy based on cooperation among inter-

nal customers, teamwork, and a shared vision. The old organization was fragmented to the extent that it was difficult even to identify major cross-organizational critical processes, let alone collaborate to achieve common goals.

In effect, then, implementing TQM actually led to a major reorganization. Members of the TQM Steering Team transformed the college to coordinate its philosophy and its practice. The old, independent regional offices headed by middle managers were replaced by units that provided major collegewide programs, functions, and services, all of which were interdependent. The new structure promoted internal cooperation and discouraged internal competition. The focus of the institution began to shift to meeting the needs of customers and staying ahead of external competitors.

As more employees were schooled in TQM, a new culture began to emerge, with work ethics and practices that would eventually enable Rio Salado not only to survive but also to thrive. This culture had several major characteristics. The first was a new emphasis on work teams. Previously, each department or area considered itself a nearly autonomous working body; rarely did members of one department interact with members of another. However, the TQM philosophy encouraged the formation of cross-functional, vertically integrated teams to improve processes and to solve problems. The cross-functional team concept had a profound effect on Rio's culture and continues to be the preferred method for working on collegewide challenges.

A second characteristic of the new culture was a change in college values. As a result of TQM, the college came to place a strong emphasis on service, quality, and continuous improvement rather than on merely increasing student enrollment. Involved in discussions that ranged beyond accomplishing their specific work tasks, employees now began to focus on continually improving the quality of their work. This new orientation fundamentally changed how work was perceived in order to accomplish the college's vision and mission. The consequence was that people were enthusiastic in their efforts to improve and no longer focused on only the bottom line. Moreover, discussions about values continued across departmental and area lines.

The third significant characteristic of the new culture was a shared understanding of the meaning of customer service. Most employees came to understand the importance of thinking first of the customer's needs and expectations, not about how much work was or was not getting done. Employees came to place high value on serving the customer well, and their new attitude often served as a catalyst for making procedural changes. As employees began to see students as external customers and each other as internal customers, they came to be willing to examine the needs of both groups and to change outmoded or dysfunctional processes. Examples of successful employee-developed improvements included streamlining the college and district purchasing process, making the catalogue common pages more user friendly, and designing and revising a collegewide rewards and recognition process.

A final critical step in the college's structural transformation was the revision of its mission. Previously, the job of drafting a mission statement was

assumed to be the responsibility of the top leadership. Now it was seen as a task that allowed all employees to contribute to drafting the college's mission. The new mission statement focuses on Rio's unique and customized programs, accelerated programs, and courses and programs for delivery by distance technologies.

It took four years for the TQM philosophy, principles, and tools to become part of the college's culture. In that period, TQM was embraced by employees and provided the framework for the way in which the college conducted business. Employees knew what to do when they wanted to make a change or solve a problem: they applied a tool or used the process improvement cycle: "plan, do, check, act." Because everyone had been trained in the use of the TQM tools, there now existed a common vocabulary.

The Case for Continuing Change

An institution's culture is dynamic. As Morgan notes, "Culture is constantly evolving, incorporating changes in the values, beliefs, and attitudes of the external environment as well as those of institutional members" (in Kuh, Schuh, and Whitt, 1991, p. 71). Predictably, then, some of the conditions that caused the college to embrace the TQM philosophy and management model were themselves changed, and new needs arose. Destructive internal competition had indeed declined. And formidable external competition had increased.

In particular, the college needed better, faster innovation. It needed everyone to respond to major advances in technology so that the college could compete with a variety of local, national, and international public and private colleges and teaching organizations, all interested in obtaining a share of the distance learner market. New organizations such as Western Governors University, the International Community College, and Arizona Learning Systems posed a threat to a college that once had the local distance learning market to itself.

However, when innovation was most needed, it did not happen, because too many of the college's resources were allocated to Rio's self-imposed version of TQM formalities rather than to the production of important outcomes. For example, the TQM Steering Team and its official CITs that had worked well initially had become a lumbering, bureaucratic system that could neither produce results fast enough nor answer the need for large-scale innovation. TQM Steering Team meetings became mired in process trivia, and members of the TQM Steering Team who viewed their time as not well utilized stopped attending the meetings.

Eventually, the Steering Team dissolved. Although the concept of the process improvement cycle was adopted throughout the college and continues in use today, official Continuous Improvement Teams were too often caught up in the ritual surrounding the use of the process improvement cycle. In retrospect, the outcome rarely justified the time and resource commitment required to produce it. In short, official CITs frequently lost sight of their goals

because they perceived using the tools and attending meetings to be their main focus. It is interesting to note that Rio's problem with the bureaucracy of TQM teams is relatively common. For example, Brigham (1993) indicates that often teams become bogged down when there is confusion about objectives and about deadlines for completion.

The demise of the TQM management model, therefore, taught the college a valuable lesson and, together with momentous external developments, presented a new challenge. Instead of adopting another management model with a formal structure, the college leadership learned that it needed a strategic management approach capable of evolving with a dynamic culture and able to position the college to deal adeptly with rapid external change.

Becoming a Learning Organization

Thus, in 1994, the Rio Salado College leadership asked two questions: What step will help the college maintain a competitive edge? What management model will enable the college to take that step? They found answers in Senge's concept of the learning organization: "A Learning Organization is a place where people continually expand their capacity to create its future, where adaptive learning is joined by generative learning" (Senge, 1990, p. 14).

Senge's "Five Disciplines of a Learning Organization" (Exhibit 6.1) also seemed to be a good fit with the college's needs and with its TQM foundation. Moreover, the concept seemed to point the way to take the organization to the next level.

Exhibit 6.1. Peter Senge's Five Disciplines of a Learning Organization

Personal mastery. Learning to expand our personal capacity to create desired results, and creating a culture that encourages all members to develop so that they can achieve their goals and purposes.

Mental models. Continually reflecting on, clarifying, and improving our internal pictures of the world and noticing how they shape our actions and decisions.

Shared visions. Building group commitment by developing shared images of the future we seek to create and the principles and guiding practices by which we expect to get there.

Team learning. Transforming conversational and collective thinking skills so that groups can reliably develop intelligence and ability greater than the sum of their individual members' talents.

Systems thinking. Learning a new way of thinking about, describing, and understanding the forces and interrelationships that shape the behavior of systems, to see how to change systems effectively, and to act in tune with the larger natural and economic processes.

It is important here to emphasize the difference between change and evolution. When the college embraced the TQM philosophy, it altered itself radically. When it adopted the learning organization approach, however, the college began a gradual evolution that builds on its TQM foundation rather than departing sharply from it. That is, those who are committed to the college's becoming a learning organization would not have supported the move in that direction if they had not already experienced the changes brought about by the shift to the TQM model. TQM emphasized shared mission and vision, customer service, teamwork, understanding process, empowering employees, continuous improvement, and strategically aligned resources. The resulting conceptual infrastructure enabled the leadership to envision a culture in which all employees would increase their capacity to create and innovate continually, and in which they could design new systems without allowing old structures to limit their thinking.

This evolving strategic management model is characterized by inculcating the five disciplines and by accepting dynamism rather than imposing rigid, formal management systems. The new model allows the institutional culture to reinforce valued fundamentals as it discards outmoded ways and adopts new processes. What is important is the learning that comes from the growth and movement that the model encourages. The model is not limited by structure; it is expanded and enhanced by the behaviors embodied in the five disciplines of the learning organization.

The college's evolution toward becoming a learning organization began with a change that reflects the new values. When the TQM Steering Team was discontinued, a new meeting format quickly took its place: the Leadership Council. Members of the TQM Steering Team who had become discouraged by the tediousness of the Steering Team agendas took the lead to form a leadership community with a different goal: to share research, to engage in dialogue, and to learn. Leadership Council meetings are currently opportunities to teach each other about new theories and concepts, such as Wheatley's (1994) chaos theory and Howe and Strauss's (1993) "thirteenth generation." Through this mechanism, college leadership pursues the role of learner, indicating, as one member put it, that this role feels "right for the organization." The fifteen members of the TQM Steering Team represented all employee groups of the college—administration, faculty, and staff. The newly formed Leadership Council had twenty-five members from the same three employee groups.

Given the emphases in the institution on Senge's model, it is significant that the evolution toward becoming a learning organization has been different from the earlier shift to the TQM model. The implementation of the TQM philosophy was expansive and involved all employees in formal training and practice. Evolving into a learning organization has involved less formal planning and a more spontaneous "just in time" approach. Several faculty and administrators who were interested in learning organization concepts have become resident experts on ideas from Peter Senge's books *The Fifth Discipline* (1990) and

The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook (Senge and others, 1994). They lead discussions on various readings, videos, and satellite conferences, all associated with learning organization concepts. They also provide practice sessions for those who want to learn Senge's five disciplines.

The college has recognized that the different approaches to implementation have, in fact, been key to their success. As noted, TQM implementation was formal, deliberately expansive, and mandatory for everyone. Implementation of the learning organization philosophy is informal, fluid (reaching employees as interest grows), and voluntary.

Yet, each philosophy has become pervasive as it meets the needs of the college as a whole. Employees respond in a different way to the learning organization culture than they did to TQM, but their acceptance is no less authentic. Their use of the learning organization vocabulary and their attempts to demonstrate skills and concepts all attest to their interest in and understanding of the learning organization. In addition to introducing key concepts, college learning organization experts assist groups in the college that are interested in applying Senge's concepts to their projects. For example, faculty who are interested in moving forward with a technology agenda spent a semester in dialogue about the learning organization. Later, a group of college middle managers having operational responsibilities for supporting college initiatives received training about learning organizations.

The cultural transformation that evolved as a result of adapting the learning organization philosophy comes from viewing the five disciplines as strategies for change. Indeed, these disciplines have taken on specific meanings at Rio Salado College. Personal mastery means the commitment to learning on the part of each employee. Perhaps the most difficult of the disciplines but perceived as the most useful in the pursuit of knowledge is mental models. As employees practice effective communication through the discipline of mental models, they have to work on examining their assumptions and beliefs to find ways to abandon outdated structures and create new ones. Shared visions means that all employees have a common perception of the college goals and understand their roles in achieving the college's purposes. Team learning has brought about a major improvement in the effectiveness of college teams; it means that merely working well as a team is not enough: now the goal is to learn together so that teams can create and innovate. Systems thinking has also had a major effect. It means that college personnel must be aware that they cannot simply think within their segregated functions. Rather, they must recognize the implications of their work for the larger system. Systems thinking has been especially important as teams work on innovations.

The learning organization philosophy offers the college deeper and richer dialogue than did TQM, which was more concrete and process oriented. There were times when the college leadership thought that TQM conversations became too focused on detail. Also, those who are involved in practicing the disciplines of a learning organization find themselves responding with enthusiasm at being learners, which is not the usual role for administrators and

faculty. And the learning organization philosophy enables the college to create, design, and innovate more effectively as team members become proficient in examining mental models and in team learning. Nonetheless, the learning organization approach is driven by the top of the organization. That is, the work of transformation is carried on primarily by administrators and faculty at this point. By contrast, even early in TQM, all employees were active.

Early Outcomes

The premise of equifinality is that there are always multiple causes for any effect. Therefore, it is impossible to prove empirically that Rio Salado College's current enrollment success (see Table 6.1) is the direct result of its evolved TQM and learning organization management strategy. However, it is evident that because of the college's strong emphasis on customer service, Rio has been able to cultivate new student markets by establishing partnerships with business and government. Also, the college has been able to move more quickly than competitor colleges to respond to such opportunities, in part because of its strong dedication to shared vision and its work with mental models. These skills and values have helped the college to transcend the traditional communication barriers between faculty and administration, and as a result the energies of the college can be focused on innovation, customer service, and providing students with positive learning experiences.

Similarly, because of its focus on systems thinking, the college has been able to innovate quickly and to elicit support for innovations from across the college. For example, a recent major college effort involved developing courses to be delivered through the Internet. In only one year the college developed over seventy courses for on-line delivery and also added all the traditional college services, such as admissions, advisement, and book sales, on-line. Even more noteworthy is the collegewide effort, begun in May 1997, in which the college offers students the opportunity to begin any of its 142 distance-delivery courses every two weeks through the year.

Table 6.1. Growth in Full-Time Student Equivalency (FTSE)

<i>Year</i>	<i>FTSE</i>
1986-87	3,051
1987-88	3,096
1988-89	3,304
1989-90	3,650
1990-91	4,088
1991-92	3,751
1992-93	3,439
1993-94	4,078
1994-95	4,289
1995-96	4,808
1996-97	5,649

Conclusions

What can be learned from the college's experience? Although Rio Salado College is a distinctive college, its experiences are relevant to colleges desiring to manage change. The following are some lessons learned:

- To meet the needs of a rapidly changing external environment, an organization should foster change in its culture.
- Organizations can create desired internal change by implementing an evolving strategic management model.
- An internal cultural change can create the need for additional changes in the structure and work processes of an organization.
- One static management model cannot provide all that is needed to manage the numerous changes that are currently under way in the external environment.
- On the other hand, valued practices, theories, and beliefs will endure even if an outmoded model dissolves.
- Enduring and valued practices, theories, and beliefs can be integrated into a new strategic management model.

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Case Study Number Two: Phoenix: Quantum Quality at Maricopa

Author(s): Kathleen E. Assar

Reviewed work(s):

Source: *Change*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (May - Jun., 1993), pp. 32-35

Published by: [Taylor & Francis, Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40164951>

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TQM**ON CAMPUS**

CASE STUDY NUMBER TWO

PHOENIX

QUANTUM QUALITY AT MARICOPA

BY KATHLEEN E. ASSAR

What happens when one of the largest, most influential community colleges in the nation adopts TQM? That's the case at the Maricopa County Community College District consisting of 10 colleges serving 180,000 students a year across the 10,000 square miles of greater Phoenix – and what I set out to see.

Maricopa is the second largest multi-college system in the country, exceeded only by the Los Angeles system; it ranks among the nation's leading colleges in the use of computers and telecommunications. In 1992 it was selected by *U.S. News & World Report* as one of the best community college districts in the nation; Paul Elsner, its long-time chancellor, is widely regarded as one of the most effective college leaders in the nation. Given Maricopa's size, standing, and leadership, the fact of its systemwide commitment to TQM made a lot of us in higher education sit up and take notice.

This new initiative is not the result of Maricopa having surplus revenues to throw at a fancy new project. Quite the contrary, the district has had to reduce its operating budget this year, with fiscal constraints and budget-cutting expected to continue for at least two more years.

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But vision is not in short supply at Maricopa. Indeed, the notion of quality improvement has been present in several enterprises of longer standing. Its Think Tank, for example, is dedicated to coalescing any and all resources to help ensure that youth remain in the education system and make the most of the educational opportunities before them. The Think Tank's new agenda is systemic change, and it knows TQM in the schools is about to become a big issue. More recently Maricopa began working with the Pew Charitable Trusts to develop an urban compact that would tie it to the schools and social-welfare agencies in ways that would make "the system" work for each child.

What, then, led Maricopa to decide that its future lies in continuous quality improvement (CQI)? How will it accomplish this goal, one of no small proportions?

The Beginning

The quality initiative began, more or less, as a pilot project at one of the district's community colleges, Rio Salado. There, two years ago, president Linda

Thor initiated TQM training for employees. A steering group and quality teams soon formed to employ CQI tools in several of the college's processes. Rio Salado moved along steadily with its TQM initiative. By April of this year all full-time faculty and staff and some part-time employees had gone through 40 hours of training in TQM's basic concepts and tools, and more than a dozen quality-improvement teams were at work improving various college processes. Dr. Thor reports one very telling outcome: a recent survey of Rio's full-time employees indicated that a full 94 percent say they clearly understand their roles in accomplishing the college mission.

Watching the first successes at Rio Salado, a year ago February Chancellor Elsner formed a Commission on Quantum Quality, charged both with investigating TQM programs in higher education and in government and industry, and with recommending a program for Maricopa that would focus on the central vision of the district—effective teaching and learning.

The commission's report, published last August, contains seven recommendations:

- 1) The Quantum Quality Initiative should begin immediately throughout the colleges and district offices that constitute the system.
- 2) The chancellor and a steering team should lead the initiative with actions including development of vision statements and implementation strategies with timetables.
- 3) Communication concerning Quantum Quality should be immediate, pervasive, and universal.
- 4) Quantum Quality training and education for all employees should begin.
- 5) Quantum Quality should be integrated into Maricopa classrooms.
- 6) The district should establish partnerships to ensure external support and involvement.
- 7) Mechanisms should be developed to monitor, analyze, and evaluate the Quantum Quality Initiative.

Quantum Quality is now fully under way at Maricopa. At the district's Support Services Center, William Wacchter holds the title Vice Chancellor for



Quality and Employee Development, and the Quantum Quality Executive Council, which includes the chancellor and vice chancellors, presidents, and representatives of the faculty, professional staff, and the board, has, among other things, developed a new vision statement for the Maricopa colleges. A sense of the role Maricopa is preparing itself for is captured in its opening lines: "MCCCD will be the international model for community college education and in that role will be esteemed and sustained by Arizona. This institution will focus on educational excellence for the student through a superbly prepared faculty and staff, 21st century technology, and a striking level of innovation."

Implementing Quantum Quality

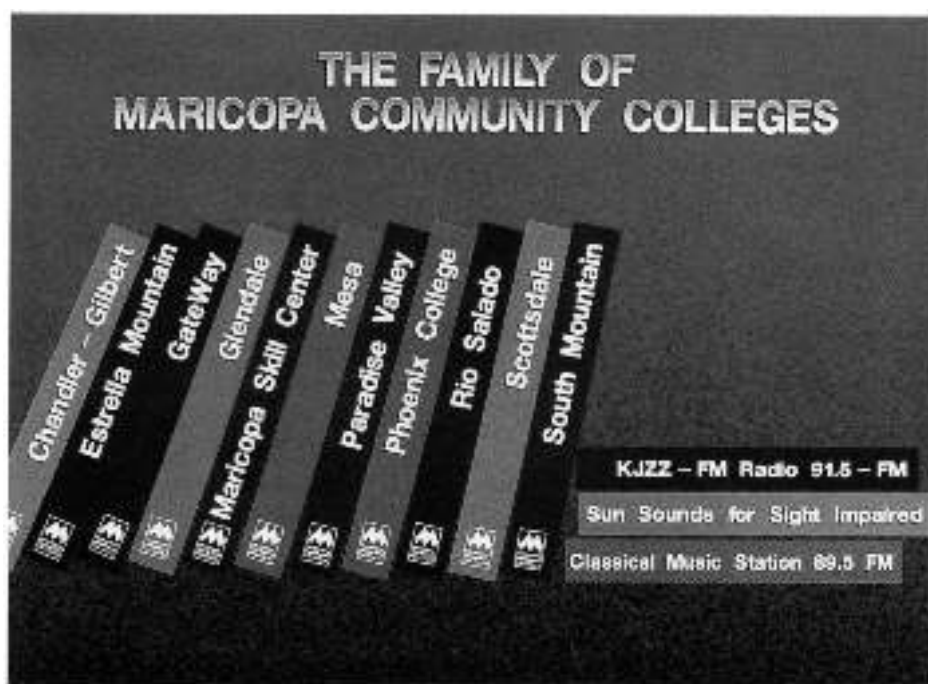
Training districtwide has begun; the chancellor, vice chancellors, the college presidents, quality coordinators, and faculty leaders have all received 40 hours of training and are now certified as "coaches." All 10 colleges have selected quality coordinators—their regular jobs range from secretary to dean—and they meet regularly with

Donna Schober, executive assistant to the chancellor, to plan, share, and ensure the momentum of Quantum Quality. The colleges are now forming quality coordinating teams and are well under way with training for faculty and staff.

At Rio Salado, already two years into the quality movement, the next round of training—16 hours on Employee Empowerment/Customer Satisfaction—is beginning. An exciting new development is its Quality Academy, which provides TQM training of all kinds for academic institutions, business and industry, and other organizations. Formed less than a year ago, it has already begun to "take off" with an impressive calendar of training commitments and inquiries from across the country and Canada.

Training is a key element in TQM implementation, a point readily acknowledged by Donna Schober: "Developing our training agenda has been very challenging. We are planning different types of training: basic awareness training, the 40-hour training (which is offered by Rio Salado's Quality Academy and is linked to a campus project), and en-

Maricopa, the nation's second largest multi-college system, began its quality initiative as a pilot project at its Rio Salado Community College campus, and based on the positive results, Quantum Quality is now fully under way districtwide.



Maricopa may not be the first community college to adopt TQM, but it claims there is a "Maricopa Difference" in that it has focused its quality improvements on the core function of effective teaching and learning.

hancement or specialized training focused on an aspect of Quantum Quality like team building or driving fear from the workplace. This multidimensional training will allow us to involve everyone—on a voluntary basis—in some kind of training over a period of time."

Is Quantum Quality Important?

Predictably, faculty and staff response to Quantum Quality is not unanimous at this early stage. Not all employees yet see it as a top priority: the faculty senate at one college issued a report in response to the Quantum Quality commission's report, raising questions about the impact of TQM on the faculty work agreement and challenging some of the basic TQM philosophy.

Dr. Paul DePippo, president of the systemwide Faculty Association, expresses reservations yet sees Quantum

Quality as having genuine possibilities for the organizational aspects of a district as large as Maricopa. He is especially impressed with the potential of Quantum Quality to make committee functions more meaningful and to give faculty more say.

The weight of opinion clearly is on the positive side. Many faculty and staff are guardedly optimistic about the possibilities that Quantum Quality holds; some bubble with enthusiasm about the prospect of processes refined by quality and of campus climates strengthened by a spirit of cooperation and empowerment. Faculty member Laura Helminski sees TQM as "... a vehicle for student success." She describes classes in which TQM tools and philosophy are actively being used; students function as empowered teams, helping to set the course's goals and strategies and continuously modifying and improving them. Some faculty are experimenting with group examinations and moving toward final course evaluations based on a portfolio of educational documentation.

Students, too, seem to have caught the wind of change. At a recent meeting of the Board of Governors, several spoke powerfully and persuasively about a classroom environment where they felt part of the teaching/learning process, not mere recipients of wisdom uttered by their professors. Vice Chancellor Waechter summarizes it nicely,

"Quantum Quality is really about people; it allows and encourages individuals to be at their very best. TQM is the 'people strategy' for the nineties and beyond."

The Maricopa Difference

Maricopa is not the first community college to adopt TQM; indeed, at least two—Fox Valley and Delaware County—have been at it since 1985–86. Coming a bit later to the scene, however, Maricopa does so with its own imprint; Quantum Quality is characterized by several differences from the mainstream of TQM college initiatives.

To begin with, there is the name itself. The word *Quantum* implies a special meaning at Maricopa. As Elsner describes it, "MCC would not pursue quality in the same way—sure, we are interested in continuous improvement, data analysis, empowering employees, all of which will undergird the major transformations we must face. But the *real* transformations must push the paradigms we know to the paradigms we don't yet grasp or understand. This is the Quantum aspect of TQM, the unknown, untested, the 'un-obvious' paths to change."

The "Maricopa Difference" extends beyond its name and philosophical intent. For one, its training emphasizes a "cross-functional, vertically integrated" format in which training groups include faculty and staff from different levels of responsibility and different divisions of the institutions. Most other colleges train by level and function, with faculty all in one group, administrators in another, support staff in a third.

Then there is the matter of the processes colleges choose as the focus for quality improvement. At most colleges and universities TQM's successes are reported, at least initially, in terms of turnaround-time saved in travel reimbursements or in efficiencies in the delivery of mail. In contrast, Maricopa's efforts are directed toward effective teaching and learning and improvements in that core function. According to Alfredo de los Santos, vice chancellor of academic and student affairs, districtwide groups are already conducting occupational course-by-course analyses to ensure that students are

learning the competencies most required by potential employers. "The entire focus is shifting to outcomes, to institutional effectiveness," according to de los Santos; "TQM is an integral part of that."

Finally, there is the human side. Sharon Koberna, quality coordinator at Rio Salado, says the focus so far has been, "one-fourth on process improvement, three-fourths on human issues." The emphasis is on teamwork and cooperation. Vice Chancellor Ron Bleed says TQM's greatest asset is that "... it gets to people. It will break down bureaucracy and lead people to focus on the truly important things. Already we are seeing the benefit of working with teams; bringing cross-functional viewpoints together creates synergy."

President Thor's success with TQM at Rio Salado Community College is gaining attention coast to coast; she recently delivered a keynote address at a national conference dedicated to TQM in community colleges. Her remarks dealt with the human element of TQM. President Thor put it this way: "Some say that TQM is 90 percent culture and 10 percent tools. For me, the human aspects of TQM have been the most exciting and rewarding, namely, the fostering of empowerment and teamwork, favoring cooperation over competition, improving communications, reducing fear, increasing trust, and building pride among individual employees and the college as a whole. TQM is about the wonderfully diverse and capable people that make up our colleges."

What Will It Take for Success?

Quantum Quality is a major undertaking, especially as a districtwide initiative in a system as large and complex as Maricopa. Nothing short of total commitment is essential to its success and that commitment begins at the top. Chancellor Elsner is acutely aware of this, as is Grant Christiansen, chair of Maricopa's board. "Success will depend on the involvement of the people," Christiansen states. "To really work, that involvement must be top-to-bottom. We have the kind of personnel who can genuinely involve people. Also, we need to make sure this effort does not become a threat, rather that it becomes an opportunity."

TQM'S GREATEST ASSET IS THAT IT WILL BREAK DOWN BUREAUCRACY AND LEAD PEOPLE TO FOCUS ON THE TRULY IMPORTANT THINGS.

A consensus has developed on what it will take for Quantum Quality to reach its potential:

- Training is key—as many people as possible must be trained in TQM philosophy and tools, and as fast as possible. Employees also need to be introduced to the nature and dynamics of change itself. A common ground must be reached so the vocabulary of TQM facilitates, not hinders, communication.
- Perception is often more powerful than reality. "Walking the talk" cannot be overdone. Administrators in particular must be alert to the danger of doing the same old things in the same old ways.
- Patience is critical. An institution's culture does not change overnight; a long-term commitment is basic. Maricopa looks five to ten years ahead for full institutionalization of Quantum Quality.
- Quantum Quality must become part of the everyday routine. It must be integrated into the way an institution does things, not treated as an "add on."

Chancellor Elsner describes the challenge ahead: "Quantum Quality embraces the yet-to-be-learned; the interesting risk may be the interesting failures that need to be encouraged. Maricopa has gravitated to the state-of-the-art technology user, the boundary pusher—it rewrites the role of community colleges as it evolves in its relationships with its partner schools, with its com-

mitments to training a national cadre of learners, with its innovative human resources strategies—so TQM has to move Maricopa to its own Quantum stage."

The Future

The year is 1999, Phoenix, Arizona; a visitor enters one of Maricopa's colleges. In a classroom, chairs and desks are scattered in groups; a list of ground rules hangs on the wall. Different things are going on all over the classroom. Energy is very high. In one area students help each other through a series of computerized multimedia lessons; in another area a team of students works on a project that will constitute a part of the final course grade; in yet another part of the room one student stands before a group, seemingly presenting a lesson in anthropology. The teacher confers with other students about their plans and goals for the next class and discusses with them the things they think could be improved about their last class. In a nearby conference room a class group meets about a major issue it has identified as an "opportunity" . . . charts and graphs line the walls . . . it is difficult to identify the chair of the group, since several individuals share facilitation of the meeting. Faculty in an office area are completing a survey asking their suggestions for improving a student-orientation process in which they took part; in the hallways, entering freshmen complete a survey soliciting their views of the same program. A member of the support staff greets a work-study student who will relieve her so she can attend a meeting of the budget team she participates in. An occupational program chair is not on campus today; she is interviewing employers for feedback about the graduates they've hired. From that information, a faculty team will make curricular revisions. . . .

Will this be the snapshot of Maricopa in the not-too-distant future? If commitment, planning, training, foresight, vision, and support are what it takes to make it a reality at Maricopa, the answer is a resounding and unequivocal "yes"! And if Maricopa leads the way with TQM, can the rest of the country's community colleges be far behind? □