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CAREER EDUCATION FACULTY
FINDING THEIR PLACES IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Ph.D	degree in	Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education

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STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND: CAREER EDUCATION FACULTY FINDING THEIR PLACES IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

Lynne Denise Hensel

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education

2005

ABSTRACT

STRANGERS IN A STRANGE LAND:
CAREER EDUCATION FACULTY
FINDING THEIR PLACES IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

Lynne Denise Hensel

Career and technical education is an important part of the mission of the comprehensive community college, yet the work and perspectives of career education faculty are not well understood. This study examines what the career education faculty come to understand as their roles within the community college. It specifically focuses on how these faculty develop their understanding of their roles as teachers; what events, actions, and interactions influence the sense-making process as they find their places within their colleges; and what particular issues and challenges the faculty face in understanding and enacting their roles.

The study utilizes a phenomenological approach. Data was collected from extended, unstructured interviews with ten career education faculty. The participants, who were drawn from two midwestern community colleges, had been full-time faculty at their schools for two to six years and represented a variety of disciplines. Socialization theory and Gidden's structuration theory serve as theoretical lenses with which to interpret the results.

The image that emerges from this study is of a group of career education faculty who are engaged in multiple activities—curriculum development and revision, student recruiting and advising, clinical or lab maintenance and supervision, cultivating and sustaining links to the workplace, and, of course, teaching. These activities are performed

against a backdrop of changing technologies and externally mandated directives. The career education faculty have been thrust into an academic setting with little or no preparation for the role and of necessity maintain a pragmatic and outwardly directed perspective on their work.

The structural organization issues faced by the faculty in this study—external curricular demands, limited formal educational background, multiple responsibilities, and potential isolation as a group — suggest a variety of institutional responses that would support the career education faculty in their work and strengthen the education offered at community colleges. Orientation programs and formal mentoring would assist new teachers with their initial adjustment to their colleges, and on-going professional development programs that introduce faculty to different pedagogical strategies and promote reflection about matters of teaching and learning would help to reshape instructional paradigms. Institutional inducements, such as incentives built into the reward system, appear to be important if the faculty are to view continued professional development and organizational involvement as part of their role definition. Finally, most of the participants initially worked as adjunct instructors. Better support and integration of adjunct faculty would not only bolster the instruction offered by these teachers, but also help to prepare future full-time faculty.

Understanding the challenges that the career education faculty face and the perspectives they hold can help institutions support their work and thereby strengthen this crucial aspect of the community college mission.

To my husband and best friend,

Lawrence Kameya

My life is blessed because our paths are joined.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A journey such as this should not be attempted alone, and I was fortunate to have many companions on the expedition. Some pointed the way, some trudged alongside, and some shouted encouragement along the path.

Chief among the guides was my advisor, John Dirkx. Without his patient nudging and keen insights I would have been mired in dissertation distress. He kept me on the path when I threatened to veer off and offered suggestions that were always sound. I owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

Special thanks also go to the other members of my guidance committee—Ann Austin, Marilyn Amey, and Frank Fear. Their ideas helped to shape and refine this research, but their impact on me extended beyond the dissertation. Through classes, discussions, and conversations, they have influenced my thinking, my perspectives on education, and my understanding of higher education issues.

I am grateful to the wonderful career education teachers who generously gave of their time and allowed me a glimpse into their worlds. Their enthusiasm, dedication, energy, and creativity are inspirational and are reflective of what makes community colleges so dynamic and essential.

My fellow travelers, the doctoral cohort from HALE, made the trip a lot more fun and a lot less lonely. Gail, in particular, was always there to discuss, commiserate, and offer advice, and became a good friend in the process.

I would not have even begun this journey were it not for the encouragement and support of my husband, Larry. He willingly engaged in conversation about whatever I

was reading and was an insightful reader of all my writing. His questions challenged my thinking and refined my writing. I could not have done this without him.

And finally, I was blessed with a host of cheerleaders. My family, including children, parents, and sister, bolstered me with their pride and confidence. My colleagues at work, Carole, Barb, Betsy, Chris, Kim, and Becky, listened patiently over the years to my ruminations about school, offered reassurance when I was plagued with self-doubts, and rejoiced in my successes.

My thanks to all of you.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Background of the Problem

New technologies, globalization, and volatile market economies — all are bearing down on the American workplace, changing the nature of work and the required skills of the workers. Increasingly, jobs that support a middle class life style call for technical skills and expertise beyond that afforded by a high school degree (Callan, 1997). This reality is not lost on the public. In a 1990 poll conducted for *Time Magazine* and the Cable News Network, 80% of the respondents believed that there was little chance of economic success without some postsecondary education (Wallhaus, 1996). This interest in occupationally oriented education is not limited to traditional-age college students. Job mobility has increased significantly in this new economy (Osterman, 1999). Retraining and retooling are much more common for today's workers than was true in the past. More people find themselves back in school in order to upgrade their skills or to prepare for a second or third career.

Business leaders and policy makers have also expressed great interest in and concern about the educational preparation of the work force. Employers complain about the shortage of technically prepared workers. Politicians, fearing loss of economic competitiveness, have responded with legislative efforts. In 1983 national attention was focused on educational quality and the gap between students' academic preparation and their readiness for the workplace by the report "A Nation at Risk" (National Commission on Excellence, 1983). Initially, K-12 schools received the bulk of the scrutiny, but increasingly the higher education sector has received its share of criticism. Subsequent

legislation, Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 and 1998, School-To-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, and Workforce Investment Act (1998) among others, sought to strengthen vocational education and increase accountability of the educational programs (Orr, 1998).

Almost all the policy initiatives in the last decade that concern vocational education advocate integrating technical education with traditional academics in order to foster broader literacy and thinking skills. This "new vocationalism" broadens the view of post-secondary occupational programs beyond the traditional two-year terminal and certificate programs that lead to entry-level occupations to integrated programs that prepare students for careers in highly paid and skilled professions (Grubb, 1997; Jacobs, 2001a, 2001b; Perin, 2001). In addition, proponents of the "new vocationalism" advocate the use of learner-centered, constructivist teaching approaches (Dare, 2001; Grubb, 2001).

Community colleges find themselves at the vortex of the interests, concerns, and activity surrounding occupational education. Open door admissions, geographic proximity, and affordable tuition make them attractive venues for postsecondary education, and, indeed, community college enrollment has exploded over the past few decades. Between 1965 and 1999 public community college enrollment increased about five-fold compared to four-year colleges and universities where enrollment doubled during the same time span (Kasper, 2002). Close to half of the Americans pursuing postsecondary education now do so at community colleges (Phillippe & Patton, 1999). Of these students, a substantial number are taking career education classes. A national

study in 1993 estimated that 43% of community college students were enrolled in vocational educational programs (Cohen & Brawer, 1996).

Community colleges have a history of involvement with workforce development. At their inception in the early 1900s, junior colleges primarily delivered the first two years of a baccalaureate education, after which students transferred to a four-year school to complete their degrees. Beginning in the 1930s and accelerating with the 1947 Truman Commission report, "Higher Education for American Democracy," interest in occupational education increased (Perkins, 1998). As the junior colleges broadened their missions to include occupational education, they changed their names to community colleges. The modern comprehensive community college contends with multiple missions addressing not only transfer and vocation education, but also developmental education and community service.

The increasing emphasis on career education in community college missions (Callan, 1997; Levin, 2000) is not without its critics. They (e.g., Brint & Karabel, 1989; Kevin J. Dougherty, 1994) argue that community colleges have a "cooling out" effect on students and point to studies that show that students intending to attain a baccalaureate are less likely to complete the degree if they start their education at a community college rather than a four-year school. These critics maintain that the vocational emphasis diverts the attention and energies of community colleges away from the transfer mission.

The people working in the middle of this controversy, community college faculty, labor in relative obscurity. Although close to half of undergraduate education occurs at community colleges, this segment of higher education goes largely unnoticed by both researchers and the public (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). Community college faculty, almost a

third of higher education practitioners (Huber, 1998), are largely invisible to the general public and to the educational research community.

The distinction between the vocational and transfer education missions of community colleges is reflected in their curricular offerings. The career education programs are typically two-year or certificate programs that lead directly to employment or job upgrading, although an increasing number of these occupationally oriented programs articulate to four-year colleges (Townsend, 2001). The courses offered within the career preparation division vary widely, but typically include health career, manufacturing and industrial technology, computer information systems, and business programs. The terms vocational and occupational education are also used to describe this function of the community college. On the other side are the liberal arts classes, also called academic, general education, or transfer programs, which include the traditional collegiate offerings of humanities, science, fine arts, and social sciences as well as developmental classes. The distinction between career education and liberal arts courses is not clear-cut, however, and varies from school to school. Some vocationally oriented programs may be situated within the liberal arts half of the school, such as interior design in an art department, and a business department from the career side may offer economics classes, traditional liberal arts courses.

This study examined one group of community college faculty — those involved in career education. Using a phenomenological approach, I investigated how these instructors came to make sense of their roles and found their places in the academic community.

Problem Statement

Although community college faculty in general have not received much public attention, the career education faculty at community colleges are arguably even less well understood by the general public than their colleagues in the liberal arts. The most common public image of the vocational educator is that of the high school shop teacher. Yet this representation hardly does justice to the sophisticated and varied objectives of today's career preparation programs and the responsibilities and activities of their instructors.

Within the higher education community, the understanding of the roles and work of career education faculty is not much better. As noted earlier, the research and writings about higher education generally have largely ignored community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). The bulk of the education research that fills the scholarly journals is performed by university faculty and graduate students who often do not share the perspectives and priorities of community college faculty (Bers & Calhoun, 2002; Frye, 1994). In particular, much of the writing on college faculty focuses on the full-time employees of four-year schools, especially research universities and liberal arts colleges. The discussions and findings of these studies, though in need of general reinterpretation for the community college sector, have greater applicability to the community colleges liberal arts instructors, whose teaching responsibilities more closely resemble those of four-year faculty, than to the career education personnel. Empirical research focusing specifically on career preparation faculty is almost non-existent (Grubb & Associates, 1999).

Even on community college campuses, a gulf frequently exists between the liberal arts and career education staff. The tensions between the competing missions of the community colleges get played out among its faculty. Misunderstanding and distrust of the intentions and activities of the other sector are too often present (Grubb & Associates, 1999; E. Seidman, 1985). Typically, the offices, labs, and classrooms of the two groups are separated on campuses, reducing the amount of casual contact. Career preparation faculty tend to have much lower participation rates in campus-wide committees and in the college governance structure than their liberal arts colleagues, again limiting the opportunities for collegial interactions that could further understanding between the two units (Grubb & Associates, 1999). In addition, career education faculty necessarily maintain contact with the businesses and industries of their disciplines. This outward orientation contrasts with that of the liberal arts faculty who have fewer contacts outside their colleges.

Distrust between the two groups is fueled by status differences within the academic community. The values of the academy not only relegate community colleges to the bottom rung of the post-secondary hierarchy, but also have accorded greater merit to the work of the liberal arts faculty within comprehensive community colleges (Grubb & Associates, 1999). Better understanding of the work of career faculty could help to increase appreciation for the complexity and scope of their roles and facilitate collaboration between the two sides of the college.

These factors — the increased weight given by the policy makers, students, and community colleges themselves to occupational preparation, the curricular and pedagogical changes demanded by the "new vocationalism," the relative invisibility of

community college faculty in general and the career education faculty in particular, and the distrust between the faculty groups within the colleges — call attention to a need for greater understanding of the work and roles of the career education faculty. This study focused on how these faculty viewed and constructed their professional roles by examining the experiences of career education instructors through a series of unstructured interviews.

Purpose

Career education faculty face a number of challenges as they establish themselves in community colleges. Their backgrounds and orientations toward teaching differ somewhat from those of their liberal arts colleagues. Because of their association with the workplace, they have to manage relationships both within and outside their colleges, unlike the liberal arts faculty who tend to have little outside contact. These differences have contributed to misunderstanding and distrust between the two faculty groups at a time when pressures are mounting for more collaboration on curriculum and program matters.

The process by which career education faculty come to make sense of their roles, and what that understanding is, have not previously received much attention from researchers. By examining the experiences of career education faculty, this study sheds light on the challenges that confront these teachers, how they resolve these issues, and how they shape their roles within their community colleges.

Clarification of the experiences of career education faculty and their subsequent role enactment should help to dispel some of the misapprehension surrounding these faculty and facilitate communication between the various constituencies within the

community college staff. Better understanding of these faculty should also enable community colleges to design staff development programs to promote the curricular and pedagogical changes of the "new vocationalism." Finally, this study also provides insights into how community colleges can better assist and accommodate new career education faculty as they move into their institutional roles.

Research Questions

This study involved interviews with career education faculty to determine what events, actions, and interactions the faculty found significant in making sense of their new work environments and explored their understandings of their work roles. The roles of career education faculty were expected to include that of teacher, organizational member, and occupational representative. This study explored the meaning and salience accorded these particular roles by the career education faculty as well as identified any other roles they had assumed. Since teaching in general plays such prominent part in the work of community college faculty, particular attention was devoted to understanding how these career education faculty viewed their work as teachers.

Accordingly, this study was guided by the following questions:

1. What do career education faculty come to understand as their professional roles within community colleges?
2. In particular, how do career education faculty develop their understanding of their roles as teachers?
3. What events, actions, and interactions influence the sense-making process as career education faculty come to find their places within community colleges?

4. What are the particular issues and challenges that career education faculty face in understanding and enacting their roles?

Research Paradigm

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that "methodological decisions involve assumptions not only about the method itself but about the nature of the phenomenon to be investigated" (p. 178). This study explored the experiences of individual faculty members as they negotiated their community college careers, experiences that are necessarily bound to their specific situational contexts. It focused on understanding how the faculty use these experiences to make sense of their roles in their schools.

I am aware that I am not able to approach a study of this nature as a dispassionate, distant observer. My years as a community college faculty member have shaped my beliefs and values and affect both how I have framed the study and the interrelation between the respondents and me. These factors, the emphasis on exploration and understanding, the acknowledgment of the contextual nature of the inquiry, and the interactive role of the researcher, provide epistemological support for the use of qualitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1982; Yin, 2003). The findings from this study are not intended to be generalizable in a statistical sense, but have been presented with sufficient detail to allow readers to determine their applicability to their own contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Since my interest in this study in the personal understanding and experiences of the teachers, a phenomenological inquiry seemed the most appropriate approach. Long, unstructured interviews are the usual strategy for data collection in phenomenological studies (Creswell, 2003; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). "The ability to tap into the

experience of others in their own natural language, while utilizing their value and belief frameworks, is virtually impossible without face-to-face and verbal interactions with them" according to Guba and Lincoln (1981, p. 155). Although this study is largely exploratory, previous research on faculty in community colleges suggested avenues to investigate with the career education faculty. Consequently, the interviews were unstructured, utilizing a series of open-ended questions.

Significance

As the Industrial Age fades further into the past, the demand for highly skilled workers with the ability to analyze and solve problems, manage new technologies, and engage in life-long learning increases. Community colleges are well positioned to provide education for this workforce given their history of vocational education and their linkages with local businesses and industry. However, Farmer and Key (1997) caution that this history does not guarantee a central role in the new workforce education market. They note that "community colleges must either lead or be pushed out of the way as preferred training providers for technical workers" (p. 98).

If the societal needs for better-educated workers are to be met, and if community colleges are to remain a vital part of the vocational education market, the career education faculty will have to play a central role. These are the people who must design the curriculum and teach the courses. An understanding of who these faculty are and how they understand their jobs is crucial if community colleges are going to support their work and encourage reforms.

This study is also timely due to impending changes in the community college workforce. Like their counterparts in four-year schools, the faculty in community

colleges are graying (Gahn & Twombly, 2001). Community college faculty averaged 55 years of age according to the Carnegie Foundation's National Survey of Faculty, 1997 (Huber, 1998), so a significant wave of retirements can be expected in the next five to ten years. Clarification of the process of professional role definition for community college career education faculty can help colleges to design and provide appropriate experiences to support the new teachers as they adjust to their new roles.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

In order to lay the groundwork for this study, this review of the literature will begin by exploring the terrain of career education in today's community colleges. Next, we will consider what is known about community college faculty, particularly about the people working in career education. The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion of the research approach that has been utilized in this study.

Career Education in Community Colleges and the New Vocationalism

As indicated in the first chapter, vocational education was an early add-on to the initial transfer mission of junior colleges. The increasing prominence of career education on community college campuses in recent decades reflects, in part, the growing significance students attach to the economic utility of higher education. In a 1993 survey conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute, 75% of college freshman gave economic reasons for attending college, compared to 50% who answered similarly in 1971 (Grubb, 1996b). Eighty-two percent of the respondents in 1993 also pointed to the value of higher education in securing a better-paying job. While debates may rage within academic circles about the relative merits of the intellectual, civic, and economic roles of higher education, it is clear that the vast majority of community college students view education as a means to improve their job prospects, either immediately or after transferring to a four-year school. Education for careers is necessarily a central function of community colleges.

Career education has also attracted the attention of policy-makers. The National Commission on Excellence focused national attention on the gap between students'

academic preparation and their readiness for the workplace with its report "A Nation at Risk" (1983). The series of reports and policy initiatives that followed (e.g., the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act of 1984 and subsequent reauthorizations, the SCANS Report in 1991, the Workforce Investment Act in 1998) all sought to broaden vocational education from its traditional emphasis on specific skills for entry-level employment (Bragg, 2001b; Orr, 1998; Prentice, 2001). Dubbed the "new vocationalism," this approach stresses the combination of technical education with traditional academics in order to provide students with the thinking and problem solving skills necessary for today's workplace and to prepare students for access to highly paid and skilled professions (Grubb, 1997; Jacobs, 2001a; Perin, 2001).

Sub-baccalaureate Market

Community colleges are well positioned to capitalize on a shifting focus of vocational education from the high schools to postsecondary education (Carnevale, 2000; E. I. Farmer & Key, 1997; Grubb, 1996b). This move reflects the growing sophistication of technical work and the increased skill sets demanded by employers, as well as the general inflation in academic credentials that has affected all sectors of the economy. The sub-baccalaureate labor market, that is, the portion of the labor force that has more than a high school degree but less than a baccalaureate degree, has grown substantially in recent decades. In 1967 only about 13% of workers fell into this category, while in 1992 the number had grown to 28% (Grubb, 1996b). Moreover, this growth is likely to continue. Experts predict that 65% of future jobs will fall into the sub-baccalaureate labor market (Gray & Herr, 1995). Employment projections for 2000 – 2010 foresee the greatest growth rate for occupations requiring an associate's degree, such as computer support

specialists, paralegals and legal assistants, and many fast-growing health occupations (Hecker, 2001).

The sub-baccalaureate labor market poses a number of challenges that community colleges have to address if they are to maintain their central position in vocational education. First of all, career education programs must meet the demands of a very local job market (Grubb, 1996b; Jacobs, 2001b). Employers may search beyond their geographic vicinity for managers and professional staff but hire workers for the sub-baccalaureate jobs from the surrounding community. Employers want these workers to have specific skill sets and experience, ideally with the processes and equipment used at their particular companies. Moreover, with the exception of the health careers where national licensing standardizes the knowledge requirements of graduates, the particular thrust of the skill requirements for jobs varies from one region of the country to another. For example, the emphasis in computer-assisted design programs in industrial drafting classes in Detroit where the automotive industry prevails is different from that in similar classes in Seattle where Boeing is a major employer. The curriculum for career education must be responsive to the demands of external stakeholders to an extent not faced by the liberal arts. Career education faculty need to maintain close ties with the local labor market in order to understand the needs and the often rapid changes in the work processes of this market.

At the same time that employers are demanding job-specific expertise in their prospective employees, they are also asking that these workers have broad academic competencies in problem solving, written and oral communication, and mathematical computation (Grubb, 1996b; Jacobs, 2001b). These often conflicting desires for broad

basic skills and narrowly defined technical competencies pose a dilemma for career education faculty who must design the programs and teach the courses for these occupations. They find it difficult to reconcile the demands for both general education skills and the increasingly specific disciplinary requirements within the limitation of 60 credit hours that constitutes the typical associate degree program.

Curriculum Integration

One approach to resolving this quandary is curriculum integration — the incorporation of traditional academics into technical education. Part of the "new vocationalism," this tactic has been advocated and supported by almost every policy initiative in the past decade, notably the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act Amendments of 1990 and 1998 (Grubb, 1997; Jacobs, 2001a, 2001b; Perin, 2001; Prentice, 2001). Drawing from the ideas of John Dewey, curriculum integration shifts the emphasis from teaching *for* the occupations to education *through* the occupations. Grubb (1997) argues, "integrated approaches to occupational education can foster meaning-making pedagogy because broadly-conceived occupations provide a context for teaching a variety of subjects" (p. 85), and that "in its most Deweyan form 'education through occupations' can incorporate the entire range of political and moral purposes, rather than simply assume that the need of employers are paramount" (Grubb, 1996a, p. 540).

Although vocational education leaders and public policy initiatives have promoted curriculum integration, community colleges have been slow to embrace the concept. However, pockets of genuine innovation and integration do exist. Badway and Grubb (1997) compiled a sourcebook of innovative practices from some 40 colleges and

technical institutes across the country that provide examples of integrated curricula. The most common form of academic and vocational integration are stand-alone applied academic classes, such as mathematics for health careers. This approach is one of the weaker forms of integration, and the courses suffer from their lack of transferability to baccalaureate institutions. In a survey of all 49 community colleges in Illinois, Bragg and Reger (2000) found that most schools offered applied academic classes, but more sophisticated forms of linkages, such as multidisciplinary courses or learning communities, were much less common. Badway (1998) reported similar findings in a national study of public community colleges. The National Assessment of Vocational Education (NAVE), a comprehensive study of the American vocational system conducted by the U.S. Department of Education, confirms these results. The NAVE Final Report to Congress notes that "a number of improvement strategies promoted in both Perkins II and Perkins III — e.g., the involvement of employers, use of current technology, articulation agreements — are standard in many community and technical colleges. Other strategies, such as the integration of academic and vocational education, receive less emphasis" (Silverberg, Warner, Fong, & Goodwin, 2004, p. 117).

Why have colleges been slow to adopt these approaches that have been so heavily promoted as good practice? The usual impediments to innovation exist — faculty resistance to change, costs for planning and development, lack of professional development, and amount of time needed for collaboration. In addition, structural issues, such as scheduling difficulties with linked courses and transferability problems for multidisciplinary or integrated classes, complicate implementation. However, Bragg and Reger (2000) point to a more fundamental divide.

> The structural, political, and philosophical mechanisms that maintain clear distinctions between academic and vocational education have been difficult to modify. Problems with transferring applied academics courses and reluctance to commit institutional resources to support collaboration between academic and vocational faculty are indicative of deeper underlying differences. Political and organizational structures that separate the liberal arts for transfer from vocational-technical education for work, curricular approaches reinforced by external agencies, and the traditional distribution of time, space, and money all work together to perpetuate the schism between academic education and vocational education. Until these larger forces over which individual faculty have little control are recognized, it will be difficult to move beyond rhetoric calling for more integration. Faculty commitment to the idea of integration is important, but such commitment is difficult to carry out when one's professional life and career advancement is constrained by a different set of values. (pp. 265 – 266)

Prentice (2001) also makes note of the rift between academic and vocational sides of colleges.

> This divide seems to be at the heart of the issue. The unwillingness of academic faculty to collaborate with occupational faculty, the unwillingness of many baccalaureate institutions to accept for transfer any course that might be labeled "applied," and the unwillingness of institutions to commit time and resources to develop integration are largely the result of a belief that occupational education is somehow inferior to academic education, and that students who are drawn to

> occupational subjects are less academically competent than those drawn to academic subjects. (p. 88)

Until there is greater understanding and appreciation in collegiate circles of the work and aims of the career education faculty, little headway toward true integration is likely to be made.

Transferability

Another aspect of the new vocationalism concerns the reconception of the technical degree. Historically, technical degrees and certificates were considered to be terminal programs that led directly to employment, and students planning to transfer to four-year schools were channeled into classes for the associate of arts. Increasingly, however, students earning associate degrees in applied science are transferring to baccalaureate programs (Bragg, 2001a; Cohen & Brawer, 1996; Edgar I. Farmer & Fredrickson, 1999; Townsend, 2001). Nearly 32% of students in associate degree programs in the applied fields intended to transfer to baccalaureate institutions according to data from the Beginning Postsecondary Students Longitudinal Study (Berkner, Horn, & Clune, 2000). In order to facilitate this transfer, career education faculty are advised to develop articulation agreements with four-year schools, a task that requires outreach to and cooperation with the faculty of the transfer institutions.

At the same time that career education faculty are asked to create alignments with their programs and those of four-year schools, they are also urged to work with their counterparts in the high school occupational programs in order to smooth the transition of high school vocational education students into college technical programs (Orr, 1998; Orr & Bragg, 2001). Two plus two programs, one of the key goals of both the Tech Prep

Education Act and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act of 1994, link two years of high school occupational education with two years of community college technical schooling (Bragg, 2001b). Developing these collaborations again requires that career education faculty build associations with staff and programs outside of their colleges. The career education faculty are being pulled in many directions.

Workforce Development and Contract Training

To this point we have surveyed the landscape of the traditional vocational programs offered by virtually all community colleges. Two other areas of postsecondary occupational education are worthy of note. First are the courses and programs that fall under the general category of job training and workforce development. Typically funded by federal legislation such as the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), these programs are designed to provide low-income individuals the basic academic and technical skills they need for employment (Jacobs, 2001a; Szelenyi, 2001). Because of funding regulations, the programs generally are short-term and job-specific.

The second area outside the traditional vocational curricula is the contract and customized training offered by over 90% of community colleges (K. J. Dougherty & Bakia, 2000). More entrepreneurial than the traditional vocational programs, the customized training units work closely with the local private sector. Employers contract for educational services aimed at improving the job skills of their current or prospective employees. The training frequently is very business-specific and non-credit (Jacobs, 2001b).

Both of these areas — workforce development and contract training — have different clientele and aims than the traditional vocational education curricula. Although career education faculty may teach some classes in these different units, often for extra pay, they usually are not involved in the design and development of the programs (Jacobs, 2001b). Consequently, this study did not devote attention to the staff responsible for these areas.

Summary

Career education plays a prominent role in today's community colleges. Most new jobs require postsecondary education, and the sub-baccalaureate labor market is an expanding sector of the economy. The faculty responsible for career education face challenges that distinguish their jobs from those of other postsecondary faculty. For example, the content of the technical programs is rapidly changing and is dictated by stakeholders outside the college. This requires career education faculty to maintain close ties with their local economies, to continuously upgrade their own technical skills, and to revise their courses to reflect these changes. In addition, career education faculty are asked to integrate liberal arts instruction into their courses and programs in order to better meet the skill demands of employers. Finally, these faculty are asked to coordinate curricula and programs with both high schools and four-year schools in order to provide a seamless K-16 technical education for students.

Community College Faculty

Given that close to half of Americans pursuing postsecondary education (Phillippe & Patton, 1999) do so at community colleges, it is surprising that community colleges and their faculties receive so little notice among both the general public and

within academic research circles (Cohen & Brawer, 1996). This section will review the research on community college faculty that has been done to date.

Demographics

Roughly a third of higher education practitioners work at community colleges (Huber, 1998). Of these, the majority are part-time. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 65% of the community college faculty in 1995 were part-time (Leslie & Gappa, 2002). This percentage has grown steadily over the years. In 1962, 38.5% of the community college faculty were part-time, increasing to 40% in 1971 and almost 50% in 1974 (Callan, 1997). However, these statistics overstate the actual percentage of classes taught by part-time faculty since a full-time instructor typically teaches more classes than an adjunct instructor.

Part-time faculty typically are not involved in curriculum and program development and usually have limited association with and connection to the schools at which they teach. Although some part-time faculty teach on a contingent basis while looking for a permanent teaching position, most either have a "day job" elsewhere or are not interested in full-time employment. As a result of these factors their experiences as faculty are distinctly different from those of the full-time faculty. Consequently, this study did not include part-time faculty.

The precise breakdown between liberal arts faculty and career education faculty is difficult to ascertain. In 1989 Keim found that 60% of community college faculty were employed in the career education areas (as cited in Olson, Jensrud, & McCann, 2001). A national study in 1993 estimated that 43% of community college students were enrolled in vocational educational programs (Cohen & Brawer, 1996), while the Community

College Research Center, using data from the 1999 – 2000 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS), suggested that roughly 51% of community college students were in occupational programs (Bailey et al., 2004).

The Center for the Study of Community Colleges (CSCC) analyzed the spring 1998 class schedules of 164 community colleges to determine the proportion of classes that were "non-liberal arts" (Palmer, 1999). They concluded that, overall, 45% of the classes were non-liberal arts (up from 43% in 1991), but they also noted that the percentage varied among the schools from 19% to 77%. The CSCC categorized the non-liberal arts classes into ten groups, with over 80% of the sections from the business and office, trade and industry, technical education, health occupations, and personal skills/avocation areas. The NPSAS (Bailey et al., 2004) survey reflected a similar distribution among community college occupational students, with 27% enrolled in business and office programs, 26% in health, 17% in computer and data processing, 10% in trade and industry, and 7% in engineering and science technologies.

Community College Faculty Roles

Community colleges developed in the breach between high schools and four-year schools. Some have suggested that community college faculty "are beset by uncertainties and torn by ambiguities in a professional role that wavers somewhere between traditional college professors and traditional high school teachers" (Callan, 1997, p. 101). Numerous scholars have discussed the professional role definition of community college faculty, some questioning whether the faculty can claim professional status (Cohen & Brawer, 1972, 1977, 1996; Palmer, 1992; Rifkin, 2000; Schmeltekopf, 1983; Spear, Seymour, & McGrath, 1992). Cohen and Brawer (1977) observe that while the faculty possess some

characteristics of professional groups (e.g., long period of academic preparation), they fail on other counts, notably, attention to self-management and a communal sense of identity. In a more recent study that analyzed the normative structure of community college teaching, Bayer and Braxton (1998) concluded that the faculty had assumed responsibility for self-regulation of the teaching role performance, giving more credence to their professional status.

The continuing discussion of the professionalism of the community college faculty is testimony to their desire to find a defined niche within higher education. For most, that professional role definition is teacher (Fulgate & Amey, 2000). In 1972 Cohen and Brawer asserted "First and last, the junior college purports to be a teaching institution... For the junior college instructor, then, the process of instruction is crucial to identity formation" (p. 13). This orientation toward teaching has not changed over time. No other sector of higher education views teaching as more central to its mission than community colleges. Nearly 95% of faculty at community colleges indicate that their interests primarily lie in or lean toward teaching (Huber, 1998).

Community colleges may view themselves as the "premier teaching colleges," but how community college faculty come to understand their teaching role is not clear. Socialization for faculty careers typically begins with graduate school (Austin, 2002; Fink, 1984), but graduate programs do little to prepare students for community college careers. Indeed, some colleges have been reluctant to hire Ph.D.s because goal dissonance has made their adjustment to the community college setting difficult (Gahn & Twombly, 2001). A few universities have established graduate programs with an emphasis on community college teaching, but these isolated programs do not come close to preparing

the needed number of faculty members (Gibson-Harmon, Rodriguez, & Haworth, 2002; Miller, 1997). Teaching skills are typically learned on the job by trial and error since there is little supervision, guidance, or professional development support at the colleges (Grubb & Associates, 1999).

These problems are magnified for career education faculty. The teaching demands on them are more complicated than for the liberal arts faculty. Grubb (1999) describes their work as "rich and complex. It incorporates a greater variety of competencies than academic instruction, and it takes place in more varied settings, including workshops with a bewildering variety of activities as well as classrooms, workplaces as well as colleges" (p. 137). The faculty are under greater pressure to keep their curriculum relevant and specific than are their academic colleagues (Jacobs, 2001b). Yet the career education faculty's preparation for community college work does not offer much support for teaching. They are more likely to have prior business or industry experience (Gahn & Twombly, 2001) and less likely to hold graduate degrees or have worked previously in a postsecondary education setting (Palmer & Zimbler, 2000). Furthermore, the on-campus sources to which most community college faculty turn for advice about teaching matters and institutional concerns, their departmental colleagues, are likely to be in short supply for career education faculty. Vocational education departments tend to be small — one or two full-time faculty supplemented by a number of adjunct teachers (Grubb & Associates, 1999).

The work lives of career education faculty are further enriched and complicated by their necessary association with the workplace outside the community college. They maintain a more cosmopolitan orientation to the college than the liberal arts "locals." Not

only are they teachers, but they are representatives of their respective vocations, and they may be more attentive to the norms and standards of the workplace than to those of academia (Grubb & Associates, 1999). They must be more engaged with the businesses and industries they serve, and frequently employ advisory boards composed of local employers that provide curriculum suggestions and program guidance. Student recruitment, clinical assignments, and job placement are all concerns of the career faculty, issues with which liberal arts faculty have little contact.

Distinctions between Liberal Arts and Career Education Faculty

Several surveys point to additional differences between the liberal arts faculty and the career education faculty. Cohen and Outcalt (2001) conducted a national randomly sampled survey of more than 1500 community college faculty. Generally, they found that the community college professoriate had become more differentiated since 1974 when a similar study had been conducted. Not surprisingly, they found that the career education faculty were less likely to believe that the purpose of community college courses was to prepare students for further education. They agreed in greater numbers that the most important goal was to provide knowledge and skills directly relevant to careers than their liberal arts counterparts, although this was the highest ranked goal of all for all community college faculty. In addition, they found that the two groups used class time differently with liberal arts faculty making greater use of lecture and discussion and the career education faculty relying more on lab activities and technology.

Brewer and Gray (1997) used both survey results from more than 1700 community college faculty and intensive case studies of several colleges to examine the connections between community colleges and local labor markets. They found that the

vocational faculty were more aware of and engaged in community issues than the academic faculty. The study also uncovered strong boundaries between the academic and career departments.

Using data from the 1993 National Survey of Post-Secondary Faculty, Palmer and Zimbler (2000) compared differences between subgroups of two-year college faculty. They, as did Cohen and Outcalt, found evidence of disciplinary subcultures and differences in teaching approaches. Gahn and Twombly (2001) used the same database to examine the faculty labor market of community colleges and discovered differences in the academic preparation of career education and liberal arts faculty and in their previous job experiences. As might be expected, career education faculty were much more likely to have previously worked in the health professions, business, federal government, or consulting than their liberal arts counterparts.

Very few large-scale surveys have focused exclusively on community college faculty. Most surveys that include two-year faculty compare their aggregate means to those of other postsecondary educators, providing little information specific to career education faculty (Palmer & Zimbler, 2000). A number of qualitative studies of community college faculty (e.g., Fulgate & Amey, 2000; Grubb & Associates, 1999; E. Seidman, 1985), although not focused exclusively on career education faculty, do provide some insights into the issues these faculty face. Using data collected from observations and interviews with approximately 260 instructors from all disciplines and types of community colleges as well as interviews with about sixty administrators, Grubb, in particular, offers a detailed view of the work of community college instructors, including that of career education faculty.

Summary

Career education teachers constitute a sizable portion of community college faculty. They, as do their liberal arts counterparts, must contend with ambiguity when defining their roles within the community colleges. Although their roles clearly include that of teachers, how they come to understand and define this role is not clear, particularly given the challenges of teaching in the vocational programs and the lack of formal preparation for this work. They differ from their liberal arts colleagues in teaching approaches and goals and are more likely to have worked outside academia. Finally, the ties they must maintain with the businesses and industries outside of academia make the work of career education faculty distinct from that of other postsecondary educators.

Numerous authors (e.g., Cohen and Outcalt, Brewer and Gray, Palmer and Zimbler) have commented on the increasing differentiation of the faculty of community colleges and the proliferation of sub-cultures. The result is what Grubb and Kraskoukas (1992) describe as "an archipelago of independent islands, each serving one mission but with limited communication among them" (p. 39). This study will shed light on how one of these "islands" — career education faculty — understands its place and role in the community college archipelago. This information should aid communication, understanding and collaboration between the different parties.

Theoretical Perspective

This research explored the understandings career education faculty had about their professional roles. Because the focus was on how the individual teachers interpreted their experiences within the work context and then used these subjective meanings to make sense of their professional roles, this study adopted a phenomenological approach. Patton

(2002) suggests that phenomenological studies emerge from the question "What is the meaning, structure, and essence of the lived experience of this phenomenon for this person or group of people?" (p. 104). Implied in this question is the belief that there is an essence to the shared experience (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002), in this case the experience of being a career education teacher in a community college.

Phenomenology is an interpretive approach that considers the meaning of a particular phenomenon from the perspective of many individuals so that the essence of that experience can be described (Creswell, 1998; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). In order to ascertain this essence, people who have actually experienced the phenomenon must be the focus of the study. So, in this study it is the lived experience of career education faculty that was examined, not the observations or opinions of administrators who supervise them or liberal arts colleagues who work with them. Although each participant in this study had a unique set of experiences as a career education instructor, these experiences were analyzed and compared to find the commonalities that constitute the essence of the work of career education faculty.

This study was further informed by socialization and structuration theories. Theory does not play a prescriptive role in qualitative studies, and numerous authors argue that theory should emerge from the data (e.g., Creswell, 2003; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; I. Seidman, 1998). These same authors also note, however, that researchers do not approach their investigations without some working assumptions about the behavior of people and organizations. It is in this spirit that socialization and structuration informed this study. Both were viewed as sensitizing devices that guided without limiting the lines of inquiry.

In his classic work, "Socialization Through the Life Cycle," Brim (1966) defined socialization as "the process by which persons acquire the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that make them more or less able members of their society" (p. 3). The process by which a person assumes a role is one aspect of socialization, but socialization includes all the various ways by which newcomers are incorporated into organized patterns of interaction. Socialization can be viewed from the perspective of the group or from that of the individual. The group's interests revolve around integrating the newcomer into the established norms, values, and behaviors that promote realization of the group's goals. For the individual, socialization is the means to participation in social life (Mortimer & Simmons, 1978).

This study focuses on the entry of faculty into new work settings. Whenever an employee moves within an organization, either into a new role or across boundaries, socialization occurs, but this process is most acute and apparent with new employees (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Louis (1980) applied Brim's definition to organizations and defined organizational socialization as "the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member" (pp. 229-230).

Classic views of socialization emphasize the efforts of the organization to mold and shape the newcomer to the norms and values of the group. Although the role of the individual in making sense of the new situation is recognized, the theory largely represents socialization as something that is "done" to the newcomer. This structural side of socialization is of course important and is the aspect that the organization can most

easily control, but it is only half of the story. Despite organization charts, job descriptions, and socialization programs, faculty do not assume the roles precisely as defined by the organization. But neither does job definition rest solely in the hands of the instructors.

The gap between institutional structure and individual agency is bridged by structuration theory. Formulated by Giddens (1979; 1984), structuration theory posits that structure is recursively created through social interactions. Structure here is defined as the rules and resources that enable and constrain action. Human social activities, Giddens (1984) states, "are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors" (p. 2).

This duality of structure is key to structuration theory. Structure is both the medium that guides the activities and interactions of people and also the outcome of those actions and interactions (Giddens, 1984). This means that while there are social structures — traditions, moral codes, established ways of doing things, and for our purposes, roles — that guide the actions and interactions of people, these very same structures get their meaning and validity from their use in interactions and can be changed when people begin to ignore them or interpret them differently. Structures themselves are not reified, but exist in their "instantiation," their use.

Structuration is metatheory that does not lend itself to predictive claims, but rather provides a means for understanding the interaction of the individual agency and social structure in the creation of structure. At the heart of this interaction are the social exchanges between people that are both guided by rules and resources and at the same time recreate these structures. From the point of view of structuration, roles are not

institutionally defined. But neither are they the result of free agency on the part of the faculty. It is the iterative interplay between agency and structure that fashion the meanings that career education faculty have about their work.

This study is concerned about the professional roles career education faculty assume within their community colleges. Socialization focuses on the efforts of the institution to acclimate new faculty and to shape the new teachers' understanding of their roles. Structuration highlights how these roles are dynamically created and recreated by the activities and interactions of the teachers. Together these two theories offer a more complete picture of how the career education faculty come to understand their places within the community college.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design

A review of the literature shows that while community college faculty in general do not receive much research attention, the work and roles of career education faculty are particularly in need of clarification. The pressures on career education faculty to maintain discipline currency and to develop continuing relationships with the workplace are far greater than on liberal arts faculty. The teaching demands on these faculty are "rich and complex" in the words of Grubb (1999), yet their backgrounds often do not provide much preparation for the teaching role. Further, the demands of the "new vocationalism" for curriculum integration with the liberal arts and for developing smooth articulations for two plus two plus two programs require faculty to work collaboratively with many groups of educators both within and outside the community college. Finally, increased emphasis placed on occupationally oriented education by both policy-makers and the general public call for greater attention to the work and roles of career education faculty.

This study will focus on this important group of postsecondary educators. It will be guided by the following questions:

1. What do career education faculty come to understand as their professional roles within community colleges?
2. In particular, how do career education faculty develop their understanding of their roles as teachers?
3. What events, actions, and interactions influence the sense-making process as career education faculty come to find their places within community colleges?

4. What are the particular issues and challenges that career education faculty face in understanding and enacting their roles?

This study adopted a phenomenological approach. The aim of phenomenology is "to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it. From the individual descriptions general or universal meanings are derived, in other words the essences or structures of the experience" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). Open-ended, in-depth interviews with people who have experienced the phenomenon are the usual means to gather data in a phenomenological inquiry (Creswell, 2003; Moustakas, 1994; Patton, 2002). Consequently, I conducted long, in-depth interviews with ten community college career education faculty.

Participant Selection

Consistent with the methods of qualitative studies, I used purposive sampling to select participants for this study. Since the focus of this study is on how career education faculty make sense of their professional roles, I interviewed ten community college career education faculty. Because part-time faculty work on a contingent basis and consequently have a very different relationship with their colleges than that of full-time teachers, I restricted my attention to the experiences of full-time faculty. Furthermore, since this study sought to understand the events, actions, and interactions that influence the sense-making process of these faculty as well as the issues and challenges they face along the way, I focused on faculty who are still in the early stages of their careers — people who have taught two to six years at their schools. After two years of employment

instructors have a sense of their roles and responsibilities. By limiting experience to six years, however, memories of the process should be still fairly fresh.

The study drew participants from two midwestern community colleges, Midwest Community College and Multi-Campus Community College. The decision to use more than one community college stemmed from a pragmatic consideration — the need to find a sufficient number of willing participants that meet the selection criteria. However, multiple sites also shed some light on the effects of different organizational structures on the understanding of roles. Multiplicity of both participants and colleges provided means of triangulation for a study that is based on the meanings and understandings individuals attach to their experiences.

My initial contact with each of the two community colleges was with administrative officers that I met at professional meetings. In each case, I introduced myself and briefly described the nature of my study. Both agreed to allow teachers from their institutions to participate. I followed these initial contacts with emails that again described the study and asked for their assistance in identifying faculty who met the selection criteria. At Midwest Community College, the administrative officer simply supplied me with the names and contact information of full-time career education faculty who had taught at the institution the desired two to six years. At Multi-Campus Community College the administrator made the initial contact with the teachers who met the selection criteria and then forwarded me the names of the faculty who agreed to be interviewed. Because he only sent the names of people who agreed to participate, I do not know if there was any conscious or unconscious bias in the selection process. This is a shortcoming in the participant selection in this study.

In both cases I sent an email (see Appendix A) to the identified faculty in which I introduced myself, briefly described the nature of my study, and invited their participation. Using this approach I was able to recruit ten participants, in keeping with Creswell's (1998) suggestion that phenomenological studies collect data using "long interviews with up to 10 people" (p. 65). The participants hailed from a variety of departments, four from various health professions, two from computer-aided design, and one each from computer science, hospitality, welding, and automotive service. Gender and ethnicity differences were not the particular focus of this study, and participant selection did not hinge on balancing the gender and ethnic mix. Nevertheless, the sample group was comprised of five men and five women. The group was overwhelmingly Caucasian with only one non-Caucasian participant, an African-American woman. One of the participants was foreign born and had immigrated to the United States as a young adult.

Data Collection

Interviews provided the vast majority of the data collected. All the participants but one were interviewed two times. In that one instance, I was unable to schedule a second interview due to the unavailability of the participant. I conducted all the interviews at participants' schools and digitally recorded the sessions. The interviews ranged in length from one to two hours, with most running approximately 80 minutes.

Prior to beginning the interviews, I "bracketed" the research by recording my own ideas, assumptions, and beliefs regarding the research questions for this study (See Appendix F). By doing so, I hoped to expose the preconceptions and prejudgments I brought to the study in order to better set them aside during the interviews and the

interpretation of the data. This process is important in order to be open and receptive to the participants' descriptions of their experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Also before I began collecting data, I piloted the first interview protocol with a career education teacher from my college.

Both the interviews consisted of a series of open-ended questions. Prior to beginning the first interview, I reviewed in general terms the nature of the study, reiterated the voluntary nature of participation, and explained how I would maintain confidentiality. Participants were then asked to sign the consent form (see Appendix B). The first interview (see Appendix D) focused on the teachers' descriptions of their work, their connections with the workplace outside the college, and their places within the college. The second round of interviews (see Appendix E) included questions about the teachers' interactions with colleagues and their understandings about teaching.

At the end of the first interview each teacher was given a questionnaire (see Appendix C) to complete. The questionnaires collected demographic information, thereby eliminating interview time needed to solicit the data, as well providing background information about each participant. The instructors were asked to mail the completed questionnaires to me, and any necessary clarifications of the information were sought at the start of the second interviews.

Between the two interviews I attended an organizational meeting at each of the two colleges. At one school I was present at a departmental meeting that was also attended by four of the participants. At the other college I observed a meeting of the instructional technology committee of which one of the participants was a member. The purpose of these observations was not for data collection, but to provide a broader sense

of the organization and a shared experience that could be discussed at the second interview. Scheduling difficulties and a lack of suitable venues prevented similar observations with the other participants.

Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed for analysis. I sent participants copies of the transcripts of their interviews in order to check for accuracy and completeness, and participants had an opportunity to clarify their responses. The units of analysis in this study are the individual teachers.

The data was then analyzed to look for patterns and themes concerning the career education teachers' experiences and understandings related to their professional roles. I began with repeated readings of the transcripts to develop a holistic and intuitive understanding of the data. From these readings I developed an outline of the meanings and ideas that had emerged. I then moved to closer analysis of the text and in the process both refined my outline and also used it to code the transcripts. The coded passages were clustered together to form a general description of the roles and responsibilities of career education faculty, including both a textual description of what was experienced and a structural description of how it was experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

CHAPTER FOUR

Description of the Participants

Ten career education faculty participated in this study, six from Midwest Community College and four from Multi-Campus Community College. Both schools are public, comprehensive two-year colleges from the same midwestern state. A brief description of the colleges and participants is necessary to understand the findings of this study. This chapter provides some demographic information about the colleges and an introduction to each of the participants. For the faculty I have included a short account of their prior employment and entry into teaching, a description of their teaching practices, some of the challenges and constraints that they face, and their plans for the future. Pseudonyms are used throughout the accounts.

Midwest Community College

Midwest Community College, founded in the early 1960s, serves three counties with a combined population of about 400,000. Although the main campus is in a rural setting, it is close to three metropolitan areas. The school also has three small satellite locations in each of the three cities. The total enrollment of the college numbers about 10,000 students, of which almost 50% have declared majors in one of the career education programs. The college employs roughly 200 full-time instructors.

The full-time faculty work under a contract negotiated by their faculty senate. They are not affiliated with any external unions. The contract specifies a promotion system to which all of the participants from Midwest referred. The college uses the traditional academic ranks of instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and professor. Candidates for promotion, as well as tenure, prepare packets listing their

accomplishments in teaching, professional development, contribution to the college, and community involvement. These packets are subject to both peer review and evaluation by administration.

Of the six faculty that I interviewed at Midwest, four were from health careers. These programs are unique among those represented in this study in that students are admitted as a cohort, generally after some prerequisite work, and advance through a defined one or two-year program of study. The other two Midwest participants taught in programs — computer technology and computer-aided drafting (CAD) — that have more open enrollment policies. A brief description of the participants, their backgrounds, classroom experiences, and future plans, follows.

Matt

When I met Matt, a thin, earnest man in his late forties, he was completing his third year as a faculty member in the respiratory therapy program at Midwest Community College. Working at the college provided a welcome contrast to his previous twenty-five years of working as a respiratory therapist in a hospital.

> It's fun. I get to teach what I love to do. The other, working in the hospital was rewarding and exciting and extremely hard. This is rewarding and fun. I can't say that what I did at the hospital was fun. It was exciting and rewarding, but it wasn't fun. This is fun. And if I can be paid to have fun. When I make a mistake here, nobody dies. If I make a mistake, I don't get AIDS. If I make a mistake, I don't get hep C. It's not as dangerous here.

Matt was introduced to the respiratory therapy program at Midwest Community College when he was drafted as a clinical instructor while working in the hospital. He

worked in this capacity without additional pay for eighteen years and, in the process, gained confidence as an instructor.

> So I did it that first year. And I was probably doing twice as much work as the students because I was doing my regular workload plus they were firing a lot of questions at me. And I would have to go home and do research and find out what the answers to those questions were. Each year it got progressively easier.

Matt's family influenced his decision to apply for a full-time position at Midwest.

> Family was a big input into whether I took this job or not. Family is wife and kids. This job allowed me to spend more time with my kids actually because working in the hospital, we worked twelve-hour shifts and every third weekend and every third holiday. So a lot of the times when my kids were home after 3 o'clock, I was at work, and a lot of the times when I was off from 8 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon, they were off at school. So this job allowed me to spend more time with my kids. My wife and I sat down and we actually added the positives and the negatives of working in the hospital and the positives and negatives of working at the college.

He has not severed all ties with hospital work, however. He continues to work as a respiratory therapist during holidays and summers. "So I have a personal belief, desire that I think to stay current that I should work at least seven weeks a year in the field. So every year since I have been here I have worked seven weeks. Last year I worked eleven weeks."

Conscientious and earnest about his work, Matt was proud of his success after only three years at Midwest Community College. He values hard work and believes it is

rewarded by his administration. "They've already promoted me to assistant professor. My parents, they can't believe it. My mother passed away a couple of years ago, but she would be very happy." He had obtained a Bachelor of Science degree early in his career, but is now pursuing a master's degree in education at the suggestion of several colleagues when he was reviewed for promotion. He reasons that the advanced degree will strengthen his case for tenure and further promotions.

As the clinical supervisor for the program, Matt not only teaches classes but also arranges clinical placements for his students. Over the course of a year he receives four hours of release time for his clinical responsibilities, but "that doesn't nearly cover the time that I spend. I visit approximately six sites per week, and I spend at least an hour at each site, and that doesn't include travel time."

In order to accommodate the students' clinical schedules, classes are long, often lasting five hours. During several of these hours Matt lectures, using elaborate PowerPoint presentations that include graphs and pictures to reinforce his significant points. Hands-on activities are interspersed through the lectures. He described an upcoming activity with syringes, needles, and artificial arms. Students would practice putting the syringe on the needle and then sticking the artificial arm. During this time, he oversees the activities.

> Going from table to table making sure that they are following the procedure and the proper steps and maintaining clean technique, safe technique; that they are not picking themselves or picking somebody else. Just constantly going around. There are frequent questions. Somebody will bring up a question, and I will ask them to repeat it louder for the whole class. And I will give one answer to the whole class.

It is, the lab sessions are very informal and open. Students enjoy it. They have a good time, relax.

When his partner in the respiratory therapy program retires, Matt hopes to assume his position as program coordinator. Although he has continued to work part-time in the hospital, he sees his future to be at Midwest. When asked if he would consider ever working full-time again as a respiratory therapist, he replied:

> If the college should explode, if there were a giant earthquake that swallowed the college, I would consider it. I love the job [working in the hospital]; I love doing it part-time. That is the best of all worlds, teaching here and working part-time. But those twelve-hour days, when you get to be a certain age, they're tough.

Madeline

Madeline, an attractive woman in her late forties, began her full-time career at Midwest Community College with twenty-one years of experience in the dental hygiene field. When I first interviewed her, she had been working full-time in the college's Dental Hygiene program for two and a half years on a series of one-year appointments that afforded her opportunities for promotion but not tenure. In the interval between my two interviews with Madeline, she applied for and was awarded a tenure-track position.

Madeline's association with the college preceded her full-time employment there. While working as the dental manager of a health clinic, she was also employed as an adjunct faculty member at Midwest for sixteen years, mostly supervising students in the dental clinic, but also teaching some lecture classes. Those years as a manager soured her on administrative work, and she has no intentions of moving out of the teaching ranks now that she is employed full-time at Midwest.

> I am not an asset to this college in any kind of administrator role because I don't have the patience I once had. You know, seventeen years of basically the same personality types and the same issues regardless of where you go. I just found I really couldn't take much more.

As did several of the other participants, Madeline herself attended a community college, graduating from a dental hygiene program with an associate's degree in applied science. In contrast to most of the others, however, her background also included many education courses. She received a bachelor's degree in allied health teacher education and was finishing a master's degree in adult learning when I interviewed her. This recent school experience gave her empathy for her students.

> The other day I had the realization, this has been the hardest thing for me. I don't remember my associate's being this hard or my bachelor's being this hard, but I realized I wasn't working before. When you combine that working full time with going to school and having a home and having spouses. Most of the students have children on top of it!

She credits her education background for her comfort in the academic setting. "I learned that when I was working on my bachelor's, because that was the basis for curriculum development, how you put a class together, goals and objectives, how you assess, learning styles." She expressed interest in sharing this knowledge with other teachers through the college's teaching and learning center.

Madeline's responsibilities include both classroom and clinical instruction. Class sessions are typically two hours, but some run as long as three or four hours. Madeline breaks up the sessions with a variety of activities. For example, she has her dental

students construct models of mouths using play dough and incorporates crossword puzzles, jeopardy, and bingo games for review. She makes heavy use of PowerPoint in which she tries to include a lot of visuals. She does that:

> So that instead of me telling them that information, they have to put the pictures together to figure out the topic. So they are not just reading it; they have to think. One of them was a guy trying to lift weights, and he was too weak to lift the weights. And that had to do with the enamel breaking down and becoming weaker and turning into a cavity. So that is not just words that they are reading.

Madeline is very conscious of educational trends such as learning styles, and all students entering the dental hygiene program must take a learning style assessment.

> That is something we have them do so they know what their learning style is. And I know, what it is so that we know, if they are having difficulty, we know the different things that will help them with their learning style.

She incorporates principles and activities from writing across the curriculum in her community dentistry course. She described a writing assignment:

> So I tell them, you have a dental clinic. You decide where it is, and you decide what you are going to do, and you decide how you are going to do funding. It can be your dream or whatever. And then you write how you are going to develop this clinic and how you are going to eliminate some barriers to dental treatment. So that is a writing assignment to help them apply their writing skills, but yet they are applying what they learn in class.

As part of her philosophy of teaching, Madeline has communicated some of the learning theory from her graduate program to her students.

> Since I've gone through my program, I've tried to incorporate trying to teach them a little bit about the learning process so that they realize, that yes sometimes you just have to memorize it to get a real basis, but then as you build on that, you need to start comparing and contrasting things to do a deeper learning. So I try and teach them that so that they know why they should be looking at a first molar or a second molar, and why they should be different. I try and teach them a little bit about learning so they realize what they should be doing.

Clinical instruction is, of course, very hands-on. In the clinical sessions she supervises six students as they work with patients, and "we are working one-on-one with students. It's pretty much your entire time is working one-on-one with the students, observing them, giving them feedback, encouragement or instruction, whatever they need." As a clinical instructor she must work with multiple constituencies.

> The prep for clinic is kind of different than the prep for lecture because the prep for clinic is more the where are we at, where are we at in the semester, what are we doing, but it involves communicating with the receptionists, the faculty, the students, the patients. The students are not as experienced in communicating with patients. I have to call my patient, this is the problem, this is the treatment. So you have to talk them through until they are comfortable to make that contact.

Like many of the other participants, Madeline feels the press of many responsibilities.

> I didn't expect that when I came here that I would have a hard time keeping things organized and everything. So and I think that what I have figured out is that you are in this role and you are in the classroom, but then you are in the role as

> helping out in the college, doing different things to get students, and you have some other responsibilities in the college. And then, because I'm main clinical, I have these faculty that I am working with. And then I have my classroom things that I want to keep changing and making better and updating. So there are just so many facets.

Her future at the college does not look like it will offer much respite from such responsibilities. Now that she has a tenure-track position, she is beginning to prepare for her tenure review. And as a result of retirements in her department, she will take on the role of program coordinator next year.

Nicole

Nicole, a petite, energetic woman in her early forties, coordinates the sonography program at Midwest Community College. Her introduction to full-time employment at Midwest was stressful. During her thirteen years as a sonographer in a hospital, she had worked with students during their clinical placements, but beyond that had no academic experience except as a student herself. Nicole was hired five years ago to establish a sonography program at Midwest and was given one semester to get the program up and running. She confessed,

> I didn't know what I was getting into. Which in a sense was good because I wouldn't have taken the job. I was very naïve. I thoroughly enjoy the job now, but if I knew what I was up against then, I think I would have been too afraid to take the job.

She remembers in those first days her division chair telling her:

That you will need to have outcomes and objectives for every single class. But first I had to put the, design what the classes were going to be, the content and so on. I didn't even know what an outcome and an objective was. I got samples, and I learned real quick, even though all the inner workings of a college, that I was clueless on. But very quickly I had to go through all those processes to put the program together. I had to develop the admission procedure, how were we going to admit students, what was the criteria going to be, what was the process going to be. Once I figured out the design to the program, how many credits per semester, how many classes, then the next step was the outcomes and objectives. From there I had to write the lectures and form the classes. At the same time I had to get the program accredited.

When Nicole started at Midwest, she had only an Associate of Science in medical radiography and a certificate in medical sonography. So during those first couple of years on the job, she also completed a Bachelor of Science degree in medical sonography. This additional education strengthened her case for promotion, and Nicole had been advanced to assistant professor the prior year. Because she has been working on a series of one-year appointments, she is not eligible for tenure. Midwest did not want to commit initially to a permanent tenured position because the sonography program was new and had no track record. Just the prior fall, local hospitals had been surveyed and, based on the results, the college chose to keep the program and position on an annual renewal basis. Although this made her continued employment somewhat tenuous, Nicole seemed unconcerned. "Other than that I don't worry about it too much. I automatically get my

letter every year. I generally forget the fact until they send me the letter telling me I've been renewed."

With those initial rocky years safely behind her, Nicole can now concentrate on running the program and teaching classes. She receives six hours release time during the year for her program coordinator responsibilities, which include budgeting, developing and maintaining clinical sites, and working with her advisory board. Students in the program take classes continuously for fifteen months, so Nicole does not have the option of a summer break. The spring and summer classes she teaches are part of her annual contractual load of thirty hours, and, consequently, she does not receive additional pay for them.

Nicole's classes are usually two hours in length and are mostly lecture. Lab skills are taught in a single first semester class. Nicole's teaching style has evolved over the years from a traditional approach modeled after her own experience as a student to one that is:

> Much more focused on not just verbally giving them the information, but ... having the student own the information and trying to get that information in their long term memory and trying to get them to see how this information, all these definitions and terms and so on, how it applies to their clinical setting.

She uses PowerPoint to accompany her lectures, but "not for the words. I tried that once and hated it because all they were doing is looking at the slide and writing it down. But I'll throw slides up to illustrate what we are talking about, which is extremely helpful."

Nicole took a "Writing to Learn" class offered by Midwest Community College for its instructional staff and has incorporated writing activities into her classes.

I had them pull out a piece of paper and write me a scenario. I said you are the sonographer. Make up the patient, make up whatever symptoms, and you have to use x amount of all the new terms we used today. I said, you can borderline along the edge of reality, but you have to use the terms correctly. And they had fun doing that. I got some really funny stories. Another time I gave them two minutes to write as many, I can't remember what it was, but something we had talked about the week before. And then other times I will have them, oh, make lists or describe, different things like that. I find that the more they write and pull out that paper and actually write something, the more it really helps to apply it.

Although she started at Midwest with no prior teaching experience, Nicole now finds it the part of the job that she likes the best. She would happily give up her administrative responsibilities.

I love teaching; I don't want to quit. But I would love not to be the program coordinator. I think the thing that would highly tempt me ... is a program that is developed. A strong program, it has been around a long time, and the position is just for a full-time faculty, and someone else is running it. That would be tempting.

Andy

Andy has worked full-time in the nursing department at Midwest Community College for two and a half years, but had been a clinical instructor while working in the hospital for four years prior to that. He described his entry into teaching:

I was sitting in the nursing office, and one of the instructors from here [asked], does anyone know anyone who might want to be a clinical instructor? And I said,

well, that is always something I was interested in, but I don't know if I could do that. Well, the next thing I knew, I was hired.

His seventeen years of experience in hospital nursing, working both as a staff nurse and as a manager, have given him a practical background on which to base his teaching.

A friendly and gregarious man in his early forties, Andy puts much emphasis on his relationships with students and colleagues

> I'm a very open doors type of person, which is a bad thing sometimes. If I am here, you are free to come in. For some reason I have asked my colleagues, is there a light out there that says "come on in," because I don't get a thing done. I do like it because it allows the students to come in. I want people to feel nonthreatened by me, to feel welcomed that, whenever, if they are just down there studying and some crazy question just pops in their mind, I am here to answer.

Perhaps because of the importance he attaches to these relationships, he is very sensitive to criticism.

> I am a very I-have-to-make-everyone-happy type of person. Not that I've given up on doing that, but I don't let it bother me to the degree that it used to. It used to drive me insane when one person would say, "he was not available." And I was, oh my god, I keep the door open all the time, and I tell them any time. When someone says, I'm not available, I just want to drop over dead because that is not me at all. I used to take some of that stuff really personally, and then I would be like, I'm a total failure. But what I've realized is that there will always be that percentage, that no matter what you do, you may get some negative feedback and that's OK.

Andy has two master's degrees. Prior to his employment at Midwest, he obtained a Bachelor of Science in nursing and a Master of Science in Administration. When he began working full-time as a teacher, he returned to graduate school and completed a Master of Science in Nursing. Thus far, Andy has not been reviewed for either tenure or promotion.

Andy's teaching responsibilities include both classroom and simulation labs on campus and clinical instruction in the hospital. Weeks of clinical assignments alternate with weeks of on-campus instruction. The classroom sessions are long, stretching five or six hours. He tries to keep the students engaged by asking questions and including a variety of activities.

> I tend to talk about what I think is the newness of the topic and then get into doing a case study. So now they have been given some information so they can do a case study and start applying some of the information. So I will do things like that. I have developed some games. Sometimes, like maybe you take a topic and develop a Jeopardy game to change things around a little bit.

As was true of the other health careers faculty at Midwest, Andy accompanies his lectures with PowerPoint presentations.

Simulation labs are interspersed in the classroom work. The labs typically demonstrate some of the apparatus the students will encounter in their practice and offer them an opportunity to work with it.

> When we do trach suctioning, we talk about all the different trachs there are. We demonstrate it, show how to clean it, talk about why it is important. But then we break out, and each student does that process. And during that process, I give

them scenarios. You have a patient who has had a trach for thirty years. This is what you are finding. Maybe I make them tell me what their assessment findings are, make them be creative.

Hospital days stretch ten hours starting at 6:30 AM. Andy supervises ten students during this time. He arrives before his students in order to make patient assignments, keeping in mind the skills level and previous experience of each student.

As the semester progresses each student gets more and more patients. When we first start off, each student gets just one patient. But they have not been in the hospital; they have to learn the paper work. I don't know their competencies with medications, so everyone has to run their medications past me. ... So it keeps you hopping because there are constantly things coming up.

Clinical assignments are not just all hands-on work. Students are required to complete written reports about their work.

They all submit paperwork to me that goes through what we call the nursing process in terms of having gathered data on their patients, putting it together, coming up with nursing diagnoses, looking at implementations of things to help the person evaluating that. So that is all written and interpretation of the data and stuff. So I, then at a point when I can sit down actually, I provide lots of written feedback to then.

The future is wide open for Andy. He hopes to continue teaching for the foreseeable future and plans to get a doctorate. However,

I can pretty much guarantee you that I will not retire from here because I am a person who likes changing environments. ... I have twenty-five years left to work,

and I would anticipate at least two major job changes. Not because I don't like this place, but because I am a person who thrives on changing environments.

Angela

Angela, an African-American woman in her late thirties and the only minority participant in this study, began her career at Midwest Community College as an adjunct instructor in the business and information technology department because "I just needed something to keep my sanity with two little babies at home." She has twin sons, one of whom has been diagnosed with autism. Prior to this she worked as a computer network engineer and administrator and systems analyst for some six years at a variety of organizations, as well as a stint in the Army Reserves. After two years of adjunct work, she was hired full-time to teach computer science. During her four and a half years as full-time faculty, Angela had been granted tenure and promoted to assistant professor. She came to Midwest with a Bachelor of Science in computer science and Master of Science in technology management, and she is now working on a Doctorate in Business Administration.

Angela teaches a heavy course load of both face-to-face and online classes. The semester I interviewed her, she taught eight different classes and more than the minimum fifteen contact hours. Anything over fifteen hours qualifies for supplemental pay, and overloads are the norm in her department.

> But if you probably looked at our collective schedules — fifteen is the semester minimum — the average in our department is probably eighteen or nineteen. We have some people who teach twenty something hours. This is the first year that I have carried under nineteen hours myself, and I felt like I was slacking. But it

wasn't that I was slacking, but I had so many preps. I think that if somebody did slack that we would probably fall apart, because a lot of us are carrying way over load.

The majority of the face-to-face classes are half lecture and half lab. During her lectures, Angela tries to encourage student interaction.

So in a typical class session, there is lecture, there is discussion. I make the students interact. I'll put them on the spot, call them by name, ask them to answer a question. If they don't know the answer, I tell them. you've got a friend next to you. Ask your friend. I try to make sure I'm not the only resource that they have in class. So I try to really promote a lot of interaction among the students in class.

During the lab portion of the class, students actually use the application software, and Angela works individually with them.

We have a specific set of exercises that they go through. It's guided like the first 15 minutes. I'll get everyone situated so they know what's expected, and then it is at your own pace. And students ask questions. Depending upon the lab, some students may have more questions than others. And then also depending upon the students' level of understanding. Some students are just typically good at computers, and they may never ask questions. While I may have those that are terrified and, is it OK to touch this key? So in a class session I may have certain students who I almost have to hold their hands or they are more comfortable if I am just standing in the vicinity. And then I may have a group of students who other than, what am I to turn it to you, don't ask any questions. It varies. During

the lab I am walking around, some of them holding their hands, others answering their questions.

Besides her course and department curriculum work, Angela is very involved with the shared governance structure at Midwest Community College. She serves on five standing committees, a role she values.

> It breaks up just being in my little world of teaching. It allows me to see how the college is actually run. And some of the policies that have to be in place to make the college function. No, I don't find it to be a burden. I think it is part of the continuing learning process, because there is more to, the primary function of the college is to serve our students through our teaching, but there is more to making that institution run than just teaching. And I think that being able to be on both sides of that makes me a better teacher, makes me better in my first job.

Angela anticipates an extended career at Midwest Community College. Currently one of the youngest in her department, she will become one of the senior members in a few years due to retirements. She hopes to complete her doctorate and move through the academic ranks to full professor. In time, she would like to move into an administrative role.

> Eventually I would like to be a decision maker, and I think that the experience that I bring from being in class and being on the faculty side will give me a very broad perspective on what the needs are of students, faculty.

Theresa

Theresa graduated from the program at Midwest Community College in which she now teaches. She had been a full-time Computer-Aided Design (CAD) instructor

working with both the architectural and mechanical departments for two and a half years when I interviewed her. Theresa is not in a tenure-track position, instead working under a series of one-year renewable contracts. Her position is in limbo until it is clear whether or not her department chair will step down and resume teaching the CAD classes. She is eligible for promotion, though, and was in the process of assembling her packet for review.

In addition to the Associate of Science degree from Midwest, Theresa has both a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Arts in industrial education, acquiring these over a period of some thirty years. Her initial start in college was interrupted by a twenty-five year hiatus during which she married and started a family. Now divorced and living alone, she is not only teaching but also serving as her own architect and contractor for an addition to her home.

Theresa's degrees provided her with background in education, and she student taught in a high school career center. However, having had some college adjunct teaching experience and knowing that "that high school was a lot of crowd control, especially where I was located," she did not pursue K-12 teaching positions.

Before joining the Midwest faculty, Theresa worked for four years as a CAD technician and detailer in architectural and construction firms. She also taught as an adjunct faculty member at Midwest for four or five semesters, experience that helped prepare her for her full-time classroom responsibilities.

Soft-spoken and reserved, Theresa is one of two women in the Technical, Trades, and Manufacturing department at Midwest Community College. She is conscious of her position as a role model for female students in the predominantly male field.

> Sometimes if I only have one girl, the girl will drop and that bothers me. I hope that just by the fact that there is a female instructor that she doesn't think she is in the wrong place. All that we are aware of, how people might treat male and female students differently in the class. Me and the other female instructor in the department have gone to a class about how to recruit and retain women in nontraditional fields. So I try to do self-examinations. Are you giving both of them the same kind of attention and validation?

Theresa normally carries a course load of nineteen or twenty contact hours, above the base load of fifteen hours. Because most of her CAD classes have only one section, this translates into many different course preparations.

> I have five preps every week. Last semester was the, I've been working, let's see this is my sixth semester. Last semester was my first semester with three preps, and it was a whole different ball game. You could handle the meetings and the other obligations besides your classroom obligations. Right now I am pretty well swamped.

In addition, some of the classes must be offered at night to accommodate the schedules of working adults, so she usually has to teach two or three nights a week until eight or nine o'clock.

Theresa's class sessions usually include some lab time during which students work on projects using the CAD software. She typically begins by talking about a particular CAD project, demonstrating the software, and then working with students individually as they try to complete the activity.

My average class I would go in and usually I try to tell them what I am going to show them, just kind of a brief run through what this class is going to be about. Maybe an estimation of how long the demonstration will be because what they are really interested in is, when will she be done and how much free drawing time will we have at the end of class. ... And then the demonstration. The demonstration I work at my computer, and it is shown on a screen. I have to work on moving the cursor slowly enough, talking slowly enough, maybe saying something twice in different words. ... So I talked about it, they've seen me do it, and then they, with the help of their notes and my help, do it. There is always at least that last half hour for lab time. During that time they start the drawing. Now that they are taking better notes they are working much more independently. There may be two or three with questions, and I'll answer them and then there might be four or five minutes when there are no questions. And then there will be a few more questions.

In part as a result of the classroom assessment class that she took at Midwest and prompted by her work on the campus assessment committees, Theresa has been considering introducing some new elements into her classes.

That is something probably I could work into an assessment thing. Maybe just a little card that they could write which concepts are still hazy, and I could do a quick review. ... I wouldn't mind having a writing assignment that was just a short paragraph, just technical note that you might have to write to somebody else who is working on the same drawing halfway around the world. The type of writing that they would do on the job because our students traditionally do not

like to write, but that type of an assignment, knowing that it is going to be a necessary part of your job.

For the future, Theresa hopes that her position will become a tenure track one and that she can remain in the classroom.

> And the other thing is the closure and the fresh beginning. I love it. When I worked in industry we worked so hard, and you met one deadline and three more had popped up. No matter how hectic it gets, there is that day when you are going to turn final grades in and as soon as you do that you are going to start thinking, how can I do this better next time. And then there is that brand new fresh beginning. And I love those fresh beginnings. I can't imagine ever going back to industry.

Multi-Campus Community College

Founded in the mid 1950s, Multi-Campus Community College is a large community college serving a suburban county in an extensive metropolitan area. The college enrolls over twenty thousand students at two large campuses and two smaller satellite locations. Roughly 28% of these students are enrolled in career education programs based on credit hours.

Two hundred thirty full-time faculty work at Multi-Campus. An independent union represents them. Instructors can achieve tenure after three years, and it requires administrative review and recommendation. No salary distinction is made for advanced degrees, nor are there opportunities for promotion. Salary increases are based on years of service and negotiated raises.

The four faculty interviewed represent very diverse fields — welding, vehicle design, culinary arts, and automobile service. Descriptions of these faculty and some of their teaching practices follow. I was only able to arrange one interview with Randy, and, consequently, have a little less information about him.

Henry

Henry teaches welding in the Applied Technology department at Multi-Campus Community College. The Applied Technology courses were originally designed to serve the training needs of apprentices, who were essentially paid by their employers to attend school. As a result of a downturn in the economy, however, fewer companies were sending their employees to school, and the Applied Technology classes suffered a drop in enrollment. Even though they began enrolling more non-apprentice students, Henry expressed some discouragement, describing the situation as a "hopeless environment."

Henry worked as a welder and millwright in a variety of manufacturing firms for more than twenty years when his wife passed away, leaving him with two young boys. In order to better accommodate his sons' school schedules, Henry enrolled at Multi-Campus Community College intending to become a science teacher. While attending classes he also worked as a lab assistant in the welding lab. When illness prevented the full-time welding instructor from teaching a retraining class for the millwrights of a local company, Henry was asked to substitute.

> And the gentleman from [the local company], upon their evaluations, wow, this guy really knows a lot about welding. Well, little known to them, I had been a welder for twenty-five years. So I had already had a journeyman's card as a welder and also a millwright. So when [the full-time instructor] came back and

saw the credentials, it was, oh my god I didn't know you had this, and how would you like to teach a welding class?

Although Henry was still intent on obtaining a teaching degree in science, the retraining contract with the local company grew to the point where he was teaching three forty-hour, week-long classes a month. He was hired as a temporary full-time instructor six and a half years ago and two years later became a permanent faculty member.

Henry characterized himself as a professional student. He completed his associate's degree at Multi-Campus and then went on to complete a Bachelor of Technical and Integrated Studies degree. He also has started coursework for a master's degree.

Now that the classes in the Applied Technology department include many more non-apprentice students, they are offered primarily in the evening. So Henry's day typically starts between noon and four o'clock and runs to 10 PM. In addition to his base load of fourteen contact hours, he usually also teaches the maximum allowed limit of twelve extra-contractual hours. The heavy teaching loads that he and his fellow department member carry take their toll on the instructors.

And then frankly, you have the blackboard burnout phase where you've taught so many courses to so many people, a lot of different expectations. I can see where a lot of people can easily become very lackluster, basically going through the motions and then want to leave. I can see that happening.

The courses in the Applied Technology department differ from those in other technical departments in that they include more lab time. During a two-hour class

session, Henry follows a standard format of lecture, demonstration, and then time for students to practice in the lab.

> We would generally begin on a topic, a lecture, whatever the topic would be for the day. The lecture could last from anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour and a half. ... We will then convene in the lab across the hall. Generally I would do a demonstration, and time permitting, at that point they indeed do their exercise doing the same thing. Basically they go across the hall ninety-nine percent of the time. It is about a fifty – fifty lecture/lab time. So basically they will go out and practice the skills. We will do whatever is required until about ten minutes before the class. Then we will go through a clean up process.

While his students work in the lab, Henry is "following them around. I am basically in just about all the welding booths or in the front of the room where they are able to catch me and drag me around."

More than any other participant, Henry expressed a sense of division between the occupational and the liberal arts faculty.

> By and large I don't think the tech areas are revered as being as good as the liberal arts. I think there is maybe, to use a term, a caste system, the lords and the commons if you will. There certainly is a split.

However, some of this may be a reflection of his own feelings. When he returned to school, he had wanted to leave the vocational field and become a science teacher.

> I really didn't want to be a vocational teacher because I had done it so long in the field. It is not a glamorous profession. Maybe none of teaching is, but I think that some are better than others. And working in an industrial climate is usually less

than clean. You've got a lot of grime and dirt and smoke. Obviously you see this room right here and it looks like a factory. Most of the time you come to work wearing work clothes rather than a suit and a tie.

Perhaps also due to some insecurity, Henry was given to exaggeration. He described how he had averaged three or four thousand hours a year as a part-time instructor, a feat that would have required him to teach sixty to seventy-five hours every week of the year. At another point he claimed that "on a daily basis I am here about 14 hours," contradicting an earlier statement. He described his seven-man department as:

> A department that I guess basically because of its nature has a reputation of almost the bad boy image — the motorcycle person with a black leather jacket. Throughout the college, the applied tech area are the guys that go out and get dirty and basically work.

Henry would like to finish his career at Multi-Campus.

> This is a wonderful job. If everybody does their part, this is a job, this one of the best jobs, one of the best careers you could ever have. I think it is a good paying job. It has very flexible hours. Again, the companionship, the interactions, the exploration is just phenomenal. You've got tremendous freedom. It is one of the few jobs you're not punching a clock. It has tremendous professional rewards. Obvious social rewards — you are in a position that is revered quite highly in the community.

His concern, however, is that with contracting economy and shifting school priorities the position may not last. "So that would be advice I would give to someone. Fantastic job if you can keep it."

Ginny

Ginny, the youngest of the participants at thirty-three, is an engaging and involved instructor in the Vehicle Design program at Multi-Campus Community College. She completed an Associate of Applied Science in automotive body design at Multi-Campus, worked as a engineering design analyst at an automobile company for six years, and then returned to Multi-Campus as an adjunct instructor. She had not sought the teaching position, but was actively pursued by the cooperative education director at Multi-Campus to the point of calling her three or four times a day. She taught one class and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. "That one semester, that four months gave me so much satisfaction from a job perspective in comparison to what it was like in the industry, that I instantly fell in love with it." After the semester of adjunct teaching, she applied for a full-time instructor's position in vehicle design and was hired to teach the CAD programs used in the automotive industry. When I met her, she had completed five years of full-time employment at Multi-Campus Community College. She was married but did not have children.

Although she has almost two hundred credit hours of college coursework, Ginny does not have a bachelor's degree, a fact that she regrets.

> Sometimes I think to myself, what have I done wrong? I'm always going to school. I have to stop. I haven't taken one program – design, engineering, management, what next. That's why I tell my students, finish your degree. Take it from a person that knows.

The lack of academic credentials contributes to some professional insecurity.

> Because I definitely feel intimidated by the fact that I don't measure up a lot of times — not from a teaching perspective so much — but I don't have a master's degree. And I know that is a requirement in the arts and sciences, but it is not here. Although I may have been well trained and had a great career in industry, I still don't have the credentials necessarily.

The vehicle design classes are all scheduled at night since most of the students are working, so Ginny's workday runs from four to ten o'clock at night. During the day she either works from home on her laptop or is on campus for office hours or meetings. Her teaching load consists of four four-contact-hour classes that meet in two-hour blocks. The classes meet in computer labs where Ginny leads her students through CAD projects that she had created.

> But after that I essentially sit up at the front of the class and make sure they know, number one, what's required of them for the day. Ask before I start the new material if they had problems with the previous material. ... Then I go through on the software myself, the projects that they will have to create. ... Usually the first project I'll go through from beginning to end and the second, third or fourth I will just highlight the areas where I think they might get hung up. ... And then they will go through and basically start the project. And I will basically go down each row. Each row, first row, does anyone have a problem? If I see a student struggling, I will work with him individually. Or if I see a number of students with the same problem, I will stop the class and then cover that portion in a lecture again. I am a firm believer that the only way they are going to learn that software is to actually work on it.

In addition to her teaching responsibilities, Ginny has assumed the role of unofficial department head. In that capacity she is heavily involved in recruiting students for her program and student advising. "My typical day basically starts off with answering roughly fifteen to twenty voice mail messages, easily. Depending if it is registration, when it goes to eighty-five a day. Tons of voice mail, tons of email responses." She is passionate that her students her students are exposed to the most current software and methods and is fearful that her technical skills are rapidly becoming obsolete because industry standards change so quickly. Consequently, as she contemplates her future, she would like to stay in education but wonders whether she will seek a more administrative role.

> I am not quite sure what position or capacity that I would be working in. I don't think that I would want to work in a strictly advising role because I would still want to have my hand in some of the curriculum and working with the different corporations and the advisory committee. I'm not really sure. I would almost like to teach part time and have more of the administrative or organizational type position.

Carlos

Carlos had been the full-time pastry chef and baking specialist in the culinary arts program at Multi-Campus Community College for three and a half years when I interviewed him. As did most of the other participants in this study, he had begun as adjunct faculty at Multi-Campus, teaching for five years before he was hired full-time. Prior to his full-time employment at the college he had worked as a pastry chef for about fifteen years, both as the owner of his own pastry shop and for a hotel.

Foreign-born, Carlos attended pastry school in his native country with the hope of one day immigrating to the US. This two-year certificate is his only degree. While working as an adjunct instructor, he took some classes at Multi-Campus, including psychology and assessment classes, in order to enhance his chances for full-time employment. He is sensitive about his lack of credentials.

> I'm not a professor; I will never be a professor. I call myself an instructor because I don't have the degrees that go with being a teacher, and I don't want to insult somebody who actually went to school to be a teacher by calling myself a teacher or a professor. I don't think that is right. So I see myself as, what I had them put on my business card, chef instructor, because I am a chef instructor.

He takes a very business-like approach to his work and chafes at what he perceives to be the differences between academia and the workplace.

> Again because I come from industry, where if things have to get done, they get done now. That's the way I am. If something has to get done, it gets done now. It's not, let's plan for eight months down the road. As an example, we had a new faculty. They started in August of last year. We finally we got the chef's coat for him last Friday. It has taken countless phone calls. This is the sort of thing that in industry, it would be done in three days. It just a small example, but it shows you something. It's a very small example. So much paperwork.

Carlos usually arrives on campus each day between six and six-thirty in the morning to prepare for class. Class preparation may involve pre-heating ovens, preparing bread dough so that it has time to rise, and getting the kitchen equipment and supplies

ready. Class sessions are typically six hours long, consisting of an hour or so of lecture and classroom work and four hours of lab in the kitchen.

> As an example, today they are making cookies, so we are going to discuss the methods of making cookies, and the different types of leavening agents, and the different ways of making cookies. When that is all done, we take a short break and move on to the bakeshop. They are already in their uniforms. They bring in their toolbox, wash their hands, get their sanitizer buckets, wipe the table down, and get their assignments.

In the kitchen Carlos demonstrates a procedure or technique and the students, working in groups of two or three, try it themselves under Carlos' supervision.

> And basically as the instructor, I don't stand around, but I am there to give a demonstration. If there is something to demonstrate, I will do it right there. And they will go back to their stations and do it. And I walk around between groups and kind of supervise, but also help if they have a problem, like piping a cookie a certain way. Then I will show them and even more individually at the station rather than from the group demonstration at the front of the class.

Days are long for Carlos. Several days a week he has evening classes that last until nine or ten at night. However, he has no complaints about the hours since "I used to do long days when I was in the field; you're working bakeries or whatever, twelve-hour days are regular days." He teaches the maximum number of extra-contractual hours above his base load, in large part due to a lack of qualified adjunct faculty.

> And sometimes I want to tell them I don't have the faculty to teach that class. Pay me at the rate of adjunct faculty; I don't care. But I need to teach that class. I

don't have the faculty to teach it. I can't bring in a monkey to teach that class. Pay me the $30, pay me even at the rate of a sub, I don't care. I'm not doing it for the money. We need to teach that class.

In addition to teaching responsibilities, Carlos and the other culinary arts faculty participate in numerous extracurricular and public service activities. They send students to competitions, do cooking demonstrations on the local food shows, and participate in "taste of the region" fundraisers, and in the process generate positive publicity for the college.

So like the president said, we are kind of like the football team of the college even though we are not in sports because we do bring a lot of good publicity and press to the college. So I guess they get their money's worth in that way.

Carlos has no desire to leave teaching. The combination of working with students and a better schedule makes academia much more attractive than industry.

I really love my job here now. I love the sharing part. I have to be honest with you — I love the schedule. How many jobs are you going to work and have almost 20 weeks off a year. When you work in the industry you have two weeks paid time off. If you are lucky you can get a third one after ten years. I worked all the holidays. I've come home on Christmas Eve after working 36 hours straight and crashed on the couch and not seen Christmas with my kids because I was zoned out on the couch. I worked all the Mother's Days when my kids were growing up, all the Easters. I've paid my dues.

Randy

When I interviewed him, Randy was in his fifth year of full-time employment in the automotive service department at Multi-Campus Community College. His first four years were spent teaching in a corporate-sponsored service training program in which students spent two years alternating between coursework and dealership internships. In the current year he was teaching a new one-year program for service technicians that he had developed. Prior to working at the college, Randy was employed by an auto parts supplier. He had also taught as an adjunct instructor at Multi-Campus.

Randy had earned a Bachelor of Science in Training in Business and Industry before starting to teach at Multi-Campus. During his first two years of full-time teaching, he also had to complete a series of training modules offered through an automotive manufacturing company.

Randy developed the new one-year program in part because he predicted that the downturn of the local economy would reduce the number of dealerships willing to participate in the corporate-sponsored training program. He displayed obvious pride in the new program and was involved in the whole range of student-related activities, from recruiting to advising to registering to instructing. The program also allowed him to spend more time with his young family.

> Last year, because I was low man on the totem pole, I was here four mornings and four nights. I left the house Monday at noon and I didn't see nobody awake at the house until Friday afternoon because I had 8 AM class. I left the house at 6 AM. I live about an hour away. Class would get done at noon. Next class began at 6. I

did paperwork in between. So basically I didn't see the kids until Friday afternoon.

In his new accelerated program, students take about fifty-five credit hours of automotive classes in one year. During each four-week period, students take two classes, each one meeting four times during the week. The students and Randy are engaged in class from 8 AM to 5 PM, Monday through Thursday — a three or four hour class in the morning, a break for lunch, and a second class in the afternoon. The classes are a combination of both lecture and lab work.

Most classes are, generally between forty and sixty percent hands-on versus lecture.

The first couple of weeks, like in electrical the first couple of weeks of class sections, it's a lecture. You've got to get the fundamentals out of the way. Then after that you probably get fifty, sixty percent hands on, the rest, you know, going back over the labs, talking about it. Getting back, reviewing what we just covered.

During the last four weeks of each semester students spend the entire day in the lab working on the cars of other faculty.

But now, in our lab, strictly lab, what I do is have the students who are service advisor, or service advisor for the week, they take calls, they schedule work, they talk to customers. And I'm out there just facilitating the lab, making sure that bolts are tightened up and making sure nothing is going wrong, hopefully.

The compacted teaching schedule puts Randy at the maximum allowable hours for his base load and extra-contractual. In fact, during the summer he will be paid at "greed rate" because he will have exceeded the number of hours allowed for extra-

contractual, a move that he figures will cost him twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars. The schedule also doesn't allow time for committee work.

> But right now if you want to keep the department going, there's so much to do keep this thing going. I mean, I attend meetings and all, get involved, but it's not like I'm joining committees here and there. It's like there is no time; there's so much more to do, especially in the tech ed field. I wish I had time, but you got to prioritize it.

When he first joined Multi-Campus, Randy thought that he might one day move into an administrative role as an associate dean. After some observation, however, he changed his mind.

> That's not a good career path — so many meetings, and his position. I don't know how your associate deans work, but I consider associate deans the toughest job to have. Probably the worst job in the school. Because, one, you have to control, you have to have authority over instructors, which has their own union. So really you have no authority over these people because if it's not in the contract, you don't have to do it.

Instead he plans to stay teaching. It is, he said, the "best kept secret out there. It is. This job's phenomenal."

Summary

The ten participants, though working in varied areas, showed some remarkable similarities in their backgrounds. With the exception of Madeline and Theresa who had completed education degrees before starting at Midwest Community College, none of the participants had intended to become teachers. All had worked in jobs outside academia

for a period of time ranging from four to twenty-five years and made their way into the teaching ranks more by happenstance than deliberate planning. And all but Nicole had worked as adjunct instructors at their respective colleges before they were hired full-time.

The group was older than might be expected given that they were early in their academic careers. The youngest was thirty-three, and most of the rest were in their forties or early fifties. They were fairly typical in their home lives. Theresa was divorced and Henry widowed, but the rest were married. Most of the group had children; Ginny was childless and Madeline and Nicole did not mention children.

All the teachers in this study expressed great enthusiasm for their work and positive feelings about their schools. Nicole voiced interest in finding a job that was solely teaching and did not entail program administration, and Andy indicated that thought he had one or two more career moves left to make. The rest hoped to finish their working careers at their colleges.

The following table summarizes the backgrounds of the ten participants.

Name	Age	Department	Yrs Full-time	Degrees	Adjunct at college?
Midwest Community College					
Matt	49	Respiratory Therapy	2.5	BS	Yes
Madeline	48	Dental Hygiene	2.5	AAS, BS, MA	Yes
Nicole	41	Sonography	4.5	AS, BS	No
Andy	42	Nursing	2.5	BSN, MSA, MSN	Yes
Angela	38	Computer Science	4.5	BS, MS	Yes
Theresa	54	CAD	2.5	AAS, BS, MA	Yes

Name	Age	Department	Yrs Full-time	Degrees	Adjunct at college?
Multi-Campus Community College					
Henry	51	Applied Tech	5.5	AAS, BTIS	Yes
Ginny	33	Vehicle Design	5	AAS	Yes
Carlos	43	Culinary Arts	4	2-yr degree	Yes
Randy	Estimated around 35	Automotive Service	4.5	AAS, BS	Yes

The next chapter will explore the themes that emerged from the interviews and how the occupational orientation of the participants affects their understanding of role and place within their community colleges.

CHAPTER FIVE

Experience of the Career Education Faculty

Over the several hours that I spent with each of the participants we discussed their experiences as teachers, the joys and frustrations of their work, and their interactions with their colleagues. Each participant had his or her own story to tell that reflected the particular background, the aspirations, and the orientation that he or she brought to the job. Yet, common themes emerged from my analysis of the hundreds of pages of interview transcripts. Four general themes will be explored in this chapter.

1. Perceptions of Expectations. The participants spoke at great length about what they considered their jobs to be. Their understandings of role were influenced by the reward systems at their institutions.
2. Development as Educational Professionals. All the participants worked outside education before becoming faculty. Learning their new jobs in the colleges, and, in particular, learning how to teach were frequently discussed topics.
3. The Role of Occupation in Mediating Perspectives. The vocational focus of their backgrounds and educational programs influenced the participants' approach to teaching, curriculum, students, and their colleges. Moreover, they did not sever their ties with their occupational fields when they joined their community colleges but found ways to maintain contact.
4. Relationships Within the Institution. Both their individual interactions with colleagues and their perceptions as part of a group of career education faculty within their schools displayed commonalities.

Perceptions of Expectations

The role of a community college teacher is complex. Although there may be a job description for the position, it usually is written in general terms that do not specify what the new employee is to do from day to day. Instead, new faculty must construct their own understandings of their job responsibilities and how best to carry these out. For the participants in this study, this process is complicated by their previous work experience outside of academia where job duties are typically better defined and more closely monitored.

In this section I will explore the participants' understandings of their roles as career education faculty. From my conversations with the participants, it became clear that the reward system in place at each of the two colleges was one of the factors influencing the participants' meaning making. Consequently, I have included a discussion of the different reward systems and how they affected the participants' perceptions of their roles. Finally, I asked the faculty about their involvement in curriculum integration since federal initiatives have placed emphasis on such activities. The section will close with their responses.

Perception of Roles

It should come as no surprise that all of the participants saw their primary role as that of teacher. As Angela described it, it was, after all, "the first job you have." It was also the part of their job that they enjoyed most. As Nicole stated,

> I enjoy the teaching the most, and what I enjoy is what can I do different in my class to help these students learn. I don't look at it as just, well, I do look at it as, yes, I have to give them all this information. But I don't want to just give it to

them. I want them to learn it, to know it. What can I do? So learning different techniques that I can try. And I am trying them now. That's my favorite part, the actual teaching.

The old "seeing the light bulbs turn on" metaphor was mentioned by several of the teachers. At both schools the base teaching load for a school year consisted of thirty credit hours, although clinical and lab hours were counted somewhat differently.

Although all of the participants had spent years, some as many as twenty-five, working in their occupational fields, they now identified themselves more as teacher than as occupational practitioner. The shift from practitioner to teacher had for most been a steady progression during their college employment, fueled by distance from the workplace, education coursework for several participants, and the daily immersion in school activities. For a couple of the participants, this shift was equated with losing professional currency. Andy expressed his unease. "What's the scariest is, if this trend continues, ... how can I really teach what I need to teach if I am not up on it. And that is to me a big concern."

Although they may see teaching as their primary function, it was far from their only duty. The teachers all enumerated many other responsibilities that they had, some of which they had not anticipated. Nicole observed, "Well I was too naïve to know what to expect. All I envisioned was teaching them in the classroom. I didn't envision everything else that would be involved as a part of that." And Andy added, "So, yes, this job has come with all kinds of things that I didn't necessarily expect. Because it is just more than walking into a class, giving your presentation, turning around, and coming back out."

The specific responsibilities cited by the teachers varied somewhat, depending upon their particular program. The participants whose programs required some sort of clinical or internship placement, such as the health careers and the dealership service training programs, were involved in working with the external sites. Finding hospitals or dealerships that were willing to take on students and supervising students or clinical instructors at these sites were time-consuming tasks. Matt reported that the two hours of release time per semester he was allotted for his clinical supervision did not fully compensate for the amount of time the work required. Andy discussed the effort he put into maintaining good relations with the hospital staff.

> Other than one or two times in six years, I have been very successful at keeping everybody happy. I mean mainly the nurses at the hospital. Because, if over time, every time I bring students there are issues, pretty soon they will say, Andy's bringing students here, and we don't really want them. That has happened to people in the past. They hear that students are coming, and everyone wants to board up the place and keep them out. You don't want to develop that reputation.

Lab maintenance was another constraint for several of the participants. Although the computer labs all appeared to be serviced by another department in the schools, ordering the raw materials used in labs, such as in the culinary arts program, fell to the teachers in those areas. Henry described his responsibilities in the welding program.

> We've got maintenance on the machines. As a mechanical device, they are perpetually broken. We've also got to order supplies and have supplies on hand. Unlike a traditional academic classroom that uses a chalkboard or blackboard, this particular class uses a tremendous amount of consumables.

Another challenge resulted from the demands of accrediting agencies. External bodies accredited some of the programs, particularly in the health careers area. The teachers in these programs had to periodically engage in self-studies in order to maintain these accreditations. Carlos mentioned some of the requirements for the culinary arts program.

> We are an accredited program with the American Culinary Federation. So we have to send reports to them, copies of all our classes, copies of our tests, copies of our course outlines and syllabi. And they come here and do site visits every three, five, or seven years.

Most of the participants had some responsibilities regarding adjunct faculty who taught in their departments. Carlos was the adjunct faculty coordinator in his department; Matt supervised the adjunct clinical instructors; Angela was "steward" for several classes and served as mentor for the adjunct faculty who teach those classes. Ginny told me how she learned that she was to oversee the adjunct instructors in the vehicle design program.

> It was not too long ago I was sitting in a meeting and someone said, "Well you're the adjunct faculty coordinator in this area." And I said, "What?" And they said, "Yeah, your job is to hire and interview all the adjuncts." We actually recommend, and it is the associate dean that hires. But we are the one that are supposed to recommend. So I thought OK. And now we are supposed to do all the reviews. We are supposed to sit two times per semester in every adjunct's classroom and write a review. And that's very difficult because we have classes ourselves.

All the participants had some involvement with advisory committees for their programs. The advisory committees, consisting of representatives from local businesses and industries, met several times a year to provide program advice about current practices and needs of the occupational practitioners. Although both schools had an office that helped to coordinate the advisory committees, the participants at the very least had to attend and make reports at the committee meetings, and in other instances, to identify potential committee members and manage the committee meetings. Ginny explained that:

> We have a chairperson title, but usually myself and the gentleman that is now my office partner, the probationary faculty member, our responsibility is literally to get the people together, decide who we want on the committee. Come together and write up an agenda and basically host the meeting.

Another challenge and task in which all the participants were engaged was that of recruiting students because, in large part, their jobs depended on it. Matt told me, "When I hired in, they said my job basically depended upon student load. That if we couldn't fill the program, that they were going to close the program down." Unlike many liberal arts departments such as English and mathematics where the courses are required of almost all students, the career areas have to promote their programs. The participants were involved in such activities as career days for high school students, competitions that brought the high school students to the college, and conferences for high school teachers. Ginny described some of her experiences:

> The recruiting thing, that's such, it's such a drain on us. We have the Learn and Earns, and visiting the high schools, having the high schools here. The Learn and Earn, it happens once a semester. And it's where they bus literally thousands of

> high schools in. And it is literally just myself and my office partner standing there. And I've had it where I've literally stood up on a chair and had students and parents handing out flyers and screaming at the top of my voice trying to give them information. And it's fun and it's exciting, you know. I feel great leaving it. But you are also exhausted. Because while you are there you are thinking, all right, I have a substitute teacher teaching my class right now.

Some of the teachers also recruited students from companies. This was particularly common in the Applied Trades area where the department secured training contracts for employees of a business.

Another role that the participants mentioned was that of student advisor and confidant. This role was usually construed as a welcome challenge. Randy described his experience.

> You're an advisor; students come to you before a counselor. You're a mentor whether you want to be or not with students because, you know, a lot of these students have never thought about college before. Especially in the trades fields now. It's not like you are dealing with academics.

Andy found himself engaged some of the personal problems of students lives in addition to their academic dilemmas.

> Like helping people deal with difficult situations in their lives. I don't know if it is my responsibility, but sometimes people come, and they just put it on you. So trying to help them will do that. Sometimes you help them because it is truly impacting their academic performance. So in that regard I look on it as a professional responsibility.

Several mentioned how they saw that student focus to be one of the differences between community colleges and four-year schools. In a discussion about her adjustment to the community college Angela talked about how that involved:

> Learning that you are in a smaller environment and not having the university attitude and having more of a community college attitude. It is more one-to-one, smaller classroom size, knowing who your students are. Whereas in a big university setting, how many professors or instructors can you talk to at a big university who can actually tell you face-to-face, who their students are, when they had those students, and maybe what classes they had them for. Most of my students, I remember, see them in the hallway. They'll come by to just talk, that sort of thing.

Committee work is a hallmark of academic life, and most of the participants were involved in committees. In this regard, however, there was a contrast between the two colleges. At Midwest Community College all the participants listed several committees in which they were involved and generally attached value to their participation. Matt contrasted his experience at the college to that at the hospital.

> The good thing about being on committees, I feel, I feel that instructors in the college have more control over the college than a therapist has in the hospital. In the hospital we have no input in any of the policies, the procedures. Here at the college we are actually on committees to hire our co-workers. You never see that in the hospital. In the hospital they come on and say here's the new employee. Here we are actually involved in the selection process.

When discussing some of her colleagues, Nicole mentioned, "You can tell the people who are committed to the institution because they are willing to be on this committee or that committee because that's something important to them."

At Multi-Campus Community College committee participation and the apparent value of this participation was markedly different. Two of the teachers there were members of a couple of committees, but the other two had no committee involvement. Henry, who belonged to both the faculty senate and the assessment committee, said that there was very little pressure to join committees.

> It is pretty much open as far as if you are interested, certainly you are encouraged but it is not required. It is, as you can well imagine, it is pretty much the same people involved all the time. The doers do and the don'ts, don't. ... I don't know. If we've got forty, fifty people, we're probably looking at twenty-five percent doers, by and large.

One of the differences between the two colleges that might account for the differing participation levels is the reward system in place at each school and will be explored in the next section.

So, in addition to teaching and its associated activities of curriculum work, class preparation, and grading, these career education teachers had a host of other responsibilities. Ginny felt weighed down by the expectations.

> The only thing that I would say that I'm a little disheartened by is that I feel completely overwhelmed. It is, I think that as instructors in this arena, we have so many hats to wear, and it is hard to balance. And if you don't know which one is

most important — sometimes in hindsight you can tell, but a lot of times, our administrators expect us to do so much in addition to our teaching loads.

Some of these responsibilities are shared by all parts of the college — attention to students, recruiting and supporting adjunct faculty, participating in committee work. Others are particular to career education faculty. Most general education faculty do not have to worry about discipline-specific accreditation nor work with external sites for student internships. Advisory boards are rarely used by liberal arts departments. Student recruitment and program promotion are matters of survival for occupational faculty but are largely ignored by faculty in such departments as English, mathematics, social science, and science that offer the required general education classes. These additional responsibilities give the career education teacher a perspective that is more directed toward the world outside the college than that of their liberal arts counterparts.

Reward System

One of the structures in any institution that guides behavior, affects perceptions, and reflects values is the reward system of the organization. Teachers in both schools had written documents that defined compensation and delineated some work requirements. In both cases these documents were negotiated by faculty senates that were not affiliated with an external union, but the faculty at the two schools conveyed different senses of their respective representatives. The teachers at Multi-Campus Community College clearly saw themselves as represented by a union and referred repeatedly to their "contract." On the other hand, no mention was made of a union at Midwest Community College and the document governing wages and working conditions was generally called a "handbook."

Whether the presence or absence of a union made a difference in the teachers' attitudes and understandings about their work was not clear. What was striking was how the differing systems for tenure and advancement affected those understandings.

At Midwest Community College every participant introduced some aspect of the school's tenure and promotion system into our discussion. Midwest uses traditional academic nomenclature for rank: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor. Progression through the ranks as well as tenure decisions are based on the candidate's teaching performance, contribution to the college, professional development, and, to a lesser extent, community service. Promotion to a new rank brought with it an increase in salary.

Faculty are guided through the tenure and promotion process by a mentor committee who helps the instructor complete the application, observes the instructor's classes, and makes a recommendation regarding the promotion or tenure decision to the instructor's department. Department members review the candidate's packet, make suggestions for improvement, and, assuming department assent, forwards the application on to administration for review and action. The same areas — teaching, college contribution, professional development, and community service — are reviewed for each rank, but the standards to which the teacher is expected to perform are increased. Nicole described the process:

> There's a template actually that we have to use. There are three parts that they look at. They look at, of course, at teaching effectiveness. You have to have a committee and members of your committee have to observe you teach and then they will write up a report. You have to compile the statistics from all your course

evaluations that you have collected over the years. That's put together and that goes in your packet. They also look at your involvement in the college community and you have to obviously list everything that you have been involved in, the committees you have been on. Professional development is a part of that. We have to show all the professional activities that we participated in. and so really by the time you've done all that it really is quite a useful tool. Granted it is quite a huge process, a pain to go through, but is a useful tool because when you are done, you have a pretty good sense.

Angela was anticipating her application for promotion to associate professor the following year and explained the escalating expectations.

Teaching effectiveness – teaching is always first. And then as you go up the ladder, my next promotion, I will be viewed next year this time next year, and they will be looking at sustained teaching effectiveness; also college contribution, and have I transitioned college-wide to the types of committees and work that I am doing and beginning leadership roles. To make full professor, again teaching effectiveness and what leadership roles have we taken on. Because when we get to the rank of full professor they expect you to be a leader. Because we have the adjuncts, the instructors and the assistant and the associate professors looking to you for guidance. So this is sort of tiered in the responsibilities.

The effects of this process were readily evident in the culture surrounding academic work at Midwest Community College. Instructors viewed their responsibilities as reaching beyond that of their individual program. For example, all of the participants

from Midwest were involved in committees outside of their respective departments. Andy told me:

> Now that people realize that I am done with my master's program, now they want to see me much more involved in college activities. So I'm getting involved in college committees, getting involved in community types of things.

Continued professional development was encouraged. All of the Midwest participants had been engaged in some sort of formal coursework since they had been hired full-time at the college. Four of the six had been or were currently taking classes toward degrees, and most had completed classes offered at Midwest for faculty on such pedagogical matters such as Classroom Assessment Techniques and Writing to Learn. When I asked Matt how it was that he had chosen to take the Midwest classes, he responded that "Again, those were things my division chair recommended. And that shows in that template that you are promoting your, increasing your level of knowledge." Similarly, he took colleagues' recommendations to complete his master's degree before he applied for promotion.

> They did tell me that I was eligible to go up for associate professor, that I could get my committee going this year and I could apply for associate professor in September. But when I got my assistant professor, two people recommended that I get my master's before I go up for associates, so I decided to wait a year. Higher standards are applied for associate professor.

Tenure and promotion at Midwest required peer review, which appeared to be received positively by the teachers. Theresa welcomed the support offered by her committee.

> The head of my committee is ... and we have worked together. And she has been very kind to share copies of what she had filled out. And there is another person from the architectural discipline who is on my committee and then someone who is from a completely different discipline, psychology. But all very nice people who I respect. I am sure they will have very good suggestions. I will be observed in the classroom. It will make me nervous, but not nearly as nervous as it would have the first semester. You do kind of get used to it.

Angela similarly cast the peer involvement in a positive light.

> They're your peers, and everything they say to you is for you to grow. And it is constructive criticism, and it is also support, because they want you to achieve the tenure or get the promotion. So your peers take a real active involvement in what you are doing. And if you are doing something that they think will hurt you, they will tell you. And if you are doing something good, they will tell you that too.

The reward system at Multi-Campus Community College is quite different, and the approach taken by the teachers there somewhat reflects this difference. At Multi-Campus, increases in base salary stem from years of service and negotiated raises. Additional degrees or coursework have no effect on a teacher's wages. This dampened interest in getting additional schooling, as Henry pointed out.

> I think that one of the things that keep coming up in discussion and certainly here at this school, professional development and reimbursement to go to these. There is not a tremendous motivator to go to a university for advanced degrees. One of the reasons is that it is out of pocket. There is no pay back in terms of wages and in most instances there is no co-pay with the faculty, so it is strictly out-of-pocket.

> The master's program at Wayne State, you can break it down to dollars and cents. It is about a thousand dollars a four-hour class. So we're looking at a ten thousand, twelve thousand dollar cost. With books, registration, parking, you are realistically closer to fifteen thousand dollars. So to get a master's, to put out fifteen thousand dollars — in lieu of going to Hawaii, that doesn't sound quite as appealing.

Similarly, there are no incentives for participating in other professional development activities. Ginny observed that "they are really trying to push the professional development, but there is no requirement for professional development. It's just basically if you feel like going, if you feel it can benefit you."

Participation in college-wide committees also appeared to be at the discretion of the instructor. "It is pretty much open as far as if you are interested. Certainly you are encouraged, but it is not required. It is as you can well imagine it is pretty much the same people involved all the time," Henry told me. Both he and Ginny both were involved a couple of committees, but more as a matter of personal interest. Henry explained his membership on the college assessment committee.

> There was a stipend for actual time put in, very minimal, but nonetheless there was pay involved, and I thought it would be an interesting thing to understand how the system worked for actually measuring the learning outcomes. So it was kind of an interest to me personally.

When asked, Carlos and Randy responded that they did not participate in any college-wide committees and felt no pressure to do so.

What was clearly compensated by contract was teaching. And this seemed to lead some teachers to a narrowed perspective on the boundaries of their jobs. Although Randy did many things besides classroom teaching to maintain his program, it seems that he saw those tasks as not part of his regular job, things for which he was not compensated. "I'll be honest with you, you have the corporate program, half your time is spent on the paper end of it, than you are actually teaching. But you get paid to teach, that's where the pay comes in. So it's challenging." He also viewed days for which he had no scheduled teaching responsibilities as "time off." Classes in his current program met Monday through Thursday, and every Friday was unscheduled. In recounting his involvement in college activities, he told me "like one Friday they had a, I think it was the NCA recertification. It was that or another one. I went to that one. On my day off I went to that meeting." His co-workers encouraged this perspective when he first started teaching at the college.

> When I was in the corporate program, it was eight weeks on, eight weeks off. My days my class wasn't scheduled, I still was here. They're like, "What're you doing here?" Working. "Why?"— you know. "Go home." I'm like, am I allowed to? You are so used to always working, always having to be there. So when you get the scheduled time off, it's hard not to, you know adjust the time.

All four Multi-Campus teachers expressed some frustration with the lack of accountability built into the system. Ginny told me:

> It's really sad, and, unfortunately, there are no checks and balances here.... Well, I think that even though I enjoy it, there is a lot of freedom for faculty members, a lot. And there are some that take that to one of the two extremes. One, some of the

faculty members will go so above and beyond their call, and we have others that take advantage of it and do the bare minimum. And there is no one, even though we have an associate dean, the famous words on the street is that, "He's not my boss. I don't have a boss. I am an individual, and I run by our contract, by the union." And it is really sad because there's no one to, I won't say monitor, because they can give evaluations, good, bad or indifferent, but there's no consequences.

Randy expressed similar irritation with the different contribution levels of his colleagues.

Here it's way more secure. I don't know, sometimes I think it's maybe too secure for a lot of people. Yeah, some instructors, I know no matter where you go to, what school you're at, some instructors that bend over backwards, do more than needs to be done. Other instructors do the bare minimum. And everybody gets paid the same, or you know, on the scale. If I make a program drive — you got to go out to the schools. You don't get paid for that, but you've got to do that. About half of us do and half of us don't. You know, recruiting events, everything. It's just some people go beyond, other people do the bare minimum.

Carlos put some of the blame on the tenure system.

Well, I think I have a few more expectations, but I don't think they are unreasonable at all. I think we should all be accountable for what we teach and be responsible and not just walk into the classroom and throw some papers and walk out. To be honest with you, I'm sure that I would ruffle some feathers, but I really don't believe in the tenure system. I don't personally don't think that it should exist. I think that if there were nothing, you probably would do a better job.

Whereas the faculty at Midwest Community College engaged in peer review and evaluation, the teachers at Multi-Campus did not take this role very seriously. Ginny described how peer evaluations were conducted in her department.

> There is a peer evaluation that is supposed to take place, and, unfortunately, what the peers do, they sit in a room and say, "I think you did this good." I mean they don't even come into your classroom. And I've asked administration, can I have an administrator? And a lot of the faculty members kind of got on me. "If you do this, then they're going to want to come into everyone's class."

One other aspect of the reward system was under discussion during the time that I interviewed teachers at Midwest Community College. At both colleges, lab and clinical hours were not counted as equivalent to lecture hours in the computation of teacher loads. At Midwest, an hour in lab or clinical was considered the equivalent of .8 of a lecture hour. This had been a practice of long standing, going back as Madeline recounted, to "when they decided there wasn't as much prep time as for a lecture, and, therefore, it was only worth .8 instead of 1."

A proposal to make the lecture and laboratory hours equivalent was under consideration, a move that would require all teachers at Midwest to take a smaller raise the following year in order to finance the change. Since lab and clinical hours fell disproportionately in career education classes, the issue tended to pit the career education faculty against some of the liberal arts instructors. Matt informed me, "And English and math, they just don't get it. What's the big deal, why are you so worried? Because I am working thirty hours and only getting credit for twenty-eight." Not only did the .8

equivalency necessitate the lab and clinical teachers spending more time on instruction, but some, such as Andy, saw it as a value statement about their work.

> The way I look at it is, whatever you do, you're getting paid for your importance within the system. And yet, someone has decided that the importance of learning that occurs either in different type of environment, outside of this place, or whatever, is not as important. I just don't feel probably they really understand the whole picture.

I spoke to Andy immediately following a faculty meeting at which the merits of the proposed change were discussed. He was particularly animated as he recounted his arguments in favor of the change.

> So, for example, my understanding was the whole reason a lab class was paid at a less amount than a lecture class was because it took less to prepare for it. But I don't find that to be true at all. As a matter of fact, I probably spend more time in my lab-associated activities than in my lecture-associated activities. And then people who teach primarily one-to-one or lecture-associated activities have talked about alternate ways of learning, so now they aren't even lecturing. They are doing other things which to us sound like labs. And I think that is really what this has come down to, as disciplines, you may teach mathematics, I may teach nursing, the next person may teach science. The thing is, we are all teaching. And we are teaching in a way that is helpful to student learning. In your setting it might be all strictly classroom. In their setting, in order to help the student effectively learn, not only do we teach in the classroom, but we do hands-on.

The proposal to count lab hours as equivalent to classroom hours was approved a few weeks later.

The reward systems at the two colleges were a powerful force in shaping faculty understanding about roles and duties. The weight accorded to professional development, committee involvement, and peer review at Midwest Community College provided external impetus to the teachers to expand the scope of their responsibilities, and seemed to contribute to greater integration of career education and liberal arts faculty. This aspect will be explored further in the last section of this chapter.

Curriculum Integration

Curriculum integration, that is, the incorporation of traditional academics into technical education, has been an approach strongly advocated by numerous policy initiatives, notably the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Act. The participants displayed different understandings of their roles in curriculum integration that split along college lines.

At Multi-Campus Community College the instructors seemed largely unaware of any efforts to include general education topics and skills in career education classes. When asked about his involvement in curriculum integration activities, Carlos told me, "We know it is they have to have so many credits of gen ed, but we don't do any of it in our classes." Ginny's response to a similar question was, "I haven't had much direct involvement in that."

The participants at Midwest Community College had a higher awareness of curriculum integration associated it with the assessment initiative at the college. Faculty

had to identify which of the general education outcomes they addressed in each course. Nicole explained the process.

> Now in assessment we do look at all our classes and mark down what are the gen ed assessment type of things, like reading skills, writing. We have this whole sheet of paper where we mark, do they practice it our class or do they demonstrate it? And that then goes on file with the official paperwork for the course. And we do that for all of our courses.

The practice was seen as a means to document the sorts of activities already occurring in classes. According to Angela, "We just have to identify what we are doing. Really we have done it all along, it just hasn't been stated. So when we look at revamping our outcomes and objectives, we have to make sure those things [general education outcomes] float to the top." Nicole also felt that her courses incorporated many of the general education skills.

> Obviously they want us to be using that [general education outcomes], but truthfully, we basically are anyways. There is a lot of writing that my students are doing, obviously specific to ultrasound. And there is a lot of analytical critical thinking. That's another gen ed. So really it's not that hard to incorporate it into the class anyway.

Whether or not the assessment strategies prompted actual changes of teaching practices was not clear, but a consequence of the course check-off seemed to be a heightened awareness of the need to include general education skills. Theresa told me, "Now if I mark some of these gen ed outcomes, I want to make sure that whether I am really assessing them. And seriously looking at the ones that I don't check off."

Development as Educational Professionals

The roles identified by the participants were many and varied — teacher, advisor, recruiter, clinical instructor, curriculum developer, and committee member. Such roles bear little resemblance to their work prior to academic employment, so the participants had many things to learn as new faculty members. How they came to understand their jobs and, in particular, how they learned to teach, is the focus of this section. The section will conclude with their observations about student learning.

Learning the Job

Starting a new job is a stressful life event for most people, and this was true for the participants when they began their employment as full-time faculty. Even though all but one of the participants had initially taught as adjunct faculty at their colleges, they still felt overwhelmed. Matt told me, "I guess I shouldn't say I wouldn't do it over again, but if every year was like that first year, I wouldn't do it."

Starting a new job in higher education may be even more difficult than in other settings. At many colleges faculty work almost as independent contractors. They are given class schedules and expected to construct their work life within and around those rough parameters. As Randy described, "So it was pretty much thrown on my plate. It was just basically, here's your job. Here's your classes." Faculty are assumed to be professionals who can work with little direction and with generic job definitions. While that makes the first year challenging for all new faculty, it is particularly difficult for career education instructors who for the most part leaving non-academic work settings where typically supervision is tighter and job responsibilities more carefully defined. Andy expressed how he initially felt overwhelmed.

> I guess sometimes, and I am not saying I didn't have any guidance, but I think basically this is how I felt. They hired you for a job, and because they felt you were qualified to do it, and then they said, here you go. Here is your job, and just let me know if you have any questions. So you like come in here and you're like, well do I have any questions? And then you realize, oh my god, you have five million questions!

So how did the participants find the answers to these questions? They did so primarily with the assistance of their colleagues. Office partners, departmental colleagues, people with nearby offices — all became resources and unofficial mentors. At Midwest Community College each new teacher was assigned an official mentor who provided assistance, and the department chairs played important roles. Matt told me, "My division chair was just excellent. He would stop by at least once a week, knock on the door, 'Hey how you're doing? Do you have any questions?'" But even with this support, the instructors had to seek information assertively in order to make sense of their jobs. Ginny described how she learned to operate within the school.

> It was really a lot of, you know, just trying to gather information and being in a sense a researcher and finding out from the various areas of the college, finding out what I could and couldn't do. And there were a lot of times I got burned, not realizing that that wasn't the proper protocol or the proper way of handling it. But the majority of it was definitely just by struggling through it and trying to find the answers on your own.

Both schools had implemented orientation programs for new faculty, although the participants from Multi-Campus Community College did not have an opportunity to

participate since New Teachers' Academy was initiated at their school after they were hired. The programs were heralded by all the participants, even those who had not had the benefit of attending, as welcome additions to the colleges. The sessions helped the new teachers understand the complex organizations in which they now worked, but still big questions remained. Andy again articulated his initial concerns.

> Well one thing that this college does is that they have a very nice orientation for new people. But it is all for the overall organization. So I understand who our president was. I understood that there were these different committees that did this and this. And I understood how I was going to get promoted. I understood all that. But even when the day was done, the thing I was concerned about was how I was going to teach my course. And no one told me that.

Learning to Teach

As Matt poignantly expressed, the major concern for most of the participants during their early years was how to teach. Coming directly from the corporate world, Ginny found the transition difficult.

> I think that the most frustrating things for me, being an instructor now, I've never been formally trained as an instructor. ... The only skills that I had to offer was what I had learned about the different software and the industry itself. So sitting down it was very frustrating to me to try to figure out how to convey this message to someone. I'm speaking at such a level and they're at a different level. How do I get that message across correctly, without number one, talking down to them and making sure that I am clear and concise, and knowing where their level was. And that was an incredible challenge, especially up front because you are thrown with

so much right off the bat. And so different personalities, different learning methods and different teaching methods, and it was a challenge.

Madeline and Theresa had the benefit of education degrees that included student teaching, and Angela and Randy had done corporate training and worked in community education, but the others had never taught before they started at their colleges. The participants from Multi-Campus Community College began as adjunct instructors and had to step into their classes on short notice and with little preparation. Randy described his start.

> And finally I called here one time. "Do you want to teach starting charging class?" I said, great, I'd love to. I go, when do I start? He said, "Tonight, at six." He goes, "We'll give you everything, just give them the high five, you know." When I first started there was no syllabus, nothing to hand out. It was basically, here's the book. It was a class I hadn't took in ten years. So I kept, I stayed a week ahead of my students.

Carlos also experienced a sudden entry into academia.

> I was called 48 hours before the class starts and said, here is what we did last year. Good luck. There was two instructors that were sitting with me that didn't like each other. ... One would tell me something when the other one was gone. And when the other one was back and the first one was gone for something, he would tell me the opposite. And I was OK, now I am going to have to wend my way between what each of you say in order to figure out what I am supposed to do, because one tells me black, one white on the same subject?

The health careers participants at Midwest Community College had previous experience working with students in clinical settings. This experience helped them develop their explanation skills and better understand their students, but it did not fully prepare them for classroom teaching. Matt recalled his first days of teaching.

> I remember my very first class was supposed to go two hours. I spend four hours preparing the class. And after I gave what I had prepared for four hours, I looked at the clock and realized that twenty minutes had gone by. I knew I was going to have to tap dance for the next hour and a half.

So given that they had no formal preparation and little time to get ready, it is no surprise that many of the instructors began by teaching as they had been taught. Andy said that he learned how to be a teacher, "I guess based on how I was somewhat taught. I won't say fully because when I went to nursing school, you were fully taught on the fear factor." Several of the participants taught classes that they had actually taken as students at the college. Theresa had completed the CAD program at Midwest Community College, and "I had taken the courses, so I started teaching in the way they were when I took them." But that was only the starting point.

> They don't even resemble that now. I found better textbooks, found what I think are better drawings that take them through more concepts, more commands, but a whole series of smaller, easier drawings. ...They can turn things in sooner, they can get grades and feedback sooner.

There were four primary resources that the teachers relied on to learn about teaching and to modify their practices. Their colleagues were the first. Office partners, teachers in nearby offices, and mentors offered practical advice on matters ranging from

student issues to classroom techniques. Ginny's office partner served as her informal mentor.

> When the gentleman who preceded me was working here, a lot of time I would come to him, and even though we were teaching two different softwares, I would say, "How do you approach this problem? What do you think works?" I went to him for a lot, especially when I had students who had problems, issues. You know, they were going to be gone on vacation for two weeks – how do I handle this? He was more or less my mentor. If he hadn't been here, I don't know what I would have done ... You know you are working on a piece of paper with pencil and compass, how do you let thirty students see what you are doing. And he would show me how he used the overhead projector or the document camera to get the point across. So from that standpoint I definitely relied on him a lot.

The second impetus for changing their practices came from the students themselves. Angela noted that, "the students really tell you what you're doing works or not. They are your best critics so to speak, good or bad." The course evaluations completed by students at the end of the semester were mentioned by many of the participants as not only useful barometers of student satisfaction, but also as sources for suggested changes. Carlos referred to these evaluations.

> And I do read those and make changes. I do make changes, like in the past I never used to give them a copy of the test. And then quite a few of them said that having a copy of the test would help them study for the final better. So now that is a change that was made.

Several of the instructors solicited student feedback during the course of the semester. Madeline used this approach when she was trying out new ideas. "Sometimes I get an idea, and I think oh, this will work. So I tell them, I've got this idea and I am going to try it out on you guys, and you tell me then if it is working." The significance of student reactions to faculty stems not only from that fact that the students are the "customers," but also because in education there are so few other means of obtaining evaluative comments. This was particularly true at Multi-Campus Community College where the reward system did not encourage any personal reflection or peer appraisal, as was the case at Midwest. Indeed, Ginny was particularly desirous of student feedback and several times a semester surveyed her classes.

As the examples cited indicate, the advice provided by colleagues and students tended to focus on the mechanics of teaching and not on more fundamental issues of teaching and learning. Nicole noted this propensity.

> Actually, I guess my conversations have been more along the lines of situations of students struggling or students failing or attitudes of students on the clinical side, and trying to get ideas, how do you handle these type of situations, more than actually talking about how they teach.

The deeper insights into practice were prompted by individual reflections and formal classes.

For most of the participants, the first year was a race just to prepare lectures and stay ahead of their classes. Once through that initial rush, they had time to reflect on their successes and consider ways of changing their approaches. Andy described how he was able to make changes in his teaching.

> So doing some reflective type of things, looking at the course, what could be changed to improve it. Knowing what kind of explanations to give to make you a better instructor. Not so much totally changing content, but understanding how to explain that content maybe a little bit differently so that it improves understanding.

The teachers talked about learning how to be clearer in the expectations they expressed to their classes, how to adjust to the different learning styles and proficiency levels of their students, and how to better structure classroom activities and assignments in order to enhance student learning.

The final influence on the participants' approaches to teaching and learning were professional development activities, particularly in the form of classes or workshops on different aspects of pedagogy. Midwest Community College offered semester-long three-credit hour classes on such topics as assessment and writing to learn. Perhaps because participation in these classes enhanced their chances for tenure and promotion, all of the participants from Midwest had either taken the classes or planned to do so in the near future. The classes seemed to push their thinking about teaching to a deeper level, as reflected in Nicole's musings about her changing practices. "I knew I had to do more to help them learn themselves, to help them, help sink it in. So over time I realized I needed more interactions, more questions to help them critically think."

Multi-Campus also offered workshops on different topics related to teaching, but these were short, one-session classes that did not seem to have the same impact as those offered at Midwest. Ginny described the offerings at Multi-Campus.

> They have more along the lines of your PowerPoint or your Excel or managing Outlook or those types of things, but there has been courses on effective teaching. But I would still feel more comfortable if I were degreed in it, had a little bit more than a two-hour workshop.

One other institutional initiative had an impact on the participants' teaching. Both schools had programs to assess student learning in order to comply with accreditation requirements. Teachers at both schools made references to changes and activities that they had implemented to address assessment requirements. Ginny told me about her appearance before the curriculum committee with a redesigned course.

> And I sat there through the first time, and they said, "Well what's your assessment?" And I said, "What's assessment? I don't know what you are talking about people." And they were the ones that told me about CATs and Angelo, and that's where I stumbled upon it [muddiest point] literally. ... They told me about the muddiest point and the classroom quiz evaluation.

It did appear that the institutional emphasis on assessment was influencing teaching practices.

Learning about Students

The final aspect of their growth as educators involved working with students. The participants told me repeatedly that the part of the job that they liked best was working with students and "seeing the light bulb go on." But that didn't mean that they weren't surprised and challenged by the issues their students brought with them to school, as Andy noted.

You know, I always used to think I'll teach in the classroom, I'll share my knowledge, I'll help people. Then you find out not everyone in your classroom is always there to learn. Or they are there for different reasons. Or something is happening in their life. And you have all these other things that impact your ability to do what you thought you were going to do. And so then you find out that there is whole other aspect to teaching that, that I never thought about.

Community college students often lead "complicated lives" and do not fit the stereotype of a college student. The number of demands on their students' time dismayed many of the participants, as expressed by Matt.

What I don't like is all the baggage these kids genuinely have. That is probably what surprised me the most. Single parents, people working two jobs, they don't have reliable transportation. They're sick or their kids are sick. And I can't discriminate between the ones that have legitimate excuses and the ones that just decided not to show up that day. That's the hardest thing — like trying to, cause I was the traditional student. I lived at home. Dad paid the bills; mom did the cooking and cleaning. To see the hardships — that's the part that I don't like.

The skill levels that the students brought to the classroom also surprised many of the teachers. Carlos told me:

You want to know the truth? I am surprised that people cannot spell chef. These are people that have graduated from high school. I am just amazed how the students are, when it comes to spelling or even doing basic math. Like doubling up a recipe, you have eight ounces times two. It's sometimes, it's like scary. My

> god, they are supposed to have graduated from high school, and this is fourth grade math that you are doing here.

Several teachers commented on the challenges posed by disparate levels of preparedness within a single class. They struggled with finding ways to challenge the more advanced students while supporting the less prepared. And, of course, some students displayed little motivation to learn, which was frustrating for the teachers as Angela expressed.

> The greatest challenge is when you have those students and you can't figure out why they are there. And you do everything you can to try to bring them into the fold, so to speak, but they are just holding a spot and not even trying to blend or take anything away from the class.

In learning to cope with these challenges, the participants frequently turned to their colleagues and mentors for advice. They learned to become stricter and to trust their own judgment. Nicole described an experience during her first semester with a failing student.

> I didn't know how to deal with it. It can't happen; they can't fail. And I panicked and ran to my mentor. And it was like I wanted to fix it. ... I was so insecure. It shook me so much that a student would fail. Now, not that I'm hardened to it, I always want my students to succeed, but over time I've come to realize that you know if they can't perform at a certain level, if they don't have a basic background of skills, they just are not going to succeed in a clinical setting as they move from one progression to the next. It's not right for them either.

The issues discussed in this section are certainly not unique to the occupational faculty at community colleges. New liberal arts faculty are similarly challenged by the

complexity of their new organizations and are bewildered as they try to sort out their new responsibilities. They also may not have any formal background in education, having completed degrees in their disciplines but not taken any education classes. The students in liberal arts classes also have varying skill and motivational levels and carry as much "baggage" as those in vocational classes. However, the occupational backgrounds of the career education faculty do color their experiences. Since all of the participants' prior full-time employment had been outside academia, their adjustments to college teaching are likely to have been more challenging than it was for their liberal arts colleagues. The influence of the participants' occupational backgrounds upon their perspectives will be explored in the next section.

Role of Occupation in Mediating Perspectives

The participants' involvement with their occupations surfaced as a recurring theme in their conversations about their work as educators. This vocational perspective colored their ideas about the purpose of education and their approach to teaching, and influenced their relationships with their students. This section will explore these concepts as well as their observations about the differences between the academic world and their previous employment. Finally, this section will conclude with a discussion of the continued involvement of the participants with their vocational practice.

Approach to Teaching

Preparing students for a world of work appeared to be the major organizing principle for the practice of the participants. Most identified career preparation as the most important function of their school. Nicole echoed the sentiment of many of the

participants when she described what she saw to be the primary role of her community college.

> Well, I think we take students from all walks of life since it is a community college, and in a lot of cases we are sending them on the road for a career. Maybe they are not done with that when they leave here. But we are serving the community, and we are doing that by giving students the skills that they need to work in a variety of professions and providing the community with full-skilled workers.

Within each discipline the particular focus of the job preparation became very specific. Nicole summed up her role within the school by stating, "I am here to produce competent sonographers." The prospect of imminent employment of her graduates compelled Nicole to maintain stringent standards for her classes.

> Well, number one we don't want to produce students that become sonographers that really don't know what they are doing, and they are not going to be able to perform properly in the field; and number two, we don't want to put students out there in situations that they are not prepared to handle.

The ability of students to find employment was an important measure of program success and significance. Matt told me, "I know I am doing a good job if they all pass the national exams. I know I am doing a good job if they all get jobs." To Henry, the fact that his students could earn a good living was a point of pride.

> A good example — let's say a degree in history, a degree in English — really doesn't get you an earnable wage. A degree in pipefitting, plumbing, or heating

and air conditioning puts you out on the job front immediately, and lets you get a check very rapidly.

But beyond its significance as a goal or marker of success, the influence of occupation reached into the participants' actual approach to teaching. This, of course, was particularly apparent in the health careers departments where clinical instruction was an integral part of the program. Madeline discussed the dental hygiene clinicals where "we are basically teaching them hands-on with a real live patient during those clinic times. So they are learning how to clean someone's teeth and how to educate the patient and how to teach prevention." But occupational orientation was also evident in the other areas. For example, Carlos described how in his culinary arts classes the students "are responsible for the station, kind of like in the real world. They are set up in a station and they have to keep it clean, wash their dishes, and get everything all ready."

In each discipline taught by the participants, students were expected to learn the skills of that profession, and each of the participants used hands-on learning to teach those skills. Again, this was very evident in the clinical instruction of the health careers disciplines where students actually worked with patients, but all the participants had incorporated lab work into their instruction. The students baked cakes and pastries in Carlos' culinary arts classes, repaired cars in Randy's automotive service classes, welded in Henry's applied technology classes, and worked with software in Theresa's, Angela's, and Ginny's computer-based classes. Ginny told me, "I am a firm believer that the only way they are going to learn that software is to actually work on it."

Approach to Curriculum

Occupation also influenced the participants' ideas about curriculum. The "real world" became a ruler against which relevancy of curriculum was measured. Matt felt that this measure should be used throughout the college.

> I have two kids that go to school here, and I don't see where they take math problems and say, you need to know this math problem because in the real world you have to be able to deal with it. And to make sure that you understand I am going to put that type of problem on your test. Same thing with English, same thing, I mean they could do that. Here's English, and if you are going into the health care field here's how you are going to have to be able to document, here's why it's important to be able to do it this way, here's why it is important to be able to communicate in this fashion. And I think they should do that. I have to do that. Here's what we have to do for a pulmonary function test, and here's how it is going to be practical. You are going to use it in the field.

The "real world" in the form of national exams guided the curriculum in the health careers. Students in these fields have to pass an externally administered exam before they are allowed to practice, so the curriculum in those disciplines must prepare students for those tests. When the national exams changed, the teachers had to revise their classes, as Matt described in reference to the exam for respiratory therapists.

> Previously they used to say, what would you do to assist the physician with a bronchoscopy? ... What would you do to assist the physician to do a thoracentesis? ... The latest [test] matrix said, how would you perform a bronchoscopy? What would you need to know to diagnose the need for a

> thoracentesis? How would you perform it? So now we are going almost from an assistant's role to the physician's role. So I need to change my notes to bring in some more information.

The curriculum in non-health career fields was also affected by the "real world" by way of employer requirements. In Henry's area, the employers play a very direct role in determining course content. "And of course we have our industrial people who come in and dictate their interest in learning this, this, and that. And therefore we have to research and find out exactly what they are interested in training for." Advisory boards comprised of representatives from local businesses provide feedback about the relevancy of coursework, as Theresa describes. "Actually when we change programs or update, ...one of the first things we do is ask for input from that advisory board, and then take it and show it to them and say, is this something, are these skills that employers want?"

The ultimate arbiter of curriculum is employability. The decisions on what to include or not revolved around how well they prepared students for a job. In the culinary arts program Carlos said,

> We are here to teach them what is being done in the real world and the proper procedure to do that. We don't teach them what was popular twenty years ago. They have to be right at the edge of what's in now to get a job.

Similarly, in the computer science field Angela told me,

> Because you know in our area, things change like every eighteen months. There is almost this huge transformation that takes place in computers and technology. So we needed to address, making sure that our students who got a degree from us, were able to compete. So we looked at some of the courses that we were offering.

The penalty for not responding to the marketplace demands can be severe. If programs and coursework do not provide students with the requisite skills for employment, or if shifts in the economy reduce employment opportunities in a particular field, enrollment in the program is jeopardized. Ginny was worried about the future of her program because of the changes in manufacturing in the region.

> Our [field] changes so quickly and from one day to the next. If the governor says we won't have any more manufacturing or engineering in the state, we're dead. We're done, unless we reinvent ourselves or try to apply it different. And that is very scary for us because we weren't trained to be instructors. We were trained to be engineers.

Randy foresaw the reduced demand for corporate-sponsored service managers and accordingly developed his one-year program.

> I was thinking about it for a while, but when, oh about two, three years ago, they shrunk about half the ASSET schools across the country — from forty down to twenty. ... I kinda seen it coming. I think a lot of instructors didn't, and it kind of hit them blindsided.

For all of the participants, curriculum was bound up by the needs and requirements of their occupations.

Relationship with Students

Finally, aspects of the occupational nature of the programs affected the participants' relationships with their students in positive ways. Because students could see the relevance of their coursework to their future employment, their motivation to

learn was increased. Madeline gave this as one of the reasons she decided to teach adults rather than children in a K-12 system.

> Because they are in a program, because that is what they have chosen. Some are there because mom or dad has said you have to go to school, but not really that many. That is the part that I find most exciting. They are sponges, they do want to learn. They know when they get out they are going to have this responsibility to the patient. So they want to learn while they are here the most information so that they are prepared when they get out, and they are responsible for their patients.

Student motivation was also enhanced by the hands-on nature of the instruction. Ginny saw this as an advantage in her area.

> When you have a history instructor, unless they are bringing in different types of presentations or projects that get the students to do something hands on, I think it is much more difficult to keep the students engaged. Because obviously, my classes allow students to let off steam by being able to play on the computers, so to speak.

Henry also spoke to the inherent attractions of working with physical objects.

> One of the big things that have been a selling point for us is that today, most of the younger people are very much swayed by bright lights, movement. Showing them a blackboard with Einstein's theory is totally a zero. Showing them a video game where everything is moving or robot with arms and machines are moving — much more captivating.

Because all of the participants were engaged in lab or clinical instruction, the frequency of one-on-one interactions between them and their students was increased

compared to a typical lecture-based class. This was particularly true in the health careers programs where faculty had on-going contact with their students over the one to two-year span during which students were enrolled in the program. Madeline viewed this as one of the benefits of working in a career education program. "I think the fun part of being in that program is that you do get to see them from start to finish. And they are learning an actual skill. And you know that they are going to use that skill when they get out." Andy pointed to this as one of the differences between the career education fields and the liberal arts departments.

> Where nursing is a little bit different, and that is how I term a lot of occupational and career fields, where the students and the instructors become really close because there is a lot of time spent together. ... I can't imagine being a student and enrolling in a single math class and maybe having this person once ever, then maybe going in and telling people their whole life stories. But you get that here. Once they are in the program, they feel they have to let you know every bad thing that is going on their life. Good things too, but definitely every bad thing in their lives.

In general, the participants seemed to connect with their students on a more sustained and personal level than is often the case in general education classes.

Academic World vs. the Work World

Having worked outside of academia, the participants had a vantage point from which to compare the two environments. In most cases the colleges fared well in the comparison. The participants appreciated the amount of control they had over their

teaching situation, in sharp contrast to their previous work experiences. Matt marveled at the degree of input he was accorded.

> It is not so much power but in control of the atmosphere I am going to work in. They actually asked our input as far as building structure. What do you want your classroom to look like, classroom design, who are the people you want to work with? We are now in the process of selecting a new president, and my understanding is that some of the faculty are involved in selecting the new president.

The flexibility of their hours at school was another distinct advantage, as were the holidays and summers off. Theresa relished the rhythm of the academic year with its beginnings and endings.

> And the other thing is the closure and the fresh beginning. I love it. When I worked in industry we worked so hard, and you met one deadline and three more had popped up. No matter how hectic it gets, there is that day when you are going to turn final grades in. And as soon as you do that you are going to start thinking, how can I do this better next time? And then there is that brand new fresh beginning. And I love those fresh beginnings. I can't imagine ever going back to industry.

There were, however, areas that required adjustment on the part of the participants. Nicole noted that she initially felt isolated after the constant camaraderie of the hospital.

> But I think that I would tell them that initially you are going to seem, even though you are around a lot of people, you are going to seem isolated initially. And that is

an adjustment that people are going to have to make coming from another setting, and a lot of the other people in the other health programs have commented on that too.

She also commented on what she initially took to be a sense of entitlement expressed by the faculty.

I don't know how to explain it. I used to tell my husband that the world of academia is different. And I think that people that have done it as a career, never worked outside of academia type setting, it's like a different world. I sense sometimes a little bit of eliteness at times. And also I sense that at times they expect an awful lot. Not to say that people, well in terms of salary, benefits, work hours, requirements for faculty. Some of those arguments to me seem petty coming from the environment I came from.

The pace of business in academia was another source of irritation for several of the participants. The delays and paperwork involved in ordering or repairing equipment frustrated Carlos.

And in industry when you are working in a restaurant or whatever, when work had to get done and things have to happen fast, because you cannot let a party of 500 people sit around because a machine broke down. So I still have that mentality. It has to get done so we can move on and teach our classes. I just, I'm not the only one, it seems that all the people that come from industry have that same reaction. You know why can't it be done any faster? Why can't it happen like it should? Why does it take so long? Why do we have to wait so long to have a plug fixed?

Randy also noted the contrast between the corporate world and education and felt that those faculty who had never worked outside academia did not feel the same level of urgency to get things done. He attributed this, in part, to a lack of accountability. "Like I said in the corporate world, there's a lot of accountability. If you don't it done, you're done. If you don't get your jobs done, you're pretty much. Here I don't quite see that." He was also disappointed by the lack of cooperation within his department.

> I think it's the lack of teamwork with all the other departments, with your own department, just getting things done. The simple things, you know, if you work as a team, if you divide it up it would be nothing. But it's not here.

In their definition of professional success as well as in their frustrations with the academic setting, the career education faculty members were oriented outside their community colleges. The basis of their curriculum and the markers of their successes were driven by forces outside their institutions — employer requirements, accreditation demands, and national testing. These were forces over which they could exert little control, but they needed to understand if their programs were to remain viable. In addition, for most, their work experience prior to employment at their colleges was non-academic. These strong connections to the workplace shaped their views of the educational process and resulted in high value placed on "real world" applications of knowledge.

Involvement with Vocational Practice

Academia is sometimes characterized as the ivory tower, removed from the realities of the outside world. But such was not the experience of the career education faculty in this study. As was noted above, curriculum matters were greatly influenced by

the requirements of outside accrediting agencies and the demands of the workplace. The occupational programs that ignored such external realities risked obsolescence. The participants all discussed ways in which they maintained contact with their vocational fields and the necessity of such contact.

A common theme voiced by the participants was the difficulty of keeping pace with the rapid changes in their fields. The computer-based fields were particularly volatile. Angela reported that the software applications that she taught changed on average every eighteen months. Ginny had the same problem in the vehicle design program.

> This area is incredibly difficult because not only does technology change, but our software that we use probably changes versions on the average of once every six months. And sometimes it's something where you won't even notice it, and other times it is a complete tear-up where we need all new curriculum, all new projects, the textbooks change so often. And then we have students who come back for retraining. They may know the software but have to have the latest version. So that is a daunting task because you are constantly, constantly upgrading and improving.

Change was not confined to computer technologies. New findings about diseases and different equipment and procedures kept the health careers faculty busy, new products and techniques required modifications in the culinary arts program, and new applications of welding technology affected the applied trades instructors. Randy told me that "the problem with automotive is that the technology changes so rapidly. What used to be false back then is now true."

The rapid rate of change created complications in teaching. Randy recounted a story of giving an exam from the textbook to a group of evening students, some of whom were already employed in the automotive industry. He ended up discarding the test because the students pointed out how recent changes in manufacturing rendered many of the questions invalid. In a similar vein Theresa anticipated problems in the fall.

> I'm sure that next fall they probably will be loading 2006 onto my computers, and I will start a demonstration and will say this is what a layered dialog box looks like, and I will look up at the screen and go, oh they changed that. ... My only problem is that they are updating the software so often and so quickly, and we get the updates so quickly, that I will get the updates long before I get an AutoCAD 2006 textbook.

Maintaining currency within their fields was an ongoing endeavor for the participants. Theresa told me, "You know after the first semester, as long as you teach you are going to be a lifetime learner." Journals, online resources, conferences, classes, and seminars all contributed to the participants' knowledge base. However, their direct contact with the workplace was of equal if not more significance.

The program advisory boards were one of the resources the faculty drew upon to stay connected to the "outside world." The boards offered suggestions about the specific needs of employers and current trends in the industry. Henry said they advised him about "what's actually happening in the industry, where we're going in the future. What type of purchases, what type of training, what type of personal development is required to keep current. What's going on in the industry."

The adjunct faculty employed in the participants' programs also offered a direct link to the workplace. Many of these faculty worked by day in industry and taught at the college at night. Their daily experience with the current technology and industry standards provided more immediately relevant program feedback than could be gained from journals and seminars. Ginny relied heavily on her adjunct faculty to keep her course content up to date.

> And we've actually had training sessions with [the adjunct faculty]. You know, come on in and teach us what is going in the districts so we can pass it on to our students. Some things are consistent and don't change, but the latest and greatest techniques in terms of their training. They are the ones that bring it to us. And we just can't live without them.

But the most valuable connection for most of the participants was actual work in the field. Angela bemoaned her loss of hands-on, practical experience that she had when working in industry.

> And just trying, doing the best, reading trade manuals and trade journals, but again it doesn't substitute for the hands-on that you would get from doing it day-to-day. When you get into teaching, if you have been in industry, what you miss is experiencewise when you go from industry into teaching.

Ginny had managed to arrange for a summer internship at a job site in order to learn about new techniques that she could incorporate into her classes, but it was primarily the health careers faculty who were able to work as practitioners on weekends or during school breaks. They viewed this as essential for keeping up with the changing skills,

procedures, and technology in their fields. Matt explained one of the advantages he found to continuing to work in the hospital.

> For instance, one of the companies just came out with a new ventilator. It won't be in the textbooks for another two years. My co-worker won't know anything about it for two years until he reads about it in the book. I'm working with it already in the hospital. It is a huge advantage staying in the hospital.

Besides the advantages of enhancing their clinical expertise, several participants mentioned how their continued vocational practice had symbolic significance for their students. Madeline worked in a clinic some weekends and summers and said, "I think that is important because I think students put more weight in what people say when they are out there doing what they are teaching."

Two of the faculty felt that their technical skills had actually improved since they had started teaching. Nicole told me that because she was responsible for teaching the full range of sonography skills, she felt she was a better sonographer than when she worked in a clinic and was only involved in one aspect of scanning. Similarly, Carlos talked about how he had more time to learn about new trends now that he wasn't working twelve-hour shifts in industry.

> There are things are things that I didn't have time to do in industry because there wasn't the demand for it, not the time for it. I was in a production setting. Here we have the time to do it, so I have bettered my skill since I have been here.

Again, the attentions of career education faculty were focused outside the community college more so than that of their liberal arts colleagues. Their involvement

with the workplace was critical to their understanding of curricular needs and to their efficacy as instructors.

Relationships Within the Institution

While the last section focused on the participants' continued connection to the "outside world" of the workplace, this section examines their relationships within the institution. This includes both their experiences as individuals within the college as well as their sense as part of the group of career education faculty.

Individual Relationships

People outside academia are often surprised that instructors often perceive themselves as isolated. Although faculty are regularly engaged with students, their contacts with colleagues can be limited. That was the reported experience of all the participants.

Several participants at Midwest Community College mentioned that their division chairs and assigned mentors were people to whom they turned for assistance, but the interactions seemed to be confined to solving specific problems. Also at Midwest, the teachers met regularly with their fellow department members. This varied from scheduled weekly meetings to lunches out to informal encounters. However, most of the departments were quite small, consisting of two or three teachers. Hallway conversations with faculty in nearby offices also occurred, but overall the number of interactions was limited. Matt told me that he communicated most frequently with the other instructor in the respiratory therapy program.

> And even that is once a week. It's not like an every day thing. My mentor who, she instructs in radiography. I see her about once a week. There a girl in physical

therapy. And we hired in at the same time and probably speak once a week or every other week.

The faculty at Multi-Campus Community College seemed, if anything, to have even fewer interactions. Henry said it was difficult to for his department to meet.

> No one can sit down and actually talk for an hour because as you are sitting, you are grading papers and doing triptiks and doing your taxes, and it is a tremendously problematic situation to sit down with six people and all be on the same page.

Carlos reported that the only people outside of his students that he regularly interacted with were his office partner and the adjunct faculty that he supervised. Similarly, Randy observed,

> Oh, if you are teaching a class you are alone. But I mean, just like, today, OK I see two or three instructors. Monday it will be different instructors around. Depending upon what their schedule is. And next semester will be totally different again because, it's like, well it's loads again. It's not like eight to five you are sitting next to each other every day. It's just, hey, it's this guy one day a week, twice a week.

As Randy noted, schedules were blamed for the lack of opportunities to build relationships. Matt pointed out, "If my class starts at eight and I don't come back down till two, unless they walk through my classroom, I'm not going to see them too much." The problem was compounded for the health careers faculty who had to spend some of their days off campus at clinical sites, further reducing opportunities for interactions with their colleagues.

Contact with teachers outside their departments, and particularly with faculty from the liberal arts departments, was even more restricted. Geographic separation played a role in this regard. Carlos said, "We are working isolated over here. The faculty that we see are the ones that come into the restaurant." In fact, geography and proximity seemed to be the prime determinants of faculty interactions. Conversations were more likely to occur around clusters of offices. Nicole observed, "So what I found, it tends to be not so much the who's in the division that you get to know each other, and we do because we meet monthly, but it's the little clusters seem to come from the halls." At Midwest Community College some of the office bays mixed faculty from different divisions, so that acquaintances were made across divisional boundaries. But for the most part the casual hallway conversations stayed within the discipline.

The primary avenues for meeting faculty outside their departments were committee meetings and workshops. Nicole said, "But I have found that until you get out there and actively working in some of these larger committees, it's hard to get to know people. A large institution, like I said, we are all kind of on our own track with varied schedules." Angela, in particular, extolled the advantages of committee involvement.

> So I have been on several different search committees the past three years. Really that is the only way you are going to learn the culture of the community college. Because when you come in and you get in your discipline, you get focused on doing your thing and then, before you know it, twenty years goes by, and you have just been in that one area. ... So it does give me an opportunity to learn how other divisions and other disciplines do things. And also to meet other people that

you might not normally meet, because we are all in the classroom. It is not often that we get a chance to do a whole lot of interacting outside of the classroom.

The participants who were not actively involved in committees had very little contact with faculty outside their departments or office areas.

Relationship with Liberal Arts Faculty

A sense of division between the career education and the liberal arts emerged from the conversations with the participants. As was discussed in the last section, there was little contact between these disparate faculty. Geographic separation on campus, conflicting schedules, and involvement in their own disciplines — all contributed to the disconnection between the two groups. Each of the participants commented on some aspect of the relationship between career and liberal arts education.

There was general consensus that the job of the career education faculty member was different from that of the liberal arts teacher. Matt stated flatly, "I know that they have a difficult job, and I know that it is almost completely different than my job, I think." Several of the participants felt that the liberal arts faculty had little understanding or awareness of the career education programs. Theresa noted this lack of awareness.

> I think there are a lot of people on the rest of the campus that have hardly ever been to that [technical] wing and don't know what goes on in that wing. People that teach in other divisions. ... I think a lot of them aren't even aware of what courses are offered over there.

Henry was particularly vocal about the differences between the career and general education programs. He felt that he understood the workings of the general education classes, but that understanding was not reciprocated.

> Yes, because everybody had to go to college to get here. So there is the unique thing, the fact that the person who teaches plumbing for most time has at least a journeyman's card or bachelor's degree. So at some time you had to attempt college to get a degree. Whereas the person who is teaching history certainly didn't have to come down and learn welding.

Participants identified some of the differences between the groups. Nicole discussed the advantages she felt she had as an occupational instructor.

> First of all, we have the same students and carry them through the program. Whereas the gen ed teachers, they have a group of students, half of them probably don't even know what they are doing yet. They don't have a focus to focus on, other than they have to get these students to learn what ever the class is. But I have a group of students and I have a focus, and that focus applies to every class that I teach. Yeah, in abdominal sonograpy my focus in on the abdomen and everything they need to know, but beyond that I am still trying to turn them into a sonographer.

Matt commented on how he works with the same group of students for two years and is able to develop relationships with them, in contrast to most liberal arts instructors who often have the students for only one semester. Ginny thought she benefited from having more hands on work in her instruction, making classes more inherently interesting.

> I think a lot of times it is much more difficult for them to convey what they need to teach than we do, because we have so much hands on. So I think it allows students a different mode of learning.

So although they sensed differences between their experiences and that of the liberal arts faculty, they saw advantages to their situation. Nicole summed it up. "I'm glad I'm on this side where I am a professional, but I am also teaching."

There was, however, a sharp contrast between the two campuses. At Midwest Community College the career education faculty felt themselves to be equal partners to their liberal arts counterparts. Theresa said, "I think we are accepted as equals for the most part. We are not looked on as just, oh just occupational people or something like that." They discussed how students in the career education programs had to take general education courses, thereby creating enrollment for the liberal arts departments and how essential the prerequisite skills were that their students gained in those classes. The bonds developed by working with liberal arts faculty on committees were noted. Theresa observed,

> But it is wonderful to have the relationship with the people from the other disciplines. And I think it makes us work well together. We always try on our committees, you know these ad hoc committees that I am working on for assessment, we try to get people from all these other disciplines. So it's nice to work with people from the other disciplines.

So although the participants at Midwest Community College noted differences between the career education and the liberal arts, they also saw the connections between the two groups within the institution.

At Multi-Campus Community College the tone was very different. Henry stated his perception bluntly.

> On the downside, if there is one, is the fact that, by and large, I don't think the tech areas are revered as being as good as the liberal arts. I think there is maybe, to use a term, a caste system — the lords and the commons if you will. There certainly is a split.

Other participants from Multi-Campus spoke of competition and division between the two groups. Carlos commented on that.

> Sometimes the college feels divided. It doesn't seem like everybody is working on the same ultimate goal or whatever. It seems that it is a little bit divided, that everybody is protecting their little, I don't know. That's the sense that I have when I go to different college things, or meetings or days that we have.

Some of this sense of status difference seemed to stem from the career education faculty themselves. Henry had originally intended to become a science teacher. He told me,

> I really didn't want to be a vocational teacher. Because I had done it so long in the field. It is not a glamorous profession. Maybe none of teaching is, but I think that some are better than others. And working in an industrial climate is usually less than clean. You've got a lot of grime and dirt and smoke. Obviously you see this room right here and it looks like a factory. Most of the time you come to work wearing work clothes rather than a suit and a tie. So there's certain impressions that I myself had, that I thought maybe it would be fun to go to the other side.

Both Carlos and Ginny were sensitive about their lack of academic credentials. Ginny noted similar feelings among her colleagues.

So I think from that standpoint that most of the career and tech ed faculty, unless they are degreed, highly degreed, whether it is a master's or PhD, they feel very, I don't want to say inadequate necessarily, but almost a chip on their shoulder where they have to prove themselves more to arts and sciences. And I do, I don't feel that I have to prove anything, but I do want to further my education so that I am not looked at being career and tech ed faculty. That makes it a little more uncomfortable.

The perception of competition between the liberal arts and the career education programs was heightened by the downturn in the economy. Ginny described the career education faculty as beleaguered.

Well, I would say right now, if I had to sum it up in one word, I would say discouraged and factioned. And that is one thing that we are really trying to overcome. It seems that with the way that the economy is going, it is really hard to stay positive. ... I think that everyone is very down, very, very down.

The different climates on the two campuses had an impact on the collaborations between faculty with regard to program offerings. At Midwest Community College Nicole described her need to have a physics class offered under different format for her program. She worked with a member of the physics department.

And he said, "You know, we are here to help you folks, your program in our specialty areas. That's what we're here for." And we worked out a schedule, and it is going to be very good. And I think that that is true, that we help each other out.

In contrast, at Multi-Campus Community College Ginny described a situation involving the liberal arts physics department and the pre-engineering program on the career education side. Both departments wanted to teach the statics and dynamics class.

> Physics got it and now everyone's got an attitude. I said we should put this in our program because that would help our students. No, no, no, we don't know if it is going to transfer and until they do something about it, we don't want it in our program. We are just shooting ourselves in the foot, and we are here for the students not for us. ... But I think the instructors just want a niche for themselves.

The distrust between the two groups resulted in a program that was less beneficial for the students.

The participants reported an initial sense of isolation when they began working at their colleges that was, for some, a contrast to their prior work experiences. Building relationships with colleagues and learning how to wend one's way through the informal social networks on campus is problematic for all new faculty, both liberal arts and career education. The difficulty is compounded for career education faculty, however, by schedules that include extended class sessions and off-site clinical assignments that offer fewer opportunities for informal meetings. When this is combined with the orientation of career education faculty toward the work world outside the college setting, it is easy to see how the career education faculty would have increased difficulty integrating into the fabric of campus life.

The participants at both schools perceived themselves as a collective entity distinct from that of the liberal arts faculty. And as a part of this group, they saw their work and roles to be different from that of the liberal arts faculty and largely not

understood by them. There was a qualitative difference between the perceptions of the teachers at the two campuses, however. The faculty at Multi-Campus Community College saw themselves to be in competition with the general education departments and relegated to the role of lower class citizens. At Midwest Community College the participants did not express the same degree of separation. This difference in cultures is significant because of the ramifications on college-wide issues that require collaboration.

Summary

In this chapter I have presented the experiences of the participants as relayed in our conversations. These experiences have been presented as four distinct general themes, but the themes are interrelated. Together they tell the story of the participants' lives as career education faculty and how they struggled to find their places within their colleges. The first theme, "Perceptions of Expectations," described their basic understandings of their roles and the variety of activities that fill their workdays. The path that led them from occupational practitioner to occupational teacher was discussed in the second section, "Development as Educational Professionals." The ways in which the participants' vocational backgrounds influenced their understandings of their roles and approaches to their work were covered in following section, "The Role of Occupation in Mediating Perspectives." The last theme, "Relationships Within the Institution," related the perceptions of some of the interpersonal dynamics that affected their work. Taken as a whole, the four themes paint a picture of teachers engaged in multiple activities, pragmatically oriented, outwardly directed, and unified by their distinct identity as career education practitioners.

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion and Implications

The intent of this study was to penetrate the lived experience as career education faculty of a small group of community college instructors. It began from the premise that these faculty shared some similar experiences and perspectives, and it aimed to identify those commonalities. And, as was seen in the last chapter, there were indeed many common themes that emerged from the interviews. Equally striking, and unexpected, were the differences in the experiences of the participants that were bound up in the cultures of their respective colleges. I begin this chapter by returning to the research questions posed at the start of this study and in the process summarize the underlying core of common experiences of the participants. I will then examine how socialization and structuration help us understand the commonalities and differences that emerged between the two campuses.

Research Questions

1. *What do career education faculty come to understand as their professional roles within community colleges?*

The short answer is that of teacher. And as teachers the participants perceived that their primary role was to prepare students for the world of work. The ultimate arbiter of career education faculty's success was their students' ability to measure up to employer and licensure demands and find employment.

In order to assure that their students had the skills mandated by the workplace, the faculty had to maintain contact with their vocational fields. Changing technologies and shifting job requirements can make programs obsolete in short order if faculty fail to note

market trends. This fostered in the career education faculty a fundamentally different perspective on their work than one might anticipate is held by their liberal arts counterparts. Whereas the liberal arts faculty have traditionally adhered to norms established within their disciplines and largely enforced by the colleges and universities to which their students transfer, in essence, standards internal to the educational enterprise, the career education faculty had to look outside academia for validation of their curriculum and programs.

This occupational lens had a number of ramifications for the work of the participants. They had to develop and nurture conduits to the workplace. Advisory boards and even adjunct faculty who have full-time jobs in industry became important sources of information about current practices and developments in the field. Some of the participants, especially those in the health careers, continued to work in their vocational fields on a part-time basis. They pursued this additional work not only for the added income but also to maintain currency within their occupations and credibility as instructors of those occupations.

Very direct links to the workplace had to be cultivated by the career education faculty who arranged and supervised clinical or apprenticeship experiences for their students. This was particularly true for the faculty in the health careers, but the faculty teaching in the industrial technology fields also had programs directly linked to industry.

In addition, the career education faculty tended to have a great deal of involvement with their students outside of class. Because their programs are elective, in contrast to most general education classes which are required for other programs or for transfer, career education faculty had a vested interest in actively recruiting students and

making sure that those students were properly advised. Recruiting activities took the career education faculty to high schools and businesses and again required them to engage with the world outside of their colleges. Once students were admitted to their programs, the faculty had continued contact with them through academic and career advising. The technical nature of their programs and their knowledge of the workplace made the advice of the career education faculty more valuable to students than that of general advisors. In addition, because the career education faculty focused on preparing their students for employment, their advice to students ranged beyond what is necessary to be successful in classes to what the students needed to be successful in their future jobs.

Although the primary role of the career education teacher is that of teacher, this role requires the instructor to wear many hats. Besides actively preparing and teaching classes, the career education teacher must serve as recruiter, advisor, and mentor for students and simultaneously must keep an eye on the steadily changing technologies and requirements of the marketplace. Although the participants in this study considered themselves now to be more teachers of their occupations than practitioners of their occupations, the role responsibilities did not allow the career education instructors to ignore their ties with the work world.

Within their colleges, the participants had clear allegiances to their particular programs. The extent to which they felt themselves to be an integral part of the larger college community, however, seemed to be function of personal preferences and campus milieu in keeping with the perspective of structuration theory that structures, such as

roles, result from the interaction between individual agency and institutional resources. This will be explored in greater detail in a latter section.

2. *In particular, how do career education faculty develop their understanding of their roles as teachers*?

The faculty's ideas about teaching were mostly based on their experiences prior to working at their colleges. A couple of the participants had intended to become teachers and had pursued education degrees. They had developed understandings of pedagogy, course management, and curriculum and had engaged in student teaching as part of their educational program. For the rest, however, teaching was a profession that they rather stumbled into along their career paths. Their initial teaching efforts were largely informed by their own experiences as students.

Adjunct instruction was the primary entryway into community college teaching for these teachers. For the health careers faculty this was mainly in a clinical setting where they had an opportunity to work with students on a more individual basis and hone their skills of direction and explication. The other participants found themselves rather abruptly thrust into a classroom with little or no time for preparation and minimal institutional support.

With no formal training and little direction from the college, the participants as new adjunct faculty had to rely on their own ideas about teaching. These ideas were based on their own learning experiences, in some cases actually using their class notes taken as students, and shaped by their vocational employment. Adjunct faculty are usually quite isolated within community colleges and have little contact with other

faculty. Consequently, there would have been few opportunities for the participants to discuss pedagogy and expand their views on teaching and learning.

Other than having had more experience in the classroom, the same set of circumstances prevailed when the participants became full-time faculty. Given this background, it is not surprising that the participants' description of their teaching practices, particularly as they recalled their first experiences, reflected a combination of transmission and apprenticeship perspectives (Pratt & Associates, 1998). The participants talked about their efforts to improve their delivery of information. They revised their classes by supplementing lectures with PowerPoint presentations, breaking the material into smaller "chunks," and being clearer about expectations. The teachers placed a high premium on maintaining their own content expertise. All are characteristics of the transmission perspective which is "primarily 'teacher centered' with an emphasis on first, what the teacher does in the process of teaching and second, how well the content has been planned, organized, represented, and transmitted" (Pratt & Associates, 1998, p. 41). This perspective is the most traditional approach to teaching and probably represents the bulk of the participants' experiences as students.

The second influence on the participants' teaching orientation was the apprenticeship perspective. Faculty were not only transmitting the subject matter but also were preparing their students to join the ranks of employed practitioners. They tried to inculcate in their students the values and practices of their occupational fields. Their former and, and in some cases, current work experiences in the occupation were viewed as important teaching credentials. Much of their classroom instruction involved modeling the particular skills of the occupation, followed by opportunities for the students to

practice the procedures. All these aspects are in keeping with Pratt's (1998) description of the apprenticeship perspective in which:

> Teachers are expected to embody the knowledge and values of their community of practice ... [and that] what they know (and wish to teach) cannot be learned in any authentic way if it is abstracted or removed from the place of its application, that is, its context. (pp. 43 – 44)

The teachers' previous employment and work orientation very likely heavily influenced their apprenticeship perspective.

For the most part, the participants did not modify their basic views about learning after they began working in academia. They improved their instrumental teaching skills, focusing on clearer delivery of their content and student management issues, but assumptions about how students learned went unexamined. This should not be unexpected because there were few prompts that would encourage the faculty to do so. Conversations with colleagues about teaching generally focused on resolving issues pertaining to students or aspects of course management or class presentations. Most of the feedback received by the participants was in the form of student course evaluations. While they did modify their practices based on these evaluations, the changes were instrumental, such as allowing students to retain tests or providing more opportunities for review.

Only two of the participants, Madeline and Nicole, talked about trying to foster "deep learning" in their students. In both instances it appeared that they had been motivated to explore their ideas about learning by professional development activities. In Madeline's case her coursework for a master's degree in education had clearly influenced

her thinking, while Nicole had benefited from professional development workshops offered at Midwest Community College, particularly a "Writing Across the Curriculum" course. Without such formal intervention, the participants maintained their basic orientations to teaching and learning.

Although curriculum integration is considered to be key to strengthening occupational education, the participants displayed limited involvement with it. At both schools curriculum integration was tied up with general education requirements for their programs. Because the teachers at Midwest Community College had to complete checklists for each course indicating which of the general education outcomes they addressed in that class, they were more conscious of incorporating liberal arts skills in their teaching. However, they viewed this as more of record keeping for activities already included in their classes, such as, written nursing plans, than as actual motivation to change their practices. The participants from Multi-Campus had even less involvement and believed that the liberal arts skills were and should be taught in the separate general education classes required of students for graduation.

The career education faculty displayed an orientation to teaching that combined the transmission and apprenticeship perspectives. Their basic understandings of teaching and learning were developed as students and then as practitioners of their occupations. Although their instrumental skills as teachers improved over time, primarily through trial and error, their basic ideas about learning were largely unchanged. The career education faculty also did not demonstrate a great deal of commitment to or even awareness of the sort of curriculum integration activities advocated by vocational education leaders.

3. *What events, actions, and interactions influence the sense-making process as career education faculty come to find their places within community colleges?*

The experience of the participants as adjunct faculty provided them an opportunity to gain confidence as teachers, but it did not prepare them for their roles as full-time teachers. Their first years were grueling experiences of long hours and hard work as they sorted through the various demands placed upon them. Several of the participants remarked that they would not have continued in the job if subsequent years were like the first.

New faculty in four-year colleges and universities are often not given much direction and have a fair amount of autonomy in adjusting to the new job (Boice, 1992; Dunn, Rouse, & Seff, 1994; Rosch & Reich, 1996), and the experiences of the participants at their community colleges were similar. The colleges did have some formal structures that helped the faculty make sense of their new jobs. Both colleges had instituted new faculty orientation sessions, although many of the participants had been hired before the programs were in place. All the participants, even the ones who did not attend, viewed these orientations as very helpful to the new employees. Not only did the faculty learn about the organizational structure of the college and reviewed matters related to tenure, but they also had an opportunity to meet other new teachers.

The orientations, however, provided a global description of the roles and responsibilities of the new faculty members and still left unanswered the myriad questions that the participants had about the day-to-day activities that made up their work lives. At Midwest Community College the department chairs and appointed mentors helped to address some of the new teachers' concerns, but the participants had to be

assertive about finding out the specifics of their work. Office partners, colleagues in nearby offices, and fellow department members were the primary sources of information about classroom matters, student issues, and the mechanics of their jobs. These relationships were of particular significance to the participants at Multi-Campus Community College where there were no formally appointed mentors and the department chairs had less direct involvement.

Tenure is a source of much concern and confusion for new faculty at four-year colleges and universities (Tierney & Bensimon, 1996). The participants in this study did not express much concern or confusion, but the requirements for tenure and promotion did shape their understanding of their roles. Because both tenure and promotion reviews at Midwest Community College evaluated an instructor's contributions to the college and professional development activities in addition to teaching performance, the participants there undertook committee work and were engaged in graduate study or on-campus faculty development workshops. They viewed these activities as part of their work responsibilities. Neither professional development nor college contributions of teachers were evaluated for tenure at Multi-Campus Community College, and faculty received no additional compensation for participating in either. This reward structure may not been the cause, but none of the participants from Multi-Campus viewed professional development or college involvement as a required part of their work. Several did participate in such activities but did so because of their own interests.

Like all new employees, the career education faculty had to clarify the organizational expectations of their new positions and determine how to accomplish their duties. Intentional and planned strategies in the form of orientation programs, formal

mentoring, and administrative assistance helped the faculty become acclimated to their new environments. However, the informal conversations in the office hallways or between departmental members provided the nuts and bolts information that the new faculty needed to understand and enact their roles.

Although the same conditions and strategies for organizational entry undoubtedly apply to all faculty, one might expect that the career education faculty would have a more difficult time adjusting to the educational environment since their prior employment had, for the most part, been in a non-academic setting. However, the participant reactions differed by campus. The teachers at Midwest Community College noted differences between their previous and current work environments and welcomed the changes that academia had brought to their work lives. At Multi-Campus Community College the participants also appreciated the flexibility and autonomy afforded by the college but chafed at the lack of teamwork and slow pace of business that they experienced. So the adjustment issues may be more related to the college context than to the prior background of the new employees.

4. *What are the particular issues and challenges that career education faculty face in understanding and enacting their roles?*

The career education faculty did face some issues that were unique to their roles. Teaching classes that were part of an occupational program had some inherent benefits but also carried with it some challenges. Unlike many of the general education courses, students were not required to take the occupational classes unless they were enrolled in the program. Consequently, the career education teachers reported that their students were generally more motivated since they saw the direct application of the course

material to their future plans. However, the lack of guaranteed enrollment meant that the career education faculty's programs, and, concomitantly, their jobs were subject to shifts in the economy and local changes in employment opportunities.

The elective nature of their programs had several implications. First, the career education faculty had to actively recruit students. But more significantly, they had to maintain the attractiveness of their programs by ensuring that the curriculum met the requirements of employers and certificating organizations. The faculty had to contend with technology, processes, and external expectations that in most areas were steadily changing. This meant that they not only had to continually upgrade their own skills and revise curriculum, but more fundamentally they had to develop linkages to the workplace outside their colleges. These contacts were the sources for information about current needs, practices, and requirements of employers.

The career education faculty were in the position of having many audiences to serve and satisfy. All college faculty have to provide learning experiences that meet the needs of their students. But in addition to these duties, the career education faculty also had to determine the current demands of employers and then adjust their curriculum accordingly; find clinical sites for their students and then assure that the clinical site staff were happy with the arrangements; and comply with the demands of accrediting agencies and prepare students adequately for licensure exams. All of the additional obligations pushed the focus of career education faculty toward the outside of their colleges.

This outward perspective was a reoccurring theme in the work lives of the career education faculty. In a sense the faculty had feet in both worlds — the vocational workplace and academia. The longer that the participants were at their colleges, the more

they identified as teachers as opposed to occupational practitioners. But their outward orientation remained of necessity.

The outward perspective was also reflected in the values about curriculum held by the career education faculty. They judged curricular relevance on the basis of its contribution to the future employability of their students. They tried to incorporate the newest techniques, procedures, and tools used in industry. They introduced new topics into their courses to prepare students for changing requirements of licensure exams. The significance of a particular topic was judged pragmatically by its applicability to work skills.

The new career education faculty had to negotiate the challenges of finding their place within their schools largely on their own. Several participants noted how much less interaction they had with their collegiate coworkers than at their previous employment. This appears to be a common feature of academia, as new faculty at four-year schools and universities also complain of isolation (Boice, 1992; Sorcinelli, 1992; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996).

All new community college faculty share common challenges as they settle into their new roles. They have to prepare to teach new classes, develop skills for handling student issues, and learn the policies and procedures of their new institutions. And based on this study it appears that at least the career education faculty are given little direct guidance and supervision by college administration and have somewhat limited collegial interaction. They have the added challenge of integrating the external demands that their occupations bring to bear on their curricula and programs. In addition, their vocational perspective puts them at odds with the traditional values of the liberal arts. These

differences lay the groundwork for a natural division between the career education and liberal arts faculty. The extent to which the divide was bridged differed at Midwest Community College and Multi-Campus Community College.

The next two sections will explore how the commonalities and differences between the two campuses emerged. I will first focus on the process by which the faculty adjusted to their new campuses using socialization theory as a guide. Socialization, however, emphasizes how the similarities of their perspectives arose, so I will then turn to structuration theory for insights into the differences.

Socialization and the Commonalities

Researchers have studied the process by which people become acclimated to new work environments using the construct of socialization. Louis (1980) defined organizational socialization as "the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member" (pp. 229-230). The lens of socialization brings into focus many of the key events and interactions that affected the meaning-making of the career education faculty as they found their niches in their new schools. Although most of the published research about faculty socialization in higher education has been limited to the experiences of faculty at four-year colleges and universities (e.g., Corcoran & Clark, 1984; Olsen & Crawford, 1998; Reybold, 2003; Rosch & Reich, 1996; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996), it provides a framework with which to examine the experience of the career education faculty.

Analysis of the socialization process led early theorists to propose stage models for organizational socialization (Feldman, 1976, 1981; Graen, 1976; Jones, 1983;

Thornton & Nardi, 1975). These models have enjoyed widespread acceptance as conceptual frameworks, although they do not have the empirical backing to qualify as truly predictive models (Bauer, Morrison, & Callister, 1998). The models show remarkable similarities, all essentially defining three stages of socialization. The first stage, anticipatory, covers the period of time and all the activities leading up to the point when the employee actually joins the organization. The entry or encounter stage begins when the newcomer actually becomes a member of the organization. The final stage is variously named by the theorists and involves a long-term process of role management or adaptation. Although these stages are presented as sequential, there is not a clear demarcation between the last two.

During the anticipatory stage the individual develops perceptions and expectations about the new role and begins to adopt values and attitudes associated with the new reference group. Researchers who apply stage theory to faculty in four-year colleges and universities focus on graduate school as the primary component of anticipatory socialization (Austin, 2002; Rosch & Reich, 1996; Tierney & Bensimon, 1996; Tierney & Rhoads, 1993). Graduate schools not only develop the disciplinary knowledge and skills of the students, but also expose them to the values and attitudes of academia. However, this was not the case for the career education faculty. Most had not attended graduate school prior to working at their colleges, and a few only had associate degrees.

The events more relevant to the anticipatory socialization of the career education faculty were their experiences in the workplace as vocational practitioners and teaching as adjunct faculty. The career education faculty's knowledge and skills were honed on the

job, and the values and attitudes to which they were exposed were that of the workplace, not academia. The faculty came to the community college predisposed for an outwardly directed, occupationally oriented perspective.

For most of the participants, their introduction to an academic career was as an adjunct faculty member. The amount of direction and support offered to them was startlingly scant, particularly considering their lack of prior training or experience as teachers. Participants described being handed little more than a text and course outline and then expected to begin teaching the class that evening or the next day. When asked what information she had been given when she first started as an adjunct instructor, Ginny responded,

> This is the book. They literally handed the book to me. And unfortunately, and it was quite a shock, the textbook was the book that they sent out to anybody who ordered the software. It was a very thin manual and it was horrible, absolutely horrible. ... They didn't give me a syllabus, I mean nothing. Literally, here is the book.

Some of the health careers faculty had a somewhat more gentle entry into teaching as clinical instructors where they had supervisory responsibilities for a few students but still continued their regular jobs in the clinical settings. In neither situation, however, was there ever any discussion of the aims or techniques of teaching. Once hired, adjunct faculty had minimal interaction with supervisors or other instructors. Angela described her experience as an adjunct faculty member at Midwest Community College.

> When you are here as an adjunct, you are here at night. You don't see a whole lot of people. So if you are fresh off the block with no experience, it is sort difficult to find out about what you need, to find out about different resources.

These experiences as adjunct faculty members began to shape their perceptions and expectations about teaching and the faculty role. Given the limited direction or supervision that they received, it would be easy for them to infer that the school considered them well qualified for the position and, consequently, that experience in the workplace must be a sufficient credential for teaching. Also, there was little to suggest that the institution expected anything more from their instruction than clear transmission of the course content. They were given no evidence that other modes of instruction existed and should be explored. Finally, since the adjunct faculty had limited opportunity to interact with and observe the full-time teachers, there was little to counteract their experience that that faculty work consists solely of class preparation and delivery.

Once the new employee formally joins an organization, the perceptions formed during anticipatory socialization are put to the test. During the encounter stage newcomers try to clarify their roles, establish new interpersonal relationships, and make sense of their new surroundings (Feldman, 1981; Van Maanen, 1977). As noted earlier, the newcomer to academia typically operates with a high degree of autonomy and is given very little direction (Boice, 1992; Dunn et al., 1994; Rosch & Reich, 1996).

Formal orientation programs typically emphasize pragmatic issues such as insurance benefits and college policies and tacitly assume that the new faculty have mastered the skills associated with teaching and organizational membership prior to entry. The new teacher academies at both schools were extended programs that stretched

out over the course of a year but still focused on the structural aspects of the organizations, leaving many of the day-to-day operational questions unanswered.

When formal socialization efforts are minimal, employees have to be more proactive in seeking information about their new positions, and the influence of their immediate workgroups become more significant (Dunn et al., 1994). Such was the experience of the participants in this study, particularly at Multi-Campus Community College where division chairs played a less active role in orienting the new faculty than at Midwest Community College. Ginny talked about her "research" efforts to learn more about her job and school when she started working at Multi-Campus.

> It was really a lot of, you know, just trying to gather information and being in a sense a researcher and finding out from the various areas of the college finding out what I could and couldn't do. And there were a lot of times I got burned, not realizing that that wasn't the proper protocol or the proper way of handling it. But majority of it was definitely just by struggling through it and trying to find the answers on your own.

Office partners, departmental colleagues, and teachers with nearby offices were the prime sources of the day-to-day information the new teachers needed to understand their jobs. Because these people were typically members of their own departments or other occupational programs, the perspectives shared were those of other career education faculty. This is useful for learning about the specific functions of their jobs, such as recruiting, advising, and advisory committees, but also contributes to their insularity within the college and promotes the prevailing orientations of their colleagues to the college, roles, and instruction.

In the final stage of socialization, adaptation or embeddedness, new employees become fully integrated into the organization. During this stage the newcomer completes mastery of the tasks of his or her job, adjustment to the norms and values of the new organization, and resolution of any role conflicts (Feldman, 1981). Chao et. al. (1994) identified six content areas of socialization: performance proficiency; people, in terms of establishing satisfying work relationships; politics, that is understanding the formal and informal power structure; language particular to both the profession and to the institution; organizational goals and values; and organizational history. These six areas offer a means for gauging the movement of the new employee from "outsider" to "insider."

Researchers have not defined specific behaviors or indicators that signal the passage from encounter to adaptation. Nevertheless, researchers have tended to apply a three to six month time frame to the encounter stage (Jablin, 2001). In the case of higher education a longer time appears to be needed. The shorter span is perhaps more applicable to situations where job expectations are more clearly defined and more supervision is provided than is the case for faculty. The teachers in this study reported that their first year on the job was spent in a frenzy of class preparation from which there was little time to learn about or participate in other job-related activities. Even after two years, the participants were still sorting out their responsibilities and roles. Andy described how he figured out his job duties after several years.

> OK, well then I hear, like you go up to your division meetings, and they are talking about involvement in college committees and all this stuff and how it's required and how you need to be at commencement two out of three years. And I'm like, wow who told you all this stuff and how did you know this? So, some of

it is, you find out the longer you are in the system, the more you find out. Oh, I was supposed to be doing that? Or, oh, that was an expectation or that was a requirement? And so sometimes you find these things out by accident. I was informed of some of the things, like when I was hired, but I had no idea what they were really taking about.

The process of moving to full integration within the college took a number of years. In this study the participants all identified more as teachers than as occupational practitioners, so all had moved closer to "insider." However, the participants who had been working full-time at their colleges for a little more than two years still were not fully embedded. In terms of the six content areas of socialization, this group had made great progress in the spheres of performance proficiency, language, organizational values and goals, and history. Notably, though, they were just starting to develop relationships outside of a narrowly defined group within the institution. Madeline described how few people she had met during her first couple of years of employment.

I've had great difficulty even getting out of this office, getting out of, you know. When you say my connection with other people outside of my department, there's a man over here that I talk to, and there's a kid over here that I talk to. And that's about all. There's my committee that hasn't met yet. And then there are our division meetings, but those are all people that are within our division. So I know them, but that's in our division. But outside in the college I have met very, very few people.

Undoubtedly because of these limited relationships, they also had a restricted understanding of the college politics. The other participants who had been employed four

or more years had a much clearer sense of their roles, their places within the institution, and the people and politics that surrounded them. Based on this I would estimate the time required for faculty to move past the encounter stage to be a minimum of a year and closer to four years for full integration.

These socialization stages as useful analytic tools, but this perspective of socialization emphasizes the efforts of the organization to mold and shape the newcomer to the norms and values of the group. This implies that there is one set of values, behaviors, and social knowledge that is generally understood, and that the culture that these values, behaviors, and knowledge reflect is immutable and should not be questioned with regard to its legitimacy (Tierney, 1997; Trowler & Knight, 1999). Antony refers to this perspective as an assimilation and congruence orientation to socialization that "requires the internalization or adoption of a profession's norms, values and ethics so that the neophyte's own professional identity and self image are defined by them. This internalization or adoption is, in reality, described as a replacement of one's own norms and values with those of the field one aspires to enter" (Antony, 2002, p. 368). Instead, these theorists argue that not only does the newcomer change during socialization, but the organization also changes as a result of the newcomer's experiences, beliefs, and ideas. Tierney (1997) writes, "Culture is not waiting 'out there' to be discovered and 'acquired' by new members. The coherence of an organization's culture derives from the partial and mutually dependent knowledge of each person caught in the process and develops out of the work they do together" (p.6).

The fact that some distinct differences emerged in the perspectives of the teachers at the two campuses illustrates that there is not one overarching set of values adopted by

career education faculty and that individual agency plays a part in the development of their understanding of their roles. Structuration is a theory that explains how the interaction between the organizational structure and the agency of individuals combine to create new structures. Whereas the stage theory of socialization helps to account for the similarities in the perspectives of the participants, structuration is a tool that can be used to analyze the source of the differences.

Structuration and the Differences

The participants shared many commonalities in their understanding about their work and roles as career education faculty. However, between the two campuses there was a rather sharp contrast in their perceptions about some dimensions of their responsibilities and their integration into their colleges.

When asked to describe a colleague that they considered to be productive, all the participants at Multi-Campus Community College told about faculty members who were committed to their programs and engaged in activities that strengthened the programs. At Midwest each of the participants responded to the same question by describing a fellow teacher who not only contributed to his or her program but also was actively involved in a variety of campus-wide activities and committees. The difference in the responses of the two groups reflected how they situated themselves within their colleges.

At Multi-Campus Community College all the participants commented on the lack of cooperation between departments and even among the faculty within their own programs. The gulf between the vocational programs and the liberal arts departments seemed wide. The participants expressed opinions of the liberal arts faculty that ranged from irritation, for example, Henry's sense of a "caste system" and characterization of the

liberal arts faculty as the "lords," to complete disengagement. The career education faculty were wholly focused on their own programs and felt no pressure to join college committees.

In contrast, the teachers at Midwest Community College considered college committee involvement to be a regular part of their job responsibilities. Each was a member of at least one and in most cases several college-wide committees, and a couple of participants were the chairs of committees. They were committed to their individual programs, but they were also connected to the college as a whole. The differences between them and the liberal arts faculty did not seem so great. Although they felt that their work was distinct from that of the liberal arts faculty and perhaps not understood by them, the Midwest participants saw themselves as equal partners within the college and the two groups as fulfilling complementary roles. Theresa commented, "I think we are accepted as equals for the most part. We are not looked on as just, oh just occupational people or something like that." The proposal to make an hour of lab equivalent to an hour of traditional class time in the computation of instructor load that was debated during the time that I visited the campus illustrates this point. Although the discussion surrounding the proposal was emotional at times and pointed to some differences in perceptions about the nature of laboratory and clinical teaching, the faculty did vote to make the hours equivalent. This agreement, which meant that all faculty had to forego an already agreed upon raise, was affirmation of the equal status of the two groups.

How is it that the faculty at the two institutions, facing many of the same challenges and constraints, having similar backgrounds and motivations, could position themselves so differently within their schools? Why do relationships within the two

schools differ? Structuration, used as an interpretive framework, can help to explain the differences between the two campuses.

In structuration theory, Giddens (1979; 1984) defines structure as the rules and resources that enable and constrain action. Rules are of two types: procedural and normative. Procedural rules specify how action is to be performed. Normative rules are the conventions that describe what constitutes appropriate behavior. Resources also are broken into two categories: authoritative and allocative. Authoritative resources have to do with issues of power, while allocative refers to material resources such as raw materials, technology, and consumer goods. Using this characterization, role definitions, tenure and promotion policies, and even the climate of interaction that affects relationships within the college fall into the category of structure.

In traditional theories, organizational structures are viewed as defining constraints on human behavior while interpretivist theories focus on individual agency as the primary determinant. Structuration theory spans these two perspectives by viewing structure as the recursive product of social interactions. Structure is both the medium that guides the activities and interactions of people and also the outcome of those actions and interactions (Giddens, 1984). This means that while there are social structures — traditions, moral codes, established ways of doing things, and for our purposes, roles — that guide the actions and interactions of people, these very same structures get their meaning and validity from their use in interactions and can be changed when people begin to ignore them or interpret them differently. Structures themselves are not reified, but exist in their "instantiation," their use.

Agency, or individual action, is both enabled and constrained by structure. People draw upon their knowledge of local contexts and their knowledge of the understandings of others in formulating their actions. Giddens (1984) stratification model distinguishes among three levels of cognition and motivation. The highest level of awareness, discursive consciousness, represents that which people are able to verbalize. Practical consciousness includes the implicit knowledge that people act upon but may not be able to articulate. At the lowest level are unconscious motives about which even awareness has been suppressed.

The stratification model also points to three processes that form the basis for the recursive nature of human social activities. First, people maintain a reflexive monitoring of action in which they "not only monitor continuously the flow of their activities and expect others to do the same for their own; they also routinely monitor aspects, social and physical, of the contexts in which they move" (Giddens, 1984, p. 5). Second, people are able to provide rationalizations for their actions and generally maintain a theoretical understanding of the basis of their activities. Finally, at the root of action is the motivation that prompts it. Motivation, often unconscious, provides the general plan of action but generally does not prompt the everyday, individual actions. These processes and the levels of cognition enable individual agency but also create barriers to totally random acts.

Turning the lens of structuration upon the different reward systems at the two campuses yields insights into the organizational dynamics of each. At Midwest Community College the written tenure and promotion policies were part of the Senate Handbook. The procedures specified that teachers would be evaluated on the basis of

teaching, professional development, and college contributions. The policy gained its power, however, from the meaning the faculty attached to it. All of the Midwest participants told me about conversations they had about the tenure and promotion procedures. They discussed it at the new teachers' academy, sought preparation advice from their department chairs, asked for clarification about requirements from their colleagues, and shared the stories of their experiences with other faculty. Angela told me about her efforts to figure out what was expected of her for promotion and tenure.

> I'm still trying to figure them out. No, you get mixed views. You just kind have sit down and talk to people. And actually when you are going through the process, you find the people that are willing to tell you their story if you approach them. And everybody has a different story. Everybody talks a little bit differently about how their promotion and tenure process went. So just learning from other people's mistakes.

It was out of these discussions that the promotion and tenure "structure" evolved.

This structure shaped the perceptions that the faculty at Midwest Community College had about their roles with regard to institutional contributions and professional development. It was clear to all the participants that college-wide committee involvement was an important part of their college responsibilities. Madeline told me that she realized that she needed to become more active in activities outside her division. She advised other new faculty to arrange their teaching schedules to accommodate the Wednesday afternoon college meetings because these activities comprised a third of the promotion and tenure evaluations. Given the meaning attached to the tenure and promotion

"structure," it is not surprising that the participants from Midwest Community College included active college involvement in their descriptions of a productive colleague.

Similarly, the Midwest teachers considered professional development to be another aspect of their work. Not only did they participate in campus workshops and seminars, but most were also pursuing additional degrees. Matt told me that he did not plan to seek tenure until he completed his master's degree because departmental colleagues had told him the degree would be necessary. Through the activities and interactions of the participants, the "structure" of role at Midwest gained the dimensions of college involvement and professional development.

The tenure policy and advancement policies at Multi-Campus Community College were quite different from those at Midwest. As specified by contract, teachers could achieve tenure after three years based on an annual review by a probationary committee comprised of two faculty members and one administrator. The committee determined the criteria on which the new faculty member was evaluated. College involvement and professional development did not figure formally into the tenure evaluation. There was no provision for post-tenure promotion, and salary increments were accrued based on years of service.

The Multi-College teachers attached much different meaning to the tenure "structure" than did the teachers at Midwest. Whereas all the Midwest participants referred to tenure and promotion in our conversations, it was given much less salience by the participants at Multi-Campus Community College. Ginny recounted how the peer evaluation was completed perfunctorily without any actual classroom observations.

Under the influence of the tenure and promotion "structure" at Midwest, college involvement and professional development became part of the role definition of the teachers there. At Multi-Campus these dimensions were not part of the tenure "structure," and they did not figure into the role definition of the teachers.

Giddens (1984) identified three processes, reflexive monitoring, rationalization, and motivation, that contributed to the recursive nature of human interactions. The influence of these processes on the actions of the participants concerning professional development was evident. The participants at both schools had discursive awareness of the norms regarding professional development. Both administrations encouraged such activities. At Midwest Community College the participants were aware that their colleagues were engaged in professional development and were conscious of collegial pressure to participate themselves. They explained that their involvement, particularly with regard to pursuing additional degrees, was necessary to satisfy requirements for tenure and promotion, and they were undoubtedly motivated by the desire to achieve tenure or promotion with its attendant benefits of increased pay and status.

The participants at Multi-Campus Community College also monitored the actions of their colleagues, only here as Ginny said, "the famous words on the street is that 'he's [the associate dean] not my boss. I don't have a boss. I am an individual, and I run by our contract, by the union.'" The teachers participated in professional development activities as a matter of personal inclination, and the disincentive mentioned by several participants for pursuing additional degrees was the lack of institutional monetary support and reward. Ginny commented on that fact.

> I really would like to go back and get my education degree. And I would say the biggest deterrent to that is probably the college, in that sense we don't have any, we don't get a raise in pay. Not that it is pay motivated, but they also don't support furthering your education. There isn't any sort of tuition reimbursement.

The differing role "structures," the inclusion of college involvement and professional development at Midwest and not at Multi-Campus, contributed to the different climates of interaction between the career education and liberal arts faculty at the two schools. The participants from Midwest Community College simply had more contact with liberal arts faculty because of their committee work and through this work had opportunities to work toward common goals. There was a context for interactions between the two groups resulting in better understanding of each other.

Without regular involvement with the liberal arts faculty, the distrust and program insularity experienced by the Multi-Campus participants were not challenged. Also, some of their feelings of lesser status might be attributed to their lack of participation in professional development activities, particularly with regard to continued collegiate and graduate work. The professional development activities of the Midwest faculty, on the other hand, were likely to enhance their sense of professionalism and contribute to their sense of equal footing with the liberal arts faculty.

Implications

Teaching and learning is at the heart of the mission of all community colleges, and colleges ideally should be organized to foster deep learning on the part of their students. Both research and policy initiatives have provided guidelines for approaches that would strengthen education. In the last three or four decades research has revealed

much about how people learn with important implications for teaching. For example, researchers have found that teachers can promote deep learning by covering fewer topics in greater depth, and that teachers need to provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress and mastery of concepts because metacognition is an essential component of learning (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000). In the arena of occupational education, almost all policy initiatives in the last decade have advocated approaches that integrate technical education with traditional academics in order to foster broader literacy and thinking skills. Unfortunately, structural constraints in community colleges make implementation of these ideas about teaching and learning difficult for all faculty, and for career education faculty in particular.

The image that emerges from this study is of a group of career education faculty who are engaged in multiple activities — curriculum development and revision, student recruiting and advising, clinical or lab maintenance and supervision, cultivating and sustaining links to the workplace, and, of course, teaching. These activities are performed against a backdrop of changing technologies and externally mandated directives. The career education faculty have been thrust into an academic setting with little or no preparation for the role and of necessity maintain a pragmatic and outwardly directed perspective on their work.

Given the sheer complexity of their responsibilities and their limited preparation for collegiate work, the degree to which the career education faculty adapted to their new roles was remarkable. They displayed an enthusiasm for teaching, commitment to their programs, and concern for their students that their colleges can point to with pride.

Nevertheless, there are clear impediments that inhibit fundamental changes in the modes of teaching and learning within the career education classrooms.

Employer demands and licensure requirements limit the flexibility of career education faculty to adapt curriculum to better accommodate their students' learning needs. Learning theory may suggest that deeper learning would be possible if students covered fewer topics, but eliminating subject areas is difficult when faculty know that those topics are included on the national licensure exams or that local employers will only hire graduates who have those skills. And the broad spread of required topics and skills that their students need discourages faculty from experimenting with new activities, such as reflective exercises to enhance metacognition. New activities appear to diminish already too short instructional time.

Curricular demands and class time constraints are not the only barriers to changes in pedagogical modes. Faculty generally are not aware of the findings and recommendations of the new science of learning. The career education faculty are by no means alone in this regard, but their relatively limited formal educational background compounds the problem. Few of the participants in this study had taken education coursework. Most did not have a graduate degree when they started teaching, and a couple had only associate degrees. Their prior experience working in their occupational fields gave them expertise in their subject matter but did not provide insights into pedagogy. Once hired as teachers, the press of responsibilities and the multiple demands on their time left little room for exploration of alternate pedagogies. Their more immediate concern was maintaining currency with the changing technologies and procedures within their disciplines. Again, let me hasten to repeat that the same could be

said of the liberal arts faculty. Liberal arts faculty, however, are more likely to have graduate degrees and, consequently, more exposure to the norms and practices of academia.

Finally, there is the matter of integration. The career education faculty themselves feel that they form a distinct group within the college, and that their work is not really understood by the larger community. This separate identity seems to stem from the differences in some of their responsibilities, their occupational perspective on education, and their outward orientation to the college. The existence of distinct subgroups within the community college is not a problem in and of itself. It becomes problematic when the boundaries between groups are not permeable, and distrust and territorialism mark interactions between the groups. Working relationships built on mutual respect can only help the institution achieve its goals. Bragg and Reger (2000) note how lack of collaboration is an impediment to curriculum integration.

> Problems with transferring applied academics courses and reluctance to commit institutional resources to support collaboration between academic and vocational faculty are indicative of deeper underlying differences. Political and organizational structures that separate the liberal arts for transfer from vocational-technical education for work, curricular approaches reinforced by external agencies, and the traditional distribution of time, space, and money all work together to perpetuate the schism between academic education and vocational education. Until these larger forces over which individual faculty have little control are recognized, it will be difficult to move beyond rhetoric calling for more integration. (pp. 265 – 266)

Collaborative working relationships require both liberal arts and career education faculty to understand the perspectives and work of the other and to appreciate the contributions made by the other group to the college's mission. It does not mean that either group must adopt the values and norms of the other. The faculty at Midwest Community College illustrated that this was possible. Lack of cooperation between the two groups ultimately affects student learning as was the case with the statics and dynamics course at Multi-Campus Community College. The pre-engineering program, and the students enrolled in it, suffered because the faculty could not agree on which faculty group would be responsible for teaching the course.

The structural organization issues faced by the faculty in this study — external curricular demands, limited formal educational background, multiple responsibilities, and potential isolation as a group — suggest a variety of institutional responses that would support the career education faculty in their work and strengthen the education offered at community colleges. These suggestions are grouped in terms of applicability to the staff responsible for faculty development, the department chairs, and the senior administrative officers of community colleges.

First of all, two areas relevant to staff in charge of faculty development are apparent from this study — new teacher orientations and workshops on various aspects of pedagogy. Community colleges are complex organizations that can be confusing and overwhelming for all new faculty. The new teacher orientations that both schools in this study instituted provided the faculty needed and welcomed assistance in acclimating to their new jobs. If already not doing so, schools should implement programs that introduce new faculty to organizational expectations, policies, and personnel. The orientations did

not address all the initial uncertainties of the faculty, however. They sought the assistance of colleagues for the multitude of questions that arose on a daily basis. Schools can facilitate this process by formalizing mentoring offered by supervisors and peers.

Learning how to teach was a particular concern for the career education faculty since most had previously been employed outside academia. Without other influences, the faculty tended to teach as they had been taught, relying on traditional transmission approaches. Professional development programs that introduce faculty to different pedagogical strategies and promote reflection about matters of teaching and learning are needed to reshape instructional paradigms. Community colleges pride themselves on being teaching institutions. Yet, if this claim is to be staked on quality and not just quantity, the institutions will have to be deliberate in nurturing it.

Department chairs play a critical role in supporting and guiding the work of their faculty. Career and technical education administrators need to mentor new faculty and to support teaching improvement and curriculum reform. However, many of these men and women are themselves drawn from the ranks from the career education faculty and do not have a strong grounding in pedagogy and curriculum reform. Ginny recounted a conversation in which she asked her dean if he would provide her some feedback on her teaching.

> On the other hand, talking candidly with our dean, he said, "I'm not an educator either. I can come in and tell you if you are projecting your voice properly or getting your point across. But in terms of actual teaching methods, I don't have anything to compare it to."

Department chairs need to avail themselves of professional development activities so that they can advocate for pedagogical practices and curricular reform that will strengthen student learning.

Almost all the participants started as adjunct faculty. This initial teaching experience was marked with little time for preparation and minimal support from the colleges. Department chairs should develop better support mechanisms for adjunct faculty. Adjunct faculty ought to be included in orientation programs, offered opportunities to engage with full-time instructors, and encouraged to explore different teaching perspectives. Adjunct faculty warrant this attention not only because they teach a substantial percentage of the classes at most community colleges, but also since many of the new full-time faculty are drawn from the ranks of the adjunct faculty. With large numbers of community college faculty reaching retirement age, the need for new teachers to replace them will be increasing. A pool of qualified and experienced adjunct faculty will serve colleges well.

Finally, senior administrative officers need to address the barriers to professional development and faculty integration. Given the press of their multiple responsibilities, teachers are not likely to devote much time to reflection of their teaching beliefs and practices unless structures exist that reinforce the significance of such activities. The old adage, "if you build it, they will come," does not seem to apply to professional development programs. For career education faculty to include continued professional development as part of their role definition, it appears to be important to build incentives for such into the reward structure. Without institutional inducements, faculty participation in these activities becomes a matter of personal options and interests. In addition to

improving instruction, continued professional development has the added advantage of potentially enhancing the career education teacher's professional self-image as an academic.

Senior administrators should also examine ways to encourage collaboration between the faculty groups at their institutions. While the differences between the career education faculty and the liberal arts teachers are probably inherent to their situations, the extent to which these differences cause a rift between the two groups is not a given. The faculty at Midwest Community College achieved an amicable, if somewhat distant, working relationship with their liberal arts counterparts. This rapprochement seemed to stem from their contact in college wide committees and activities. But as was also evident from the experiences at the two colleges, integration does not occur automatically. Colleges will need to provide some of the structures, such as incentives built into the reward system, that will provide the prompts for collaborative interactions between the two faculty groups. Community colleges have a daunting educational mission. Achieving one aspect of it, preparation of students to enter the sub-baccalaureate labor market, will require the creative efforts of the entire college.

Career education programs that address the latest job requirements are important for preparing students for the current job market. With the rapid changes affecting the workforce brought on by new technologies and globalization, however, the real challenge is equipping students with the education and skills they will need for tomorrow's job market. Without forward facing education, students will be caught up in a cycle of training and retraining. If colleges intend to address the changes in occupational education advocated by researchers and policy makers, such as curriculum integration,

administrators will have to be proactive in initiating the discussion of teaching aims and methods.

Limitations

This research sought to clarify how a number of career education faculty at two community colleges came to understand their professional roles. It provided much information about this particular faculty group, but this study does not purport to generalize to all career education faculty in community colleges. The faculty were drawn from two large community colleges set in population centers of a midwestern state, so their experiences may not be comparable to those of faculty at geographically and demographically different colleges. At Multi-Campus Community College, an administrator initially contacted the teachers, and so the selection of participants from that institution may have been tainted. The participants in the study also may not be typical of other career education faculty, even at their own institutions. Finally, all the participants were relatively new to full-time community college teaching, having been employed full-time between two and six years at the point that I interviewed them. This was by design in order to determine the formative stages of faculty role development. However, it is reasonable that faculty might come to different understandings about their roles as they progress through their careers. I might have had different results if I had included faculty who had a longer histories at their colleges.

As a phenomenological study, this research was designed to illuminate the essences and meanings career education faculty attach to their experiences at their colleges. I have presented a description of the understandings these faculty have about their professional roles. Although in the discussion, I have suggested some explanations

that might account for differences between the two campuses, the study was not designed to establish or determine causal relationships.

Finally, both the design of the study and the analysis of the data have been influenced by my personal values and beliefs. Although I employed bracketing techniques in order to reduce the impact of preconceived ideas and judgments, my own experiences as a community college instructor ideas shape my understandings and interpretations of the academic world.

Directions for Future Research

This study focused on how the career education faculty developed a definition of their roles within the community college. A similar study in which community college liberal arts faculty were interviewed would help to determine if and how their role definitions differed from that of career education faculty, and if their attention to pedagogy differed.

Very little research attention has been devoted to the associate deans and deans in the career and technical programs. A study similar to this one focusing on their roles and responsibilities would clarify the types of skills and backgrounds these individuals should have. For changes to occur in career education programs, strong leadership will be needed. A good understanding of the roles and challenges of the career education administrators would help colleges develop, select, and support talented leaders.

The different reward structures at the two schools appeared to play a role in the role definitions of the faculty in this study. An examination of the different reward schemes used at community colleges would be useful for college administrators,

particularly if it could be demonstrated what, if any, effects the schemes had upon faculty role definition, productivity, and job satisfaction.

Finally, structuration is worthwhile point of departure for studying various aspects of organizational life and behavior. As Giddens (1991) observed, the concepts of structuration are helpful as "sensitizing devices, to be used in a selective way in thinking about research questions or interpreting findings" (p. 213). Because the theory takes into account both the effect of organizational structures and the individual's interpretation and response, it is a useful tool for understanding the complexity of organizational life. For example, a study that used the lens of structuration to examine the effects of a professional development program for faculty at a community college would be able to move beyond a cause and effect analysis and gain a better understanding of the dynamics that surrounded the program and its impact.

Such a study would necessarily focus on the actions and interactions of the teachers involved in the professional development activity since, according to Giddens (1984), "analyzing the structuration of social systems means studying the modes in which such systems, grounded the knowledgeable activities of situated actors who draw upon rules and resources in the diversity of actions contexts, are produced and reproduced in interactions" (p. 25). In order to narrow the scope of the study, interviews could be conducted within a department in which an activity, such as a learning circle, had been introduced. Using a longitudinal approach in which three waves of interviews are conducted over the course of a year would yield insights into the ways in which the interactions become the basis of further actions and interactions — the recursive nature of structure. According to Giddens (1979; 1984), the structuring of social interaction

involves the interplay of meaning, power, and norms. Analysis of the interviews along these three dimensions would help to illuminate the evolving impact and meaning of the professional development activity. This sort of analysis accounts for the complexity and unexpectedness that occur in organizational life and that appear aberrant in more linear descriptions of organizations.

Conclusion

Career and technical education is a vital function of the comprehensive community college. Moreover, it is this part of the college that is particularly responsive to the unique needs of its community. As Henry said,

> But what really gives the community college its personality or its identity isn't English 101, because every college has English 101. It isn't American history prior to 1861, because every college teaches that. It is the career, tech areas, because geographically throughout the US there are different jobs and different sectors.

This aspect of the mission of the community college has become more critical now in this period of changing economic conditions. Responsive and strategic technical education can help communities adjust to the restructuring of jobs and industries that we are now undergoing. It is the career education faculty who must design the curriculum and teach the courses that will prepare their students not only for the current job market but also for one that has yet to emerge. Understanding the challenges that these faculty face and the perspectives they hold can help their institutions better support their work. The result can only strengthen this crucial aspect of the educational mission of community colleges.

APPENDICES

APPPENIX A

Introductory Email

Dear ,

I am community college mathematics instructor and department chair working on a Ph.D. in Higher, Adult, and Life-long Education from Michigan State University. My research is focusing on the experiences of career education faculty as they adapt to their new work environments and roles during the early years of their employment at community colleges. Since you are a relatively new career education faculty member, I am hoping that you would be willing to participate in the study

Of course you are wondering what participation entails. If you agree to take part in the study, I would like to interview you twice in the next couple of months about your experiences as a career education instructor. The interviews will be scheduled on your campus at your convenience and each should last 60 to 90 minutes. At the first interview, I will give you a brief questionnaire about your educational background and previous work experience to complete. If I have your permission, I will tape and transcribe the interviews. I will send you copies of the transcriptions that you may review for accuracy.

The information I collect will be treated with strict confidentiality. I will make every effort to protect your anonymity. Tapes and transcripts will not be labeled by name, and any statement that identifies you specifically will not be quoted in the dissertation.

You, of course, are not in any way obligated to participate. No one at your school will be informed of your decision about participation in this study, and your decision will not affect your relationship with your college. If you do choose initially to participate, you are free to withdraw from the study at later point.

Thank-you for your consideration,

Lynne Hensel
Henry Ford Community College
5101 Evergreen Road
Dearborn, MI 48128

APPENDIX B

Participant Consent Form
"Strangers in a Strange Land:
Career Education Faculty Finding Their Places in Community Colleges"

The purpose of this study is to gather information about the experiences of career education faculty as they adapt to their new work environments and roles during the early years of their employment at community colleges. Specifically, I am interested in the understandings these faculty have about their roles and responsibilities within their colleges.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have agreed to be interviewed two times, each for 60 to 90 minutes. This form outlines your rights as an interview participant. **Your privacy will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law.**

Participation includes the following:

- You will be voluntarily participating in a doctoral dissertation research project that focuses on the experiences of career education faculty in the early years of their employment at community colleges.

- There are no known risks associated with participation in this study. Nevertheless, you can withdraw participation from this interview at any time. You can also refuse to answer a question. If you withdraw your participation during the interview, the audiotape will be immediately destroyed.

- You can ask questions of the interviewer at any time during the interview process.

- You identity will be confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in all written papers, both published and unpublished, in order to protect individual identification.

- This interview will be audiotaped and transcribed. After the transcription is complete, all tapes will be destroyed. The researcher will retain the transcript of the audiotape and will delete any reference that may identify you as an individual. If you would prefer not to be audiotaped, the interviewer will take extensive notes during the interview.

- The transcripts and any other data will be stored in a file cabinet in the researcher's home office until the dissertation is completed. At such time, the data will be destroyed. Only the researcher and the investigator will have access to the data.

- You consent to the publication of parts of the transcript and accept that any information will be anonymous in order to prevent any identification.

- If you have any questions about this study, please contact the investigator, John Dirkx, Ph.D., College of Education, 419 Erickson Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing MI 48824-1034, 517.353.8927, dirkx@msu.edu. You may also contact the researcher, Lynne Hensel, 26346 Wyoming, Huntington Woods, MI 48070-1232, 248.545.4602, Lhensel@hfcc.edu. If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a study participant, or are dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of this study, you may contact — anonymously, if you wish — Peter Vasilenko, Ph.D., Chair of the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCHRIS) by phone at 517.355.2180, fax at 517.432.4503, email at uchrish@msu.edu , or by regular mail at 202 Olds Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Your signature below indicates your voluntary agreement to participate in this study.

_____You agree to have the interview audiotaped.

_____
Name of Participant (please print)

_____ _____
Signature of Participant Date

_____ _____
Signature of Interviewer Date

APPENDIX C

Participant Background Survey

Thank-you for agreeing to participate in this study about career education faculty in community colleges. Please complete this background questionnaire and return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope. It will provide me with demographic information for the study and save time in our forthcoming conversation. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. If you have any questions, please call (313 845-6404) or email (Lhensel@hfcc.edu).

NAME	BIRTH DATE	CURRENT COMMUNITY COLLEGE	DATE HIRED (full-time at current school)
CURRENT JOB TITLE		DEPARTMENT	
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND List all formal schooling since high school, both degree oriented and post-degree coursework/training			
COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY	DEGREE	MAJOR	DATES ATTENDED
WORK EXPERIENCE List significant prior work experience, teaching and non-teaching, from bachelor's degree to present			
JOB TITLE	ORGANIZATION		DATES

Please use the reverse side if you need additional space.

APPENDIX D

First Interview Protocol

Tell me about your job. What is it that you do here?

Probes:

- Describe a typical workday.
- Is this what you expected the job to be when you first started working at this school?
- How did you find out what your responsibilities were?
- How did you learn to do your job?
- How has your perception changed about this place and what's expected of you?

Tell me about your connections with the workplace outside the college.

Probes:

- How do these connections affect your work at the college?

What is your involvement with the your college outside your department?

Probes:

- How would you describe (draw a picture showing) your place in the college?
- How has your college been affected by your presence?
- What changes would you like to see in your college?

Let's go back to your overall sense of your job here at the college. What do you enjoy most (least) about your job?

Probes:

- What activities make the greatest demand on you?
- Is there anything you would like to spend greater time on?
- How do you know if you are doing a good job?
- What advice would you give to a new faculty member?

APPENDIX E

Second Interview Protocol

How have you learned to be a teacher?

Probes:

- Why did you decide to become a teacher?
- Describe a class session
- How do you prepare for classes?
- What would have helped you with your teaching when you first started at this school?
- How has your teaching changed since you started? Are there any changes you would like to make in the future?
- Tell me about conversations you have with your colleagues about teaching.
- What do you find to be the greatest challenge in teaching?
- Do you think others at the college understand your work?
- What would help you be a better teacher?
- How do you keep up with your field?
- Have you been involved in any curriculum integration efforts?
- Do you see yourself more as a teacher or as a practitioner? Place yourself on a continuum. Where were you on the continuum when you first started at the your college? What has prompted the change (if any)?

Are there any changes you'd like to see in the college that would make it easier for you to do your job?

Tell me about your students.

Probes:

- What have you enjoyed most about your students, found frustrating?
- Are the students different that you had expected?

I'd like to you to talk a little about your colleagues. With whom do you interact most frequently on the job?

Probes:

- What's the nature of your conversations?
- Tell me who you consider to be a productive colleague (and why).

Story telling: Depending upon time, ask for one or more of the following:

- Tell me a story about your department.
- Tell me a story about what it's like to be a career education faculty member here.
- Tell me a story about how people interact here.
- Tell me a story about your teaching that involves one or more of your students.

What do you see yourself doing five, ten years into the future?

Probes:

- Would you consider leaving the college and going back to work fulltime in your field?

What do you think is the most important purpose of your college?

APPENDIX F

Bracketing

First of all, my initial take on the differences between career education faculty and the liberal arts faculty. The career ed faculty:

- Have more emphasis on the practical
- Are impatient with academic process
- Are more motivated by money
- Are less rigorous
- Use mostly hands-on instruction — learn by doing.

I say more motivated by money because it seems that most of the career ed faculty that I know work the maximum amount of extracontractual every year — although that really isn't as true of the folks in the health fields. And then some, many?, have other jobs. Sometimes it is teaching at other schools, but in other cases it is a small business or moonlighting in their fields. Of course, I know liberal arts faculty that do the same. Quite a few years ago, in contract negotiations, we put a cap on the number of hours of extracontractual that people could work. At that point in time the liberal arts faculty were held to a maximum of 18 credit hours per year, while the tech faculty had been teaching quite a bit more, some 30 or more credit hours a year. It was not a popular decision when the lower limits were imposed, and I know that that aspect of the contract still has to be actively policed. On the other hand, there are plenty of the liberal arts faculty that now max out on the extracontractual every year.

My feeling about less rigorous stems in part from my opinions of their tech math classes. The classes are very "plug and chug." With no explanation of why or trying to communicate or require understanding of the process. Of course they see the tech math courses that we teach as too theoretical and removed from the "real world."

I think that the career ed faculty mostly learned teaching on the job. Few have participated in the professional development activities sponsored by the CTEI. I had the sense that they did not view the workshops, etc., as relevant to their fields.

There appear to be differences between the various disciplines within career ed. Business and Allied Health seem more like the liberal arts classes. The more industrial, e.g., automotive, the more distinct from the liberal arts. The career ed disciplines seem to fall on a continuum. What does it mean to be "more like liberal arts?" I guess more academic, more classroom based, less hands on. Students are more likely to be in transfer programs.

There seems to be a gulf between the two groups. For the most part it is one of benign neglect. They are in their world, the liberal arts faculty are in theirs, and there is little overlap between the two. Mostly the two groups don't know each other. There are few career ed people involved in committees — although that may just be my perception. There are fewer career ed teachers than in the liberal arts, so maybe percentagewise, participation is not as different as I think.

Through the years there have been a number of career ed faculty who have had a high profile organizationally. Several of these folks have been quite prickly — very defensive of turf, very suspicious of the liberal arts side. It doesn't seem that the newer people these days are as gruff. It used to be that walking into the faculty area of the tech building took some courage. It did not feel like a friendly place. The "tech boys" were not warm and fuzzy. Since a number of the senior members have retired, the atmosphere has changed somewhat. I wonder if the fact that there are more women over there is part of the reason.

This has been pretty focused on negatives — in part to get them out in the open. On the positive side, the people I know best on the career side — the health careers faculty — are some of the most dedicated, hardworking people on campus. They are very committed to their programs, and are stretched quite thin in trying to keep them going. I don't know much about the programs over in the tech building, but demonstrations and tours I have had have been quite impressive. The CNC stuff with the Haas equipment and the whole heating and cooling labs are so different from what I do.

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