

DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES
AT THE ASSOCIATE AND ASSOCIATE DOMINATE COLLEGES IN FLORIDA

By

BECKY L. SHERMIS

A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2011

© 2011 Becky L. Shermis

To my husband, Dr. Mark Shermis, and sons, Ryan and Jamie

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I extend my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to my husband, Dr. Mark Shermis, and son, Ryan, for their patience, love, and encouragement throughout my doctoral journey. Without their endless support and commitment, I would not have achieved this dream. This accomplishment is not mine alone. I also share this success with my family and others whom I wish to extend my gratefulness.

I thank my parents, Jay and Linda Porier, for their continued prayers, weekly phone calls, and their belief in me that I could accomplish this goal. They gave me spiritual support and inspired me to always do my personal best. My dad's encouraging words at the end of every phone call, "I'm so proud of you," helped me stay steadfast and focused on achieving this objective.

I am grateful for the leadership and guidance of my dissertation chair, Dr. David S. Honeyman. His foresight and expertise guided and challenged me through the dissertation writing process. He provided key insight, asked difficult questions, and helped me stay centered on my research goals.

Special thanks go to the members of my doctoral committee, Drs. Tom Dana, Dale Campbell, and Craig Wood, each helping me refine my dissertation research. Their contributions of providing mentorship and guidance were extremely beneficial. I would also like to thank Angela Rowe for her assistance in answering all my questions, helping with each semester's registration, and sending email reminders to ensure our cohort did not miss important deadlines.

I would also like to thank Jillian Ramsammy, a special colleague in my Leadership in Educational Administration Doctorate (LEAD) Cohort group. We spent many nights encouraging one another, studying together, and giving each other support to take one day at a

time, and pray for continued strength to make it to graduation. Her kindred spirit and friendship will continue to be a part of my life for years to come.

I am also grateful for the LEAD Cohort members who were a part of this journey from the beginning. There is truth to feeling supported by a learning community built around relationships. Thanks to Dr. Campbell and Dr. Honeyman for providing opportunities for our learning community to grow, learn, and encourage each other.

Lastly, throughout my academic studies, I have asked for God to give me patience, help me balance my work life, home life, and school life, and give me the endurance to make this dream possible. I thank God and give Him praise and unquestionable gratitude for answering my prayers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
LIST OF TABLES	9
LIST OF FIGURES	12
ABSTRACT	13
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	15
Background of the Problem	15
Statement of the Problem	17
Purpose of the Study	18
Research Questions	19
Significance of the Study	19
Carnegie Foundation Terminology	20
Definitions of Terms	20
Delimitations	22
Overview of Research Methods	23
Phases of the Study	24
Organization of the Study	26
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	27
Purpose	27
History of Distance Education in Higher Education	28
Mega-Universities	32
United Kingdom Open University	34
Diploma Mills	35
For-Profit Institutions	35
Distance Education Accreditation	36
Focus on Quality Practices	38
2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act	39
Quality of Distance Education Programs	40
Institutional Context and Commitment	40
Faculty Support	41
Student Support	41
Evaluation and Assessment	42
Community Colleges Become Leaders in Online Education	42
Distance Education Growth in Community Colleges	44
Challenges of Distance Education in Community Colleges	44
Addressing Faculty Support in Community Colleges	46

Key Studies Identify Faculty Support Best Practices and Priorities.....	48
Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness Study.....	48
Impact of Policy: Building on Two Dissertation Studies and a National Survey	52
Hodge’s Study	53
Amason’s Study.....	55
Document Review	58
Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) National Study.....	59
Framework Development	59
Community College to Baccalaureate Status	60
Florida Mandate to Increase Online Degree Programs.....	61
Summary.....	61
3 METHODOLOGY	68
Purpose of the Study	68
Design Considerations.....	69
Participants	70
Instruments	72
Procedure.....	73
Research Questions.....	74
Data Analysis.....	74
4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	77
Section 1: Survey Results	79
Section 2: Survey Results by Institution Type	82
Summary of Survey Results	87
Section 3: Follow-up Interview Analysis	88
Analysis: Research Question 1	89
Similarities.....	89
Differences	92
Analysis: Research Question 2	97
Analysis: Research Question 3	99
Analysis: Research Question 4	101
Faculty Support Best Practices	103
Internal Professional Development Offerings (Two- and Four-year Institutions)	103
New Faculty Trainings, Orientations, and Online Certification Processes (Two- and Four-year Institutions).....	106
Centralized Support Services and Leader Advocates (Two- and Four-year Institutions)....	107
Formalized Course Review Processes (Two- and Four-year Institutions)	109
Instructional Designers to Help in Content Development (Two- and Four-year Institutions)	110
Monetary or Release Time Incentives for Developing Courses (Two- and Four-year Institutions)	111
Full-time Faculty Helpdesk: Technical and/or Content Development Support (Four- year Only Institution).....	112
Making Connections between the Qualitative and Quantitative Data Results	112

5	CONCLUSIONS	149
	Discussion of Findings	150
	Finding 1: Commitment of Leadership	150
	Finding 2: Program Level Support	151
	Finding 3: Faculty Support	152
	Conclusion of Findings	154
	Implications for Practice	159
	Implications for Practice 1: More Leadership Support for Two-year Institutions	159
	Implications for Practice 2: Providing More Quality Resources for Two-year Institutions	160
	Implications for Practice 3: Improving Faculty Support Initiatives at Two-year Institutions	161
	Recommendations for Further Study	162
APPENDIX		
A	SURVEY INSTRUMENT	165
B	FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	178
C	TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS FACULTY SUPPORT FEEDBACK FROM FOLLOW- UP INTERVIEWS	180
D	FLORIDA BACCALAUREATE FACULTY SUPPORT ANALYSIS FEEDBACK FROM FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS	182
E	INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL OF PROTOCOL AND CONSENT LETTER	185
	LIST OF REFERENCES	188
	BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH	194

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>page</u>
2-1 King’s et al. policy analysis framework related to faculty support	67
2-2 Levels of support analysis framework	67
3-1 Demographic enrollment information on the two samples compared with the Florida college system totals (2009-2010)	76
4-1 Respondent self-assessment of knowledge, experience, and background with Internet-supported learning	116
4-2 Descriptive statistics for part 1 of the survey (motivation).....	116
4-3 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for motivation.....	117
4-4 Descriptive statistics for Part 2 of the survey (commitment/leadership)	117
4-5 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for commitment/leadership	117
4-6 Descriptive statistics for part 3 of the survey (program level support).....	118
4-7 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for program level support.....	118
4-8 Descriptive statistics for part 4 of the survey (faculty support)	119
4-9 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for faculty support.....	120
4-10 Descriptive Statistics for Part 5 of the Survey (Student Support)	120
4-11 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for student support	121
4-12 Descriptive statistics for part 6 of the survey (measurement).....	121
4-13 Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for measurement.....	122
4-14 Rank orders of importance of actions related to improving an institution’s Internet-supported learning efforts	122
4-15 Descriptive statistics for part 8 of the survey (goals)	123
4-16 Respondent self-assessment of knowledge, experience, and background with Internet-supported learning by institutional classification.....	124
4-17 Descriptive statistics for part 1 of the survey (motivation) by institutional classification	125

4-18	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for motivation by institutional classification	126
4-19	Descriptive statistics for part 2 of the survey (commitment/leadership) by institutional classification	127
4-20	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for commitment/leadership by institutional classification	128
4-21	Descriptive statistics for part 3 of the survey (program level support) by institutional classification	129
4-22	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for program level support by institutional Classification	131
4-23	Descriptive statistics for part 4 of the survey (faculty support) by institutional classification	132
4-24	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for faculty support by institutional classification	134
4-25	Descriptive statistics for part 5 of the survey (student support) by institutional classification	135
4-26	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for student support by institutional classification	137
4-27	Descriptive statistics for part 6 of the survey (measurement) by institutional classification	138
4-28	Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for measurement by institutional classification	139
4-29	Rank orders of importance of actions related to improving an institution's Internet-supported learning efforts	140
4-30	Descriptive statistics for part 8 of the survey (goals) by institutional classification	141
4-31	t-test results by institutional classification	143
4-32	Ranking of index score by means	144
4-33	Ranking of index scores by means by institutional classification	144
4-34	Levels of support analysis framework	145
4-35	Internet-supported Learning (ISL) survey results: A comparative analysis	146

4-36	Summary of similarities and differences of highest ranked survey items in sample schools compared to highest ranked items of Abel's 2005(a) study	148
4-37	Fall 2009-2010 headcounts for participating institutions	148

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>page</u>
2-1 King’s et al. three-tiered policy analysis framework. (King’s et al., 2000).....	65
2-2 Amason’s policy analysis framework: Policy diffusion conclusions based on document review. (Amason, 2007b).....	65
2-3 A comparison of priority faculty support attributes as defined by Abel’s, ITC’s, and Sloan-C’s study results. (Abel, 2005; Instructional Technology Council, 2009, Allen & Seaman, 2009)	66
2-4 Abel’s priority rankings for effective distance education programming based on the 21 institutions in the initial research sample. (Abel, 2005b)	66

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

DISTANCE EDUCATION FACULTY SUPPORT PROGRAMS AND POLICIES
AT THE ASSOCIATE AND ASSOCIATE DOMINATE COLLEGES IN FLORIDA

By

Becky L. Shermis

May 2011

Chair: David S. Honeyman

Major: Higher Education Administration

The purpose of this study was to identify the differences in distance education faculty support programs, practices, and policies in Florida's associate colleges with a two-year mission and Florida's associate dominate four-year institutions as classified by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The impact of increased enrollments, students demanding alternative delivery methods, and the lack of faculty support programs and resources has raised concerns of the quality of distance education teaching and learning at community colleges. The study was founded on two previous dissertation studies and a national survey conducted on 21 institutions that had been identified as having effective online practices. The current study employed a mixed methods approach by administering a survey questionnaire and collecting data based on follow-up interview questions. The results of the study suggested that the Florida associate dominate colleges in the sample were implementing more effective practices and support than Florida associate colleges in the sample. One important conclusion was that in order for two-year community colleges to become more proactive in online practices, resources have to be allocated for more faculty support. Moreover, two-year institutions may require more planning as they attempt to merge their offerings at the associate degree level with institutions that have four-year programs. Two-year institutions required more commitment of leadership,

program level support including centralized services and policies, technical support, and advocacy at higher administrative levels than their four-year counterparts. Implications for practice were listed.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

From 2000 to 2010, the infusion of distance education offerings at community colleges across the United States grew dramatically. Community colleges embraced this alternative delivery system as a way to meet the needs of their changing student demographics, as well as honor open-access enrollment at an affordable rate. However, the costs associated with the delivery of online courses raised concerns regarding the quality of the instruction and the appropriate levels of support provided to faculty in developing and facilitating distance education courses (Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 2002).

Institutions have faced the challenge of developing strategies in standards, processes, and/or policies to ensure faculty members are prepared, able, and motivated to teach online (Koehler, Punyashloke, Hershey, & Peruski, 2004). Historically, faculty issues and involvement related to distance education have been traced back to the early 1990s. For example, Wolcott and Shattuck (2007) referenced early research work during this time period that focused on faculty involvement in distance education and what persuaded them to participate or not to participate in this type of delivery experience.

The definition of faculty support, as used in this research study, is the provision of ongoing resources for online faculty in the areas of technical, design, production, pedagogical training, and assistance (Commission on Higher Education, 2001). Rahman (2001) stated that the survival and success of online distance education cannot happen without the endorsement and active participation of faculty. Researchers targeted specific barriers and concerns related to faculty support:

- inferior or lack of technical support (Gerson, 2000; Instructional Technology Council, 2007; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)
- inferior or lack of training and staff development support in development of distance education course content, assessments and online student learning styles, that is, pedagogical models (Gerson, 2000), published guidelines (Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Ellis & Phelps, 1999; Gerson, 2000; Hodge, 2000; Instructional Technology Council, 2007; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)
- concern and confusion over who owns the course, that is, intellectual property (Amason, 2007a; Gerson, 2000; Instructional Technology Council, 2007; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)
- concern over compensation, release time, or workload issues (Amason, 2007a; Gerson, 2000; Graff, 2008; Instructional Technology Council, 2007; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)
- concern over lack of incentives or recognition (Amason, 2007a; Gerson, 2000; Graff, 2008; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)
- lack of policy or procedures that demonstrate commitment of the institution to support faculty to be highly effective online facilitators (Amason, 2007a; Ellis & Phelps, 1999; Hodge, 2000; ITC, 2007; Koehler et al., 2004; Maguire, 2005)

In 1997, the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) established a theoretical framework to “reinvent” the community college of the 21st century by restructuring initiatives to meet the needs of its diverse and nontraditional student bodies. The report cautioned that though students were becoming more comfortable in a technology environment and faculty benefited from alternatives to traditional methods of delivery, it was critical that the system did not implement technology “just for the sake of technology” (Weiner, McVeigh, Clever, Brasington, & King, 1997, p. 9). The critical element was using technology to improve the curriculum and enrich the processes of teaching and learning. Specifically, the VCCS report addressed the paucity of faculty preparation and support programs to ensure the delivery of quality distance learning.

Statement of the Problem

Though the surge of online distance education offerings in community colleges grew considerably since 2000, many educators raised concerns as to whether or not too much attention was given to quantity over quality of online instruction in post-secondary institutions. For example, in the 2000-2001 academic year, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that more than 90% of two-year public institutions offered distance education courses (Clark, 2007). This percent was a dramatic increase from 1997-1998, which reported that 62% of two-year public institutions offered distance education courses. In 2000-2001, 48% of all students enrolled in a public two-year institution were taking distance education courses (Clark, 2007).

In 2002, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that the community college student profile was changing. More students, who were enrolled in two-year institutions, were older, had families, worked full-time, and attended college part-time. These types of students were demanding alternative forms of delivery to meet their work- and family-related needs. In 2005, NCES reported the average age of a community college student was 29, 58% were identified as female, and 62% were enrolled in college as part-time students (Clark, 2007).

Community colleges were turning to distance learning to address the changing demographics and to make post-secondary education more affordable and accessible (Clark, 2007). Community colleges concentrated on distance education to respond to economic shortfalls, budget cuts, and meeting “open access” requirements without the burden of increasing physical space (Clark, 2007). Though perceived as a low-cost alternative, the cost of quality education became a high-stakes question.

In 2000, the concern for distance education quality manifested itself at the federal level (Clark, 2007). By 2001, all eight of the regional accrediting commissions, under the umbrella of

the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, adopted the *Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* (Commission on Higher Education, 2001). The goal was to create common guidelines for accredited public post-secondary institutions in offering distance education programs. Specific language addressed the responsibility of the institutions to provide faculty and student support when developing distance education programs.

Two dissertation studies focused on recommendations for further study into the problem of lack of faculty support programs and policies for distance education learning. Hodge (2000) explored community college policy areas that made a significant impact on providing quality distance education programs. In her discussion, she identified three specific problems areas, the most important of which was the lack of faculty and student support. Amason (2007a) conducted a study on examining current conditions of community college distance education policies at the state, consortia, and institutional levels. By identifying the similarities and differences in these policies, his goal was to propose guidelines for community college online distance education programs. In his findings, Amason (2007a) reported that faculty rewards were almost non-existent at all three levels. He recommended that institutions and states consider engaging their faculty more in online teaching by offering more faculty incentive.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify if differences existed in distance education faculty support programs, practices, and policies in Florida's baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two year mission. This study also sought to find common attributes of quality faculty support programs and/or policies, and discriminate which practices and policies were more successful than others. The study also examined discrepancies in faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding these practices and policies.

Research Questions

In order to address the purpose of the study, four research questions were developed:

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to consider in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

Significance of the Study

As the economic crisis continued to impact individuals and communities throughout the world, e-learning programs became the solution in the 21st century to delivering communication, training, and instruction. Strong developments of e-learning were seen in the corporate and academic sectors, stemming from lower costs, attraction to flexibility and convenience, and the high demand for e-learning by students and clients (Gualtieri, 2008). While the supply and demand was expanding in academics, it was critical that training, resources, guidelines, and infrastructures were put into place to ensure that quality of instruction did not become second class to quantity. Resources were too limited to make hasty decisions that negatively impacted the involvement of faculty and the outcome of student learning.

This study sought to identify what support practices and policies were the most effective for both faculty and administration in developing and facilitating quality online courses. By analyzing the similarities and differences of practices and policies in existing institutions, the goal of the study was to develop a model of best practices. While past studies identified barriers and strengths of faculty support programs for distance education, and accreditation agencies

established formal guidelines for best practices, few studies existed that addressed a sample of institutions and reviewed what practices worked for them.

Recommendations from this study would benefit faculty and administrators at community colleges who designed and implemented online course deliveries. These recommendations would also benefit four-year institutions that targeted online learning as an alternate form of traditional classroom delivery.

Carnegie Foundation Terminology

The institutions in this study were located in the state of Florida and in the Florida College System. The four Florida state baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions in the sample were officially classified as “Associate Dominant” colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). For the purpose of this study, they were referred to as four-year institutions or state baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions. The four community colleges in this study were officially classified as “Associate” colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). For the purpose of this study, they were referred to as two-year institutions.

Definitions of Terms

The worlds of distance education and post-secondary education come complete with their own terminologies and technical jargon. To assure a common understanding, the following terms and clarifying definitions are provided, which are specific to this study.

- **ASSOCIATE COLLEGES:** Institutions in the Florida College System; referred to as community colleges and two-year institutions in the study; defined as an associate school by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. “These institutions award associate’s degrees, but no bachelor’s degrees” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010, p. 1).
- **ASSOCIATE DOMINATE COLLEGES:** Institutions in the Florida College System; referred to as state baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and four-year institutions in the study; defined as an associate dominant school by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement

of Teaching. “These institutions award both associate’s and bachelor’s degrees, but the majority of degrees awarded were at the associate’s level” (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010, p. 1).

- **ASYNCHRONOUS:** “Students attending to the teachings of instructors at some interval after the instructors have spoken, written, or provided some other form of teaching” (Schlosser & Simonson, 2006, p. 6). An example of this type of interaction is the use of discussion board communication. Subjects can respond to one another in written communication without responding at exactly the same time.
- **BEST PRACTICES FOR ELECTRONICALLY OFFERED DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:** Endorsed by the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions in 2001 as guidelines to help post-secondary institutions prepare, implement, and assess distance learning courses to ensure quality and provide essentials to inform and facilitate policies related to distance education (Clark, 2007).
- **DISTANCE EDUCATION:** “Institutionally-based, formal education where the learning group is separated, and where interactive telecommunications systems are used to connect learners, resources, and instructors” (Amason, 2007a; Schlosser & Simonson, 2006, p. 6).
- **FACULTY SUPPORT:** Training and preparation; the provision of ongoing resources for online faculty in the areas of technical, design, production, pedagogical training, and assistance (Commission on Higher Education, 2001).
- **INCENTIVE:** These external factors may have a motivational effect in reducing or minimizing barriers that may be perceived as negative. Incentives connected to distance education include: 1) rewards offered by the institution to attract faculty to teach online, that is, stipends and decreased teaching load; or 2) environment attractors or enhancers that are apparent in the institution’s climate, that is, support services, creating a favorable environment to teach online, or supportive administration to help the faculty succeed (Wolcott & Shattuck, 2007).
- **INTERACTIVE COMMUNICATIONS:** “The mode of connecting instructor and learner” (Schlosser & Simonson, 2006, p. 4).
- **POLICY:** “A written plan of action to facilitate or guide program development in a specific direction or area, that is, procedure, statute, rule, or regulation” (Simonson, 2007, p. 1).
- **SYNCHRONOUS INSTRUCTION:** “Students interacting with instructors in “real time” (Schlosser & Simonson, 2006, p. 4).
- **WEB-ENHANCED:** “Adding email or web-based interactivity to either a web mounted course or a paper-based distance education course without significant redesign of teaching and learning strategies” (Ellis & Phelps, 1999, p. 2).

Delimitations

The study's scope was a replication of a previous study conducted by Abel (2005a) and the non-profit Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness, Inc. (A-HEC), but on a different population. Representatives from the institutions in the current study completed an Internet version of Abel's (2005c) self-study survey and participated in a follow-up phone interview. This current study used similar methodology methods.

Schools were purposefully selected for both parts of the study. The state baccalaureate institutions (four-year) were purposeful selected, based on their longevity in the Florida College System as baccalaureate institutions. Phase 2 of the study limited its research to four Florida community colleges (two-year) that were not applying for baccalaureate status in 2010 or 2011. All institutions were part of the Florida College System. The intent was to focus at a local level of analysis and not at a national level. Also, the Florida schools had specific classification definitions per the Carnegie Foundation. The Florida community colleges were those institutions that awarded only associate degrees and classified as "associate" schools. The state baccalaureate schools were those defined as "associate dominant" schools and awarded both associate's and bachelor's degrees, but mostly associate degrees (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010).

The information for classification of the schools and the number of schools in the Florida College System identified as baccalaureate were taken from the most current information updates at the time of the study. As schools moved to baccalaureate status, this information was continually changing.

Phase 1 of the analysis was limited to survey responses obtained from institution respondents who were allowed to answer the items based on their own perceptions and the perceptions of faculty and administrators. Surveys were obtained only from the four community

colleges selected and the four purposefully selected baccalaureate state schools. All schools were selected from the state of Florida.

Overview of Research Methods

The study researched the differences in distance education faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two-year mission. The primary objective was to identify possible differences in perceptions as an attempt to determine if some practices and policies were more successful than others. A secondary objective was to narrow the focus from looking at community colleges at a national level to a local/state level.

The analysis was built on two past dissertation studies conducted by Hodge (2000) and Amason (2007a), as well as on a national survey/interview study conducted by Abel (2005a). Hodge (2000) conducted a quantitative study in 2000 to address the broad issues of distance education in community colleges. Specifically, her study examined the differences in states that had distance education policies and those that did not have such policies. The purpose of her study was to examine the similarities and differences of state policies to find effective and efficient policy benchmarks for each state that could be used to develop model distance education programs (Hodge, 2000). Hodge found a discrepancy in practices with those states that had distance education policies compared to those that did not. She identified three areas of significant impact on the quality of distance education programs. "These included infrastructure, program development, and faculty and student support" (Hodge, 2000, p. vii).

Amason (2007a) "conducted a normative analysis study on distance education policies at the institution, state, and consortia levels of community colleges to understand the diffusion of policy concepts in this increasingly central medium" (p. 15). He sought to "triangulate state, consortia, and institutional policies with policy analysis frameworks, regional accreditation

policies, and best practices” (Amason, 2007a, p. 17). The goal of his study was to understand the impact of policy diffusion on student proximity and recommend policy guidelines for community college distance education program models at the state level. He found that diffusion increased when policies and guidelines were closer in proximity to students. States therefore had lower distance education policy diffusion, and institutions had the greatest policy diffusion (Amason, 2007a). In relation to faculty factors, Amason concluded that overall low policy diffusion occurred, and the most ignored factor was faculty rewards. He recommended that more attention be given to this area at the institution and state levels to avoid faculty resistance against distance education deployment (Amason, 2007a).

In 2005, Rob Abel, president and founder of Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC), conducted a nationwide survey and follow-up interviews with 21 higher education institutions from various categories that regarded the online education programs at their respective institutions as being successful. Findings from this report revealed that executive leadership and support and faculty and academic leadership commitment were the top criteria for higher education distance education success (Abel, 2005b). In regard to specificity about faculty online support, his data showed that faculty support was more successful in community colleges, and that faculty did a good job in nurturing “grass roots efforts,” affording them more buy-in and ownership opportunities in developing and/or teaching online courses (Abel, 2005c, p. 23). This finding was noted as a key factor in distance learning success for those institutions surveyed.

Phases of the Study

Phase 1 of this study began with exploring characteristics of effective online practices and/or policies in higher education and in community colleges. This document review and content analysis were conducted on the following three bases: 1) two dissertation studies; 2)

researching national and regional standards for effective online practices; and 3) analysis of national surveys conducted specifically to gain information on challenges and effective practices around online distance learning practices in higher education and community college institutions. The content analysis led to the construction of a conceptual framework called the Levels of Support Framework for Analysis to be used as an analysis tool in the research methodology.

Phase 2 of the study was dedicated to administering an Internet survey instrument and follow-up interviews to enrich and expand the survey analysis and attempt to answer the research questions. The survey tool selected for the current study was replicated from a national survey with a different population. Eight public colleges in the Florida College System were purposefully selected for the sample. Four of the 19 Florida state baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions were identified based on their longevity in the Florida College System as baccalaureate state schools. Their official classification, as reported by the Carnegie Foundation was Associate Dominant schools, (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). Four of the 9 Florida community colleges were identified for the study based on the likelihood that they would not apply for baccalaureate status in 2010 or 2011. The criteria for selection came from the recommendation of the executive vice chancellor's Office of Student and Academic Success under the Florida College System. The official classification of the community colleges in the study, as reported by the Carnegie Foundation was Associate schools, (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2010). At the time of this study, there were 28 schools in the Florida College System, all locally governed, and overseen by the Chancellor of Florida Colleges. The respondents from each institution were selected for having the most knowledge and experience in their respective schools' online programs. They were also

selected to best answer the items based on their own perceptions and based on the perceptions of faculty, students, and administrators.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 presented the introduction, background of the problem, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and a brief statement about the methodology, followed by an introduction of assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and definitions of terms. Chapter 2 reviews the literature of distance education faculty support programs and policies. Chapter 3 gives the methodology used in the research study and the research design. Chapter 4 offers a thorough analysis of the data collected and a detailed description of the findings. Chapter 5 summarizes and discusses the findings, implications for practice, and issues and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the differences in distance education faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two-year mission. This study also sought to find common attributes of quality faculty support programs and/or policies, and discriminate which practices and policies were more successful than others. The study was to examine discrepancies in faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding these practices and policies. In other words, did a relationship exist between what the faculty thought were important support attributes and what the administration offered in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support? The analysis of this research was to also determine attributes that were the most effective for both faculty and administration.

In order to address the purpose of the study, four research questions were developed.

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to consider in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

Chapter 2 begins with the history of distance education and provides a foundation for understanding how it has impacted post-secondary education institutions in the United States and abroad. It also includes a discussion of the origin of mega-universities and their perceived successes and criticisms. It also investigates the "team approach" to designing and delivering

online education, as well as identifying what worked and what did not work in deploying this model. This chapter then looks at the impact of accrediting bodies on post-secondary distance education and their influence on ensuring quality. Chapter 2 presents a literature review of community colleges and the challenges they face in meeting the demands of their students by providing online education and, at the same time, ensuring that quality education is at the helm of distance education delivery systems. The dependent variable, faculty support, is then explored as a major gap that had already been identified and emphasized in the literature as a major influence in ensuring quality and success of distance education courses and programs. Because this study was built on two previous dissertation studies, which focused on distance education policy and community colleges, and on a national study, a section is reserved for highlighting key findings and recommendations from these specific resources.

History of Distance Education in Higher Education

Distance education emerged in the United States, in the 1950s as an alternative to traditional teaching in both the K-12 and university settings (Black, 2007). Its original goal was to provide learning without the barriers of place or time and to make learning accessible to students who could not be in a traditional classroom setting on campus. Distance education became known and embraced as an innovative way to provide teaching and learning for all students. Keegan (1980) defined six essentials in most distance education programs: 1) teachers and students are separated with no face-to-face contact, 2) the online environment is subjected to an the influence of an education organization, 3) distance education programs use technology/media delivery systems, 4) communication is two-way, 5) some programs have optional synchronous seminars, and 6) the new delivery system is part of an industrial era of education.

In the 21st century, distance education became a convenience and a commodity for students who wanted an education that fit their lifestyle and pocketbook. It became the delivery of choice for many students, and higher education was expected to deliver and be receptive to the needs of students (Hanna, 2007).

The growth of online programs in higher education has continued to surpass projections. In 2005, 2 million college students took online courses (Allen & Seaman, 2006a). In 2006, 96% of the larger universities (totaling more than 15,000 students) offered double the number of online courses that smaller institutions offered. Close to two-thirds of these larger institutions offered full online programs compared to one-sixth of the smaller colleges and universities. Doctorate and research schools saturated the online market with more than 80% of their courses and/or programs being offered online in 2006 (Allen & Seaman, 2006a). Overall, the number of students taking online courses grew from 2 million in 2003 to 2.4 million in 2006 (Allen & Seaman, 2006a). According to the 2006 Sloan Consortium report, 40% to 60% of traditional courses at higher education institutions were offered online. In this same report, the authors reported that almost two-thirds of the online courses taught were facilitated by full-time faculty and not adjuncts (Allen & Seaman, 2006a). In the 2010 Sloan Consortium report, the increase of students taking at least one online course surpassed all other Sloan survey reporting. In 2002, there were over 1.6 million students taking at least one online course, but in 2009, there were over 5.6 million students taking courses (Allen & Seaman, 2010). According to Allen and Seaman (2010), this increase surpassed all higher education overall enrollment growth.

Due to the increase of more online courses offered, it was critical not to sacrifice quality for quantity. Skepticism continued to exist regarding online delivery systems and their impact on student achievement. Faculty support was a critical factor in assessing the quality of distance

education programs, and though accrediting bodies, states, and institutions put policies in place to support faculty, the gap continued to be a major issue and concern.

A momentum of distance education began in the late 1950s and early 1960s, but historians have traced the first correspondence studies back to the 1700s (Black, 2007). Correspondence studies in the 1700s were the first form of distance education and were the most lasting predecessor of distance education (Evans & Nation, 2007). Teachers and students communicated in writing. These courses provided education to students who did not have access to college (Feasley & Bunker, 2007).

Independent study programs became a variation of correspondence courses in the 1920s, predominantly in high schools. “Independent study” was a frequently used term by universities in the 1960s (Clark, 2007). This kind of study essentially was distance education without technology, and it provided instruction to students without having them attend class. Students were allowed to complete independent course assignments on their own. Independent study was an individualized approach of instruction between student and faculty and was carried out via long distance. Vocational schools also provided independent study courses and referred to their independent study programs as “home study” programs (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). The National University Extension Association (NUEA) tracked enrollments of these courses beginning as early as the 1930s. Independent study courses saw a rapid growth during World War II because the war created a shortage of teachers, and the military draft affected a rise in high school enrollments (Clark, 2007). When the war was over, fewer individuals took advantage of these types of correspondence courses until the mid-1950s when enrollments began to rise again.

The first network broadcast for education programming was developed at the University of Iowa. This was a two-way satellite communication from one television in one school to a

television in another school. It was popular for schools that were far apart, and it provided a mechanism for rural students to be a part of the classroom without traveling. By 1999, an average of 40% of K-12 schools were using this form of satellite communication (Clark, 2007).

The Articulated Instructional Media (AIM) project originated in the 1960s at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (Black, 2007). It was the first attempt to look at distance education as a whole system. Wedemeyer combined disciplines and created an integrated liberal studies program (Wedemeyer & Najem, 1969). This program incorporated a variety of teaching deliverable systems into its courses, including independent study, tele-lectures, seminars, short sessions, radio-television, and portable libraries and laboratories. This innovated approach to teaching and learning marked the way for the first open universities (Wedemeyer & Najem, 1969).

Community colleges in the 1970s were leaders in post-secondary education in exploring distance education learning tools (Mullins, 2007). Offerings included tele-courses, such as live television setup at satellite campuses, video, PBS recorded broadcasts, taped sessions, and correspondence course deliveries. In the mid-1990s, the internet became the online delivery of choice (Mullins, 2007). Many community colleges took advantage of the course management tools, such as Blackboard and WebCT. This surge of new learning management tools led the way to asynchronous learning in which participation in a classroom was not live or did not use mail correspondence, but a written communication and interaction between students and faculty or between students and students (Mullins, 2007). This innovative teaching style allowed students to earn a degree or certificate in a flexible environment conducive to their lifestyle.

In 1971, colleagues of Wedemeyer, Wiltshire, and James took the AIM concept and developed the first publicly funded open teaching university, the United Kingdom Open

University (UKOU) (Daniel, Mackintosh, & Diehl, 2007). This institution was built on the premise that courses could be developed and implemented with “course teams” through distance education technology (Daniel et al., 2007, p. 612). Moore and Kearsley (2005) defined open universities as universities that divided up the labor of teaching by creating teams of faculty and staff who worked together to develop and deliver courses with many of the components that Wedemeyer and Najem (1969) used when AIM was created. The fundamental difference between an open university and a traditional university was that the institution was the teacher and not the faculty member (Keegan, 1980). Moore and Kearsley (2005) were among the pioneers of the first online university that offered degree-granting programs using distance education delivery systems. This model broke the mold of traditional student/faculty/lecture learning models. Teaching was separated into different roles, and responsibilities were carried out by faculty and/or staff of the institution. This model became effective and scalable in reaching a broader bandwidth of students. The model was a phenomenon that became widely accepted and was different from the traditional model of faculty working in isolation to design and deliver their own courses (Daniel et al., 2007). The open university concept became a success.

Mega-Universities

By 1999, 11 open universities around the world were established. During this time more than 3 million students enrolled in these 11 “mega-universities,” a term associated with open universities enrolling more than 100,000 students. In 2007, these institutions accounted for more than 6 million college students (Black, 2007; Daniel et al., 2007).

Daniel et al. (2007) stated that for institutions to be considered successful, they must pass the test on three specific benchmarks defined as the *Eternal Triangle*. These tests measured quality and efficiency in “widening access, improving quality, and lowering costs” (p. 613).

The leadership of mega-universities developed methods to deliver higher education programs by dividing up the labor and delivering instruction, using course teams via web-based delivery systems. This model of course delivery was successful for several reasons. First, it was an economic success. It took the cost of delivering instruction and spread it to millions of students without transferring the costs to the students (Daniel et al., 2007). For example, to serve 6 million students at traditional universities, it would take 200 large ground campuses to meet this enrollment demand. Also, without the brick and mortar expenses, these institutions were at a definite advantage to offer cost savings and more services to students. The cost of this type of a delivery model was not cheap (Daniel et al., 2007). Web-based distance education was a costly venture. Secondly, these universities provided a college opportunity to students worldwide who did not have an opportunity to attend college through a traditional route (Daniel et al., 2007). Another success element of open universities was their offerings of student support services that targeted individualized assistance in tutoring or administrative needs “over and above the teaching” (Daniel et al., 2007, p. 613). While mega-universities served masses of students from a distance, the individualized support services created more connectivity for the student with the university. Finally, mega-universities were successful in carrying out a business model that fused academics with business. Daniel et al. (2007) stated, “Visitors from conventional universities are astounded by the magnitude and efficiency required of logistics and administration in the mega-university context” (p. 613).

By 2007, more than 300 distance education universities were in operation. Though the majority of these did not serve enrollments of more than 100,000 similar mega-universities, they still served student populations all over the world. They were able to serve students across all

global boundaries, which was another noted success of an institution model adapted from the United Kingdom Open University model (Daniel et al., 2007).

United Kingdom Open University

The United Kingdom Open University (UKOU) was the first to implement the course team method, and its goal was to create a more systemic quality of instruction in both teaching and learning. While its delivery system focused on academics and pedagogy, it still held true to the traditional institution value that research was an important component of the institutional system. According to Daniel et al. (2007), UKOU was rated in the top third of all United Kingdom universities in research and was rated in the top 10% of all U.K. universities for its teaching programs.

The success of distance education programs, according to Daniel et al. (2007), was to ensure that costs, access, and quality were achieved. All three of these evaluative measures of the *Eternal Triangle* had to work in tandem. To hold onto credibility and success, policymakers in higher education had to ensure that these three areas were part of a unified strategy and managed effectively. What was also important to the success was not necessarily the focus on the medium used for delivery but how that medium was used (Rahman, 2001). Rahman emphasized that the success of online education relied on the support of faculty and administrative leadership and the active buy-in and participation of faculty as a whole. Open universities had an advantage over the deployment of distance education compared to traditional universities. Due to their infrastructures being set up as total online systems, administrators and faculty accepted, participated in, and supported this type of teaching and learning environment.

While mega-universities received recognition for their delivery systems from a large number of students, these types of institutions were criticized. One criticism focused on the mass production model as not being individualistic. Some critics argued that this type of

education, through virtual media, was ineffective due to the loss of the face-to-face communication (Rahman, 2001). Interestingly, the voice of these critics came from traditional faculty. Some distance education universities were also called “second-rate” institutions” due to their lack of social context and nontraditional academic and pedagogical environment (Daniel et al., 2007). While some open universities had received recognition for their quality programs and business models, other institutions inherited disapproval for their copycat schemes to mass-produce the concept without the attention to academic rigor or acquiring grant-degree type program approval. This type of scrutiny created the so-called “diploma mills.”

Diploma Mills

Diploma mills gave quality distance education universities a bad name. Scrupulous businesses took the concept of online universities and created fictitious online degree programs that offered diplomas on their website. The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) defined “diploma mills” as “dubious providers of educational offerings or operations that offered certificates and degrees considered bogus” (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2009, p. 1). Some diploma mills also misled students and the general public into thinking the institutions they represented were accredited and quality institutions. Students who put money and time into these diploma mill institutions found their investments worthless. Accreditation policies required that any certificate or degree from a diploma mill could not be used to transfer or enter graduate school or be used to get tuition assistance approvals (Council for Higher Education Accreditation, 2009).

For-Profit Institutions

By 2010, for-profit colleges and universities had grown to almost 3,000 in the United States and were offering 8% of the higher education degrees (Hentschke, Lechuga, & Tierney, 2010). Enrollments had also grown to 1.8 million, posing a threat to the enrollment market of

traditional institutions. It was reported in 2009 that for-profit institutions had received over \$20 billion in federal loans and over \$4 billion in Pell Grants (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010). A federal investigation of fifteen for-profit institutions found four institutions fraudulent in deceptive practices (U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010). In 2010, new federal regulations on financial aid were put in place (Allen & Seaman, 2010; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010). The majority of for-profit institutions have focused on nontraditional students and global markets. They have been leaders in online development innovations. Best practices for profit institutions have been models for traditional institutions to replicate (Hentschke et al., 2010).

Distance Education Accreditation

Unlike the United Kingdom and other countries that had rigorous and comprehensive state-regulated assessment systems for their higher education institutions, universities and colleges in the United States were not regulated by the federal government (Daniel et al., 2007; Feasley & Bunker, 2007; Lezberg, 2007). Reasons for deregulation came from the fact that most funding for universities and colleges in the United States did not come from the federal government. Most funding contributed by the federal government was connected to private accrediting agencies supported and recognized by the federal government (Feasley & Bunker, 2007). To be considered a legally operated institution, colleges and universities had to be licensed with their state and had to abide by state regulated rules (Lezberg, 2007).

Six regional associations were recognized by the federal government. Colleges and universities—whether public, private, for profit, or not-for-profit—had to apply for approval as an accredited institution by one of the accrediting bodies: 1) Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 2) New England Association of Schools and Colleges, 3) North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, 4) Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, 5)

Southern Association of Schools and Colleges, and 6) Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

To be recognized as an accredited institution and continually be renewed for accreditation status, institutions had to pass rigorous performance standards established by the accrediting agencies (Lezberg, 2007). By 2007, more than 3,500 associate level to graduate level degree-offering institutions in the United States were accredited with one of the six accreditation agencies (Lezberg, 2007). Historically, accredited institutions demonstrated to students, families, state governments, and employers that they offered quality degree-granting programs and held high standards of accountability (Lezberg, 2007). Consequently, institutions not accredited could not qualify for grants and were denied access to federal funding (Karlen, 2007; Lezberg, 2007).

As distance education emerged and became more prevalent in the 1950s, the idea that knowledge and education were being transmitted across state and regional borders became a concern. It became critical to look at distance education standards beyond the six accrediting bodies. This concern about transmission across borders was addressed by three groups: the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), the American Council on Education (ACE), and the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). In 1955, the Distance Education and Training Council established the first standards. The American Council on Education took over in the 1970s to monitor and support the standards. By the late 1990s, the American Council on Education determined that the agencies had to provide guidelines for distance education. Though this initiative started within individual agencies, the guidelines became requirements across the accrediting bodies. In March 1997, the *Guidelines for Distance Learning Programs* was published by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE, 2002). The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) took the

lead in addressing distance education standards and guidelines. The members of WICHE were selected individuals from institutions accredited by one of the six regional accrediting agencies (Lezberg, 2007). The new policies were accepted and were called *NEASC's Policy on the Accreditation of Academic Degrees and Certificate Programs Offered through Distance Education*.

In August 2000, the guidelines were rewritten to become a set of rules for all the regional associations. *The Policy on the Accreditation of Academic Degrees and Certificate Programs Offered through Distance Education* was changed to *The Statement of Commitment by the Regional Accrediting Commissions for the Evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education adopted and approved *The Statement of Commitment* in March 2001 (MSCHE, 2002). This statement adoption placed more accountability on institutions delivering online education by replacing guidelines for a set of rules. This accountability procedure held for not only degree-granting institutions, which were fully online institutions, but for any degree-granting accredited institution that delivered online learning (Lezberg, 2007).

Focus on Quality Practices

In 2001, another move was instituted to place a higher expectation on distance education quality called the “best practice” statement. It identified five quality areas of assessment to evaluate online distance education (Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002): 1) institutional context and commitment, 2) curriculum and instruction, 3) faculty support, 4) student support, and 5) evaluation and assessment. All these assurances were put in place to ensure high quality distance education.

In March 2001, the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions endorsed *The Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* to be used as a tool and

guide to help post-secondary institutions to prepare, implement, and assess distance learning courses to ensure quality and provide essentials to inform and facilitate policies related to distance education (Clark, 2007; Commission on Higher Education, 2001). This tool was used for internal and external evaluators to assess the quality of the distance education programs for each institution reviewed. *The Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* prescribed specific protocols and asked questions related to each protocol area.

2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act

In August 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was passed by Congress (Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008; Instructional Technology Council, 2008). The intent of this act was to increase accountability measures across all higher education institutions, including institutions that participated in the delivery of online instruction and delivery systems.

The five specific points associated with distance education included:

1. The definition of distance education replaced the definition of telecommunications. The new definition stated, “The use of one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously” (Instructional Technology Council, 2008, p. 1).
2. The Secretary of Education prepared an annual report, discussing its distance learning demonstration projects (Instructional Technology Council, 2008).
3. National accrediting agencies put into effect the following requirements to increase accountability: “Demonstrate effective standards for evaluating program quality; create review teams that are well-trained and knowledgeable with respect to their responsibilities regarding distance education; and monitor significant growth in distance education enrollments. A review was required if distance education enrollment increased 50% in one institutional fiscal year” (Instructional Technology Council, 2008, p. 1).
4. A study was asked of the National Academy of Sciences’ National Research Council to look at the quality of distance education courses with campus-based courses.
5. All accredited colleges had to validate processes that were in place to “establish that the student who registered in a distance education course or program was the same student who participated in and completed the program and received the academic credit” (Instructional Technology Council, 2008, p. 1).

The most significant contribution of the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act was to make distance education institutions responsible for ensuring that no fraudulent activity occurred in their online courses (Instructional Technology Council, 2008). This heightened awareness of student authentication resulted in the regional accrediting agencies being asked to revise guidelines for distance education programs (Instructional Technology Council, 2008). According to the Instructional Technology Council, no definitive data supported fraudulent acts; however, programs were asked to be vigilant in monitoring dishonest acts and fraudulent practices. Programs in 2009 put standard operating procedures in place to ensure they could document “course and program integrity” (Instructional Technology Council, 2008, p. 1).

Quality of Distance Education Programs

The quality of distance education programs was a recurring and rising concern, even after the accountability and accreditation policies were put in place in the early 2000s and the “best practice” statement was formalized (Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002). Online institutions continued to be scrutinized over the five “best practice” areas, which included institutional context and commitment, curriculum and instruction, faculty and student support, and evaluation and assessment.

It was difficult to validate and quantify a single online key element or best practice that yielded successful results in post-secondary distance education learning. But research studies identified common practices, which successful institutions in the online education business had prioritized, as being critical to their quality implementation and achievement of desired goals.

Institutional Context and Commitment

A common practice found in quality distance education programs was strong leadership support. Leaders demonstrated that online education was important by being proactive in two measures. First, evidence included clear mission statements that kept focus on student learning

with technology as a successful delivery of instruction (Abel, 2005b). Second, quality institutions also developed innovative programs or processes to fund centralized support resources. Examples included building internal and external support systems of online learning through consortia (Abel, 2005b).

Faculty Support

A stronger commitment to faculty was shown by including them in planning and implementation strategies and processes (Abel, 2005b; Allen & Seaman, 2008; Allen & Seaman, 2010; Rovai & Downey, 2010). As a result, faculty demonstrated a higher commitment to the practices of online teaching and learning. Faculty members earned stipends for their participation in online courses and designing courses. Clear messages were established about what rights faculty had in regard to intellectual property. Incentives of support included paid conference fees for annual online conferences, teaching in a scholar academy, or designing and developing online courses (Abel, 2005b; Abel, 2005e; Amason, 2007). Online faculty development practices strengthened the quality of the online courses and programs. These initiatives included orientations for new faculty, professional development related to student learning in an online environment, technical training, full-time helpdesk, learning techniques in designing online courses using nontraditional delivery strategies, academic integrity strategies, and including faculty as mentors to help others, thus enriching the collaborative environment of working in teams (Allen & Seaman, 2009; Allen & Seaman, 2010; Rowai & Downey, 2010; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2009b).

Student Support

Resources were readily available to help online students, and support service personnel were able to assist student needs in an efficient and effective way. Some of these services included program advising, helpdesk and technical support, enrolling and paying tuition,

academic integrity information, faculty assistance in retention efforts, and dedicated administrative staff supporting distance learners (Abel, 2005b; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2009a; Western Interstate Commission for higher Education, 2009b).

Evaluation and Assessment

Institutions spent time refining online assessments of student success and developing indicators for monitoring student learning growth and learner outcome competencies. Student anecdotal feedback was valued and important in determining what improvements were needed to ensure student learning success (Abel, 2005b).

Community Colleges Become Leaders in Online Education

Community colleges became the post-secondary frontrunners in accepting distance education as an alternate delivery system (Mullins, 2007). Many community colleges turned to distance learning to address their changing demographics, to make education more accessible, and to make post-secondary education more cost-efficient for the institution and more affordable for its students. Adopting distance education reduced barriers they faced with economic shortfalls, budget cuts, and meeting “open-access” requirements. Distance learning also addressed the challenge of addressing rising enrollments without increasing physical space (Mullins, 2007).

According to the 2002 National Center for Education Statistics, the demographics of a community college student was not the same profile as it was in past (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). The distance learning student was likely to be older than age 24, worked full-time, was responsible for his own financial welfare, supported dependent children, and attended college part-time (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). In similar data collected by Phillippe and Patton in 2005 (as cited in Mullins, 2007), the numbers were similar. They reported the average age of a community college student was 29. They also found women

outnumbered attending men by 58%, and that 43% of the students had full-time jobs. In their research, they found that 62% went to college part-time and single parents consisted of 16% of the community college student population.

Community colleges revisited how to do business differently and addressed the changing student profile and demographics. They offered nontraditional approaches to learning to meet the needs of their students and provide broader access and flexibility. Mullins (2007) illustrated that without the movement to offer more distance education opportunities, a college education would not have been achievable for many students. For example, students who worked full-time or took on two jobs could not afford to miss work to attend school. Single mothers who cared for young children could not make arrangements to attend class or could not afford childcare to take off and travel to school. High school students were also affected. They needed to take advanced placement courses at the community college while finishing up their high school degrees. Military personnel, challenged with not being accessible to their local institutions, needed an experience that would allow them to study abroad and keep their military commitment (Mullins, 2007). Students with physical and/or mental challenges or students who were homebound faced similar challenges of not having the capabilities to attend ground school campuses. Community colleges also had an allegiance to career education and to provide workforce educational opportunities with community, business, and industry partners.

By expanding technical and vocational training to online environments, they better served the needs of their community and contributed to the critical shortage needs affecting areas outside the community (Mullins, 2007). These reasons and many more jump-started the community college communities to think differently about their offerings to students. If they

were to hold true to their mission of “open-access,” then targeting distance education was a solution to standing behind their mission.

Distance Education Growth in Community Colleges

The surge of distance education offerings in community colleges in the early 2000s resulted in increased growth in enrollments. In 2003, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that community colleges led public and private four-year institutions in the percentage of enrollments of students in distance education courses (Mullins, 2007). The report identified that out of 3 million post-secondary students nationwide, 48% were enrolled in community college distance education courses, 31% were enrolled in public four-year institution distance education courses, and 19% were enrolled in private four-year institution distance education courses (Mullins, 2007).

In the *2008 Distance Education Survey Results*, community college respondents reported that their online course enrollments had grown from the previous year by 11.3%, compared to only 2% of their ground campus enrollments (Instructional Technology Council, 2008). This data mirrored the same percentages Allen and Seaman (2008) reported in *Staying the Course: Online Education in the United States 2008*. The Sloan Consortium Report also concluded that in 2007, almost 4 million higher education students enrolled in online courses. Of that 4 million, more than 20% took more than one online class (Allen & Seaman, 2008).

Challenges of Distance Education in Community Colleges

While the online education industry grew in community colleges in the mid-2000s, so did concerns of quality in their programs and policies (Allen & Seaman, 2006b, 2008; Instructional Technology Council, 2007, 2008; Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002; Moore & Kearsley, 2005; Mullins, 2007). Many of these issues were addressed in research and literature.

As community colleges became leaders in offering many online courses and programs to students, public concerns grew as to whether or not they were more focused on delivering quantity versus quality offerings. Research studies and surveys were conducted to identify the challenges, as well as quality practices of community college online education processes and programs. The Instructional Technology Council (ITC), an affiliated council of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC), surveyed community colleges in 2005. The annual survey was circulated to approximately 500 institutions. The purpose of the survey was to track longitudinal data and to record trends nationally on e-learning challenges of two-year and technical institutions. The survey summaries were usually completed by the institution's distance education administrator. The questions were categorized in four areas and included these topics: general information, administration, faculty, and students (Instructional Technology Council, 2008).

During the last four surveys, five themes, which challenged community colleges in regard to their distance education delivery systems, emerged:

1. Recruiting and training of faculty in designing, developing, and facilitating online courses
2. Providing support staff to assist in training and technical assistance
3. Ensuring that student services were in place and efficient to help distance education students, that is, financial aid, scheduling of courses, technical trouble-shooting support
4. Supporting technical and resource budgets to a) run the systems and support costs of technology that can improve the delivery of instruction, and b) supporting personnel resources to keep pace with the most up-to-date technologies to continue offering the best delivery of online content
5. Offering courses that required more sophisticated designs to allow interactivity between students or to address specific learning strategies that embraced hands-on or face-to-face simulations, or lab simulation environments, or that met the challenge of difficult content to put on line, such as languages, speech, mathematics (Instructional Technology Council, 2006, 2007, 2008; Mullins, 2007)

In 2008, a specific ITC survey mirrored the previous listed themes. The data highlighted the following findings:

- Workload issues continued to be the greatest challenge for faculty.
- The number one challenge for administrators was to budget or find appropriate support staff to offer technical and training assistance.
- Distance learning enrollments continued to rise with an average of 11.3% increase. This enrollment increase compared to an average of only 2% increase in overall campus enrollments.
- The student demand exceeded the current distance learning offerings, according to 70% of the respondents.
- A rise of blended or hybrid courses occurred among community college campuses and/or web-enhanced or web-assisted courses.
- With the new accreditation rules in place, established by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, most colleges reported that they had expanded their student services and technology support services to sustain distance education students.
- Of the campuses surveyed, 37% were deciding whether or not to change their software management system from Blackboard and WebCT to another management system. “The merger of Blackboard and WebCT has prompted a number of campuses to review their learning management system commitments” (Instructional Technology Council, 2008, p. 3).
- Assessing student learning and performance in an online environment was the greatest challenge for students in 2008 (Instructional Technology Council, 2008).

Addressing Faculty Support in Community Colleges

Faculty support, as defined in this research study, is the provision of ongoing resources for online faculty in the areas of technical, design, production support, and pedagogical training and assistance (Commission on Higher Education, 2001). As research studies and surveys were conducted and data were analyzed, increased concern grew over the disparity between online program offerings and the lack of faculty support in community colleges. With the increased enrollment in distance education courses and programs, as well as the regulatory and community skepticism that existed around quality of online content and delivery, the faculty support gap

became even more transparent as a significant problem (Allen & Seaman, 2008; Allen & Seaman, 2009; Allen & Seaman, 2010; Instructional Technology Council, 2008; Instructional Technology Council, 2009).

Institutions continued to be earmarked for putting in place inefficient policies and resources to support faculty in training, coaching, resources, technical assistance, design assistance, recognitions, and incentives (Instructional Technology Council, 2008; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010). This practice led to resistance of faculty to teach online, and the quality of the instruction was criticized. In a 2010 Managing Online Education (MOE) Survey to over 180 community colleges and four-year institutions, nearly three-quarters of the participants reported faculty resisted teaching online courses primarily due to lack of resources (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010). Karlen (2007) pointed out that when regional accreditation associations evaluated online systems in community colleges, they found that faculty roles and responsibilities were significantly impacted, and faculty resistance in teaching online became evident. Some examples of online processes that created barriers for faculty included:

- Materials were used repeatedly without permission from faculty members who designed them.
- Classes and office hours were scheduled quite differently and took on venues such as instant messaging (IM) chats, email communication, and synchronous and asynchronous discussions.
- Training was more challenging and outside faculty comfort zones or expertise, that is, teaching with alternative delivery multi-media methods and facilitating instruction in online environments.
- Training required ongoing support services to coach and mentor faculty in implementing best practices that promoted student engagement.
- Consideration of hardware and software updates impacted full-time, adjunct, and remote faculty.

- Policies needed to be restructured to include specific concerns that addressed contact hours, class sizes, and time to prepare for online courses.
- Consideration had to be given to revising faculty evaluations to be conducive to an online teaching environment and expectations.

In 2001, the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions endorsed *The Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*. This manual was to be used as a tool and guide to help post-secondary institutions to prepare, implement, and assess distance learning courses to ensure quality and provide essentials to inform and facilitate policies related to distance education (Clark, 2007; Commission on Higher Education, 2001). One of the documented areas of focus was faculty support. After a decade of dissemination of this protocol and the heightened requirement for institutions to put into place standards and practices that conform to best practices, faculty support continued to be identified as an area of needed improvement (Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Instructional Technology Council, 2010; Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2009a).

Key Studies Identify Faculty Support Best Practices and Priorities

Several studies and surveys were conducted to assess online education in community colleges and universities. The goals of these studies determined: 1) the success factors common among higher education institutions that were delivering quality online programs, 2) the challenges they faced, and 3) the priorities to be targeted. Specific to faculty support, key factors emerged as common themes in the literature.

Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness Study

The Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) is a non-profit organization that has conducted research on change in higher education and assessed quality initiatives and positive innovations that demonstrated success (Abel, 2005c). Abel (2005c) conducted a

qualitative study in 2005 with administrators from 21 community colleges and universities who perceived they had quality e-learning programs. The intent was to draw information from the resource person closest to the direct impact of distance education in his respective institution, and understand his perceptions as they related to students, faculty, and administration. This research study consisted of three parts: 1) a questionnaire first submitted via the web, 2) a phone interview, and 3) another web-survey submitted that asked respondents to rank specific criteria compiled from the first two steps of the research project (Abel, 2005c).

Abel's (2005c) overall findings in the study revealed that 42% of the respondents indicated the most important and successful attributes were faculty online learning materials and the environment from which they were produced. Abel (2005c) commented that though faculty support was considered a priority opportunity, it was also a high risk factor that impeded positive change if not considered when creating a more positive experience.

Participants were asked to rank their highest priorities for the coming year. Of the top nine priorities, the biggest challenge was convincing the traditional faculty to support online learning and be trained in online facilitation skills. The highest ranked best practices to target were course quality and student support services. Strengthening how to assess learning outcomes in an online environment was a definite common priority theme. Marketing also was ranked high as a priority, possibly due to the fact that many students perceived online learning as easy, less work, and required less demands in turning work in at certain times (Abel, 2005c).

The order of the results was as follows (Abel, 2005a, p. 40):

- 42% - new technologies or processes to increase quality
- 37% - better support for online students
- 37% - improving marketing
- 26% - convincing the traditional faculty
- 26% - keeping an eye on quality
- 26% - prioritizing scarce resources

- 21% - getting enough courses built
- 16% - training more faculty
- 16% - convincing administrators

Respondents also identified their top priorities during the next three years from a list of 25 items. Faculty support again rose to the top (42%), along with program marketing and recruiting (26%) and new content development and technology deliveries (26%). Specific to faculty support priorities during the next three years, the top-ranked items included (Abel, 2005a, p. 42):

- 26% - establishing course quality standards
- 26% - faculty support website for technical support
- 21% - one-on-one instructional design consultations
- 21% - required comprehensive training before teaching online
- 21% - additional fees paid to teach an online course
- 21% - course development support center staff
- 21% - help from unbiased experts to assess the course quality and effectiveness
- 21% - process and support to improve the course or program each term it was offered

Institutions were also asked to rank the items they planned to emphasize. Six items ranked to the top of this list (Abel, 2005a, p. 42):

- 53% - one-on-one instructional design consultations
- 53% - specific support resources for adjunct faculty
- 47% - course to develop the online course
- 47% - program website to support faculty sharing of best practices
- 47% - course management or other technical training classes
- 47% - learning object repositories to aid program or course development

In Abel's (2005a) study, he found overall that of the institutions surveyed, faculty support services needed to be more widely implemented. The major and most prevalent services implemented with wide use (by at least 65% of the respondents) are listed below (Abel, 2005a, p. 28):

- 90% - faculty web/email helpdesk
- 86% - course management or other technical training classes
- 85% - faculty phone helpdesk

- 85% - course development support from support center staff
- 81% - one-on-one instructional design consultations
- 81% - clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials
- 67% - additional fees paid to develop an online course

Other faculty support services, which were implemented with success by more than 33% of the institutions, were compared to institutions that did not put them into practice (greater than 15%). These services are listed below. The data collected would be considered valuable for future institutions considering moving to online platforms and systems (Abel, 2005a, p. 29):

- 58% vs. 29% - faculty support website for technical support
- 53% vs. 33% - faculty full-time helpdesk
- 67% vs. 24% - additional fees paid to develop an online course
- 48% vs. 29% - additional fees paid to teach an online course
- 43% vs. 29% - formation of faculty team to redesign courses or programs
- 33% vs. 38% - specific support resources for adjunct faculty
- 52% vs. 24% - grant or other funding to put courses or programs online
- 43% vs. 19% - faculty sessions to profile student needs and select appropriate online pedagogy
- 33% vs. 38% - course testing support prior to deployment
- 48% vs. 19% - support for use of publisher content

The highest risk faculty support services were also identified. These support services were considered the most challenging when put into practice, and they had high failure rates.

The nine high risk faculty support services were identified as follows (Abel, 2005a, p. 29):

- program website to support faculty sharing of best practices
- formation of faculty team to redesign courses or programs
- specific support resources for adjunct faculty
- faculty sessions to profile student needs and select appropriate online pedagogy
- learning object repositories to aid program or course development
- help from unbiased experts to access the course quality and effectiveness
- process and support to improve the course or program each term it is offered
- support for use of publisher content
- course testing support prior to deployment

Impact of Policy: Building on Two Dissertation Studies and a National Survey

Two previous dissertation studies looked at the impact of distance education policies on the quality of distance education programs in community colleges. The correlation between faculty support quality and those institutions with distance education policies in place was significant in both research studies (Amason, 2007a; Hodge, 2000). Hodge (2000) and Amason (2007a) identified online faculty support as a challenge that needed further investigation. In their findings, they reinforced that this area was critical to ensuring quality in distance education courses, programs, and student engagement.

Hodge (2000) conducted a quantitative study to address the broad issues of distance education in community colleges. Specifically, her study examined the differences in states that had distance education policies and those states that did not have distance education. The purpose of her study was to look at the consistencies, similarities, and differences of state policies to find effective and efficient policy benchmarks for each state that could be used to develop model distance education programs (Hodge, 2000). She found a discrepancy in practices with those states that had distance education policies compared to those states that did not have such policies. She also identified three areas that had significant impact on the quality of distance education programs: “infrastructure, program development, and faculty and student support” (Hodge, 2000, p. vii).

Amason (2007a) looked at diffusion gaps of community college distance education policies at the institution, state, and consortia levels (p. 15). He sought to “triangulate state, consortia, and institutional policies with policy analysis frameworks, regional accreditation policies, and best practices” (Amason, 2007a, p. 17).

The problems that influenced Amason’s (2007a) study were centered on: 1) skepticism of online education and its role in the community college; 2) the limited research conducted on

distance education policies; and 3) pressures being put on universities and colleges to deliver more online courses due to increased demand, lower costs associated with it, and new technology delivery systems to make it more accessible. The goal of his study was to understand the impact of policy diffusion on student proximity and recommend policy guidelines for community college distance education program models at the state level. He found that diffusion increased the closer that policy guidelines were to the students. States therefore had lower distance education policy diffusion, and institutions had the greatest policy diffusion (Amason, 2007a). In relation to faculty factors, Amason (2007a) concluded that overall low policy diffusion occurred, and the most ignored factor was faculty rewards. Amason (2007a) recommended more attention be given to this area at the institution and state levels to avoid faculty resistance against distance education deployment.

Hodge's Study

Hodge's (2000) study focused on the consistencies, similarities, and differences in states that had distance education policies. After collecting data from 43% of the returned surveys sent to 53 community college state directors in the United States, he found that consistencies were evident in the states that had distance education policies and supported the *Principles of Good Practice*. Findings also indicated differences in states with and without distance education policies. Hodge reported a discrepancy in practices from those institutions that had state distance education policies compared to those institutions that did not have a discrepancy in practices. An interesting finding was that 100% of the surveyed respondents ranked partnerships and business/industry collaborations as the most important initiatives to influence the development of distance education policy. Her study also found three specific policy areas that were affected the most in guaranteeing quality and equitability in distance education programs: program development, infrastructure, and faculty and student support.

Surveyed respondents indicated that for distance education programs to be of quality, institutions needed to invest in faculty training and development. Hodge (2000) recommended several practices to be incorporated in state and institutional level policies to increase faculty support in distance education:

- “The program or course provides faculty support services specifically related to teaching via an electronic system” (p. 128).
- “The institution must ensure appropriate training for faculty who teach using technology” (p. 128).
- “The program or course provide faculty with adequate equipment, software, and communications for interaction with students, institutions, and other faculty” (p. 128).
- “Policies for faculty evaluation included appropriate recognition of teaching and scholarly activities related to programs or courses offered electronically” (p. 128).
- “The institution demonstrates a commitment to ongoing support, both financial and technical, and through continuation of the program or course for a period sufficient for students to complete a degree or certificate” (p. 129).

In her research, Hodge (2000) identified Mississippi and Virginia as two exemplary state models for distance education faculty training and support. These states provided comprehensive expectations for training distance education faculty. Specific expectations in these state programs included (Hodge, 2000, p. 140):

- faculty expectations and responsibilities
- faculty compensation for course development
- faculty load assignment, planning for faculty training
- organizing faculty development activities
- new faculty activities
- activities for continuing faculty
- using technology in faculty development
- encouraging research in teaching and learning in online environments

Hodge’s (2000) research methods included: 1) a quantitative study, surveying 53 community college state directors to find consistencies, similarities, and differences in state distance education policies; and 2) a qualitative follow-up study to find the key issues of the nine

states that had distance education policies. She used multiple one-way analyses of variance to analyze the four follow-up research questions independently. The dependent variables that were studied were infrastructure, program development, and faculty and student support. Hodge wanted to determine if systemic differences or effects occurred among these three dependent variables.

Amason's Study

Amason's (2007a) study was a mixed-methods attempt at narrowing the inquiry focus to faculty support in distance education environments in community colleges. The study employed document review, content analysis, and survey interviews. He hoped to ascertain if differences in distance education policies existed on the levels of states, institutions, consortia, or regional accrediting associations, and then inform decision-makers of his findings. Amason (2007a) specifically looked at policy analysis frameworks, regional accreditation policies, and best practices. He also wanted to know to what extent diffusion for distance education policy had on the impact of quality and efficiency of community college online programs. He found that of the four different levels, state policies and guidelines were farthest from the students and had the lowest policy diffusion, thus less impact on their distance education experience. Institution policy and guidelines, however, had a more direct impact on students' distance education experience, thus greater diffusion. The closer the policy guidelines were to the students and faculty, the greater chance they impacted the effectiveness of the distance education programs and spread to the stakeholders who could make the most impact on change. Amason's (2007a) findings suggested a higher diffusion rate correlated to a greater impact of change. The lower the diffusion or dispersion, the less chance the policy would spread to faculty and students. For example, Amason (2007a) noted that accrediting bodies had coherent policies on distance education for community colleges, but because accreditation associations held institutions

accountable for standards, they not only were considered in proximity but also had high policy diffusion. Institutions, which did not have policies on distance education programs, relied on standards put forth by the regional accreditation bodies. These institutions were therefore at risk for a greater chance of low impact on students and faculty as well.

In regard to faculty, Amason (2007a) found that policy regarding faculty rewards had the lowest diffusion when analyzing faculty factors in policy. He suggested that institutions needed to pay close attention to this gap, especially if faculty resistance was negative or not well received on distance education teaching and learning (Amason, 2007a).

Amason's (2007a) qualitative research methods consisted of a normative analysis of these policies and practices and were grounded in constructivism. He used document review and content analysis studies to compare program design with actual practices and expected practices. Amason (2007a) developed a protocol to differentiate between the researched data and the operational norms (King, Nugent, Russell, Eich, & Lacy, 2000). The Policy Analysis Framework (PAF) (Figure 2.1) was the foundation for developing the content analysis in correlating the *Interregional Guidelines for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002).

Amason (2007a) referred to this type of ethnographic analysis as the qualitative content analysis (ACQ). His goal was to compare and contrast existing policy with desired policy and look for patterns and trends. Amason's PAF was constructed in the following format (Figure 2.2): His sample consisted of 37 community college distance education programs from 15 states, with five regional accreditation bodies associated with this sample. Each of the community colleges was a part of the League for Innovation in the Community Colleges. Most of the policies for the 37 community colleges were available through the internet and could be accessed

through the League for Innovation website. Amason (2007a) also found most of the state consortia documents on the web. These included “statutes, administrative code, departmental directives, and strategy and financial documents” (Amason, 2007a, p. 69).

Amason’s (2007a) policy diffusion research PAF conclusions were charted to demonstrate his findings on diffusion rates at each of the three levels and their comparisons with selected factors. In summary, his research showed reasonable diffusion of policy for online distance education in community colleges (Figure 2-2).

King’s et al. Policy Analysis Framework was used to identify the factor elements in Amason’s (2007a) study. The specific factors relative to faculty support are included in Table 2-1.

Some conclusions determined from this study, especially centered around faculty and curriculum, included (Amason, 2007b):

- Consistent themes arose of access, student success, and educational quality and infrastructure viability at the state and institutional levels.
- A possible relationship occurred between accreditation standards and institutional curriculum/courses policies. Institutions are sensitive to accreditation standards.
- Patterns were identified in faculty support (training and preparation) at the consortium and institutional levels, which suggests high policy diffusion in faculty training at these two levels. Faculty asked for training on student engagement and technical assistance. Administrators shared a concern about the quality of online courses.
- No data were found to support faculty release time for professional development to learn how to design or teach online course.
- Little mention at any level was given to faculty rewards. “Factors analyzed included: stipends, promotion and tenure, merit increases and release time” (p. 108).
- A lack of information existed regarding intellectual property factors.

This researcher noted that faculty members were critical of online achievements. They held copyright and intellectual property rights in high importance, and incentives were essential

to accepting and being involved in online development and delivery (Amason, 2007b). Amason (2007a) recommended future research in investigating exemplary faculty and preparation training programs. In his document review, he recognized specific examples of excellent training programs and mentorship programs for new faculty.

Document Review

A document review was conducted on faculty support factors and attributes identified in the Sloan Consortium reports, Instructional Technology Council's reports, the A-HEC reports, and the Middle States Commission on Higher Education's *Interregional Guidelines for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* and *Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2001). A comparison chart was constructed to analyze these past studies. The goal was to use the chart as an analysis tool to see if the same indicators of faculty support success appeared in the results of this study (Figure 2-3). A comparison of priority faculty support attributes as defined by Abel's, ITC's, and Sloan-C's study results).

An initial analysis was also conducted using Hodge's (2000) and Amason's (2007a) study findings, as well as conducting a document review on best practices and challenges reported in three major studies: A-HEC 2005 Study, ITC 2009 Study, and Sloan-Consortium 2009 Study. The analysis of these three studies resulted in the following collection of indicators: motivation to support online learning; policies and guidelines; increase for demand; financial need; competition and demand; staff support training and technical assistance; leadership support; faculty recruitment; faculty acceptance and participation; faculty support; faculty training in design, development, and pedagogy; faculty incentives and rewards; strategic planning and assessment; and student support.

Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) National Study

Based on referrals from the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC)'s national study and other sponsors, the 21 nationwide participating institutions were invited to take part, based on their own perceptions that their distance education programs were successful. These selection criteria were noted by Abel (2005b) as being a "subjective indicator" (p. 2). The institution responders were categorized as follows: "2 non-profit public baccalaureate/masters, 4 community colleges, 1 community college consortium, 1 national for-profit college, 4 non-profit private baccalaureate/masters, 8 non-profit public research doctoral and 1 non-profit private research doctoral institutions (Abel, 2005a, p. 10).

The result of the 2005 A-HEC study identified six factors for any institution to set as a standard to determine if the institution was successful in online learning (Abel, 2009c, p. 6): 1) compelling motivation, 2) commitment and prioritization, 3) programmatic approach, 4) faculty support, 5) student services, and 6) goals and measurements.

The analysis of Abel's (2005c) study resulted in finding online best practices and possible indicators for success. He constructed a framework that identified the indicators that were the most successful and those that were not successful. Faculty Support ranked as one of the top six indicators of success.

Abel's (2005a) initial study found six factors that were benchmarks for success. According to Abel (2005a), they were derived from analyzing more than 110 factors from the original survey to the 21 institutions. Abel (2005c) constructed the conceptual framework to highlight the six factors.

Framework Development

After completing the document review and analyzing past research and national studies on distance education programs at community colleges and universities, a Levels of Support

Analysis Framework was developed to compare the similarities and differences of the two-year and four-year institutions in the study (Table 2-2).

A similar tool was used by Amason called the Policy Analysis Framework (PAF) (Figure 2-2). Amason's framework was adopted from King's et al. (2000) conceptual framework research. The Levels of Support Analysis Framework was designed to take selected key attributes and factors from the study's survey instrument and use them as a baseline for comparing responses from follow-up interviews from sample institutions. The analysis grid would assist in documenting how the two-year institutions' distance education factors and faculty support indicators were similar or different.

Community College to Baccalaureate Status

Since 2001, Florida community colleges are becoming four-year, degree-granting institutions. The purpose of this movement was to meet the demand of offering baccalaureate degrees in areas that addressed local workforce demands, provided more four-year school choices for students, and offered geographical flexibility in attending institutions in proximity to local areas (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, 2005).

According to the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability Report in 2005, Florida ranked last in having the fewest public four-year institutions per capita. In 2000, Florida Statute 1004.73 approved the first baccalaureate, degree-granting institution, St. Petersburg College. This statute authorized St. Petersburg College to offer four-year programs in nursing, education, and applied science with the authority to provide programs meeting local needs beginning in 2005. In 2001, the Florida Legislature created Florida Statute 1007.33, which provided authorization for all community colleges in Florida to apply for baccalaureate status. By the 2003-2004 academic year, Florida had four approved programs: St. Petersburg College, Miami Dade College, Okaloosa-Walton College, and Chipola College (Office of Program Policy

Analysis and Government Accountability, 2005). The Florida College System provided more than \$7 million to support the community college baccalaureate programs in the 2003-2004 academic year (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, 2005).

Florida Mandate to Increase Online Degree Programs

In 2009, a formal mandate was written in the Florida Long Term Strategic plan from 2009 to 2014 for all baccalaureate institutions and community colleges to expand access of online degrees (Florida Department of Education, 2009). The plan reported that the Board of Governors Distance Education Consortium would appoint an advisory board to meet specific distance education goals. One of the goals was to provide professional development in online learning for faculty (Florida Department of Education, 2009). With the surging need to increase the number of four-year institutions and at the same time increase distance education opportunities for students, the findings and recommendations from this study were designed to contribute to better quality online experiences, especially in the area of faculty support. Based on the data from Allen and Seaman's 2009 *Learning on Demand* report, an increased percentage of community colleges did not value or accept online education, based on the perception of the respondent completing the surveys. The authors questioned whether or not the recent drop in acceptance was due to more faculty being forced to teach online, and this was an indicator of "push back" (Allen & Seaman, 2009, p. 12). Future research studies could be considered in looking at the relationship of "perceived faculty acceptance to the rate of growth of online offerings at an institution" (Allen & Seaman, 2009, p. 12).

Summary

Chapter 2 began with an explanation of the history of distance education in post-secondary education and addressed challenges that institutions faced in working through a paradigm shift of using this nontraditional delivery system in the 21st century. Open universities and mega-

universities were also discussed, as well as their role in developing infrastructures that were more team-centered models versus faculty-centered models.

The literature suggested that this nontraditional delivery system was cost-efficient, met the demands of the students, and provided a flexible way to attend college using 21st century technology resources. But the literature also pointed out specific gaps in the roll-out of the delivery system over the years that raised skepticism about its quality. Specific gaps of online delivery systems were identified, and information regarding the role of accrediting agencies to address these gaps was described. Critics continued to address whether or not too much attention had been given to quantity versus quality of online instruction in post-secondary institutions.

Accrediting agencies put in place best practices and guidelines for post-secondary institutions to deal with the shortfalls of distance education instruction. It was important to create guidelines due to the fact that online offerings crossed regional borders. But it later became critical to put more accountability measures in place to enforce standards and best practices at the institution levels. These commitments were adopted in 2002 and the following became accreditation policies and standards: *Interregional Guidelines for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*, *The Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs*, and the *Statement of Commitment by the Regional Accrediting Commissions for the Evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs* (Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002). Five specific elements were highlighted as key quality measures: 1) institutional context and commitment, 2) curriculum and instruction, 3) faculty support, 4) student support, and 5) evaluation and assessment.

Special attention was given to community colleges and their role in delivering distance education. As the post-secondary frontrunner in accepting distance education as an alternate

delivery system, many community colleges turned to distance learning to address their changing demographics and to make post-secondary education more cost-efficient for their institutions and more affordable for their students. They saw distance education as an opportunity to reduce barriers they faced with economic shortfalls, budget cuts, and meeting “open access” requirements. Distance education was also a solution to addressing rising enrollments without increasing physical space (Mullins, 2007).

The literature continued to address faculty support as a major gap. Institutions did not put in place adequate policies and resources to support faculty in training, coaching, resources, technical assistance, design assistance, recognition, and incentives. This lack of support led to resistance of faculty to teach online, and the quality of the instruction was criticized.

Two dissertation studies were described in Chapter 2 that focused on community college distance education policies and the differences, similarities, and consistencies of these policies. Policy diffusion was compared at the state, consortia, and institutional levels. In their findings and recommendations, Hodge (2000) and Amason (2007a) built a case for stating that more research was needed in the area of faculty support so decision-makers could have specific and practical tools to implement on a continual basis.

A national study was also discussed that provided insight into the perceptions that community colleges and universities had successful online learning programs (Abel, 2005a). The characteristics were identified, and the challenges set the stage for the current study in targeting effective practices for faculty who teach online courses and/or who are involved in the development.

The literature was fairly consistent in identifying strengths and weaknesses of online delivery systems in post-secondary institutions. But the concern continued to be at the forefront

of the inconsistencies among the institutions in how they provided accountability measures and a self-assessment framework to assess their own policies and processes.

The literature review in Chapter 2 set the stage for this dissertation study. Unless faculty support was addressed as a major system-wide commitment and continually assessed to ensure quality was enhanced, online courses would continue to be scrutinized in this area. The faculty are the closest individuals to the students—whether in an online environment or in a traditional classroom. Resources need to be in place to send the message that this is a critical and important factor needing attention. This study was built on Hodge (2000) and Amason's (2007a) studies to specifically address faculty support and compare specific factors and attributes of Florida state baccalaureate institutions and community colleges to determine if a relationship existed.

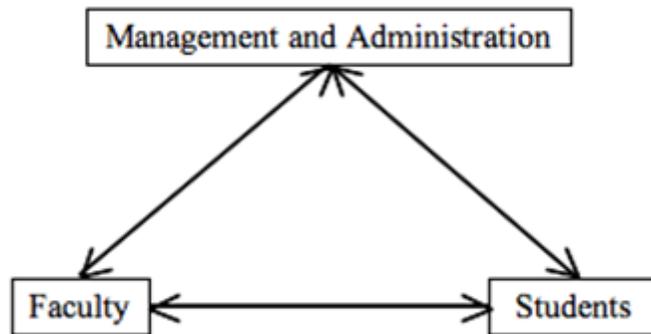


Figure 2-1. King's et al. three-tiered policy analysis framework. (King's et al., 2000)

Level \ Factor	Mgt & Org	Faculty	Students	O/A
State	Low	Low	Low	Low
Consortium	Moderate	Moderate	High	Mod
Institution	High	Moderate	High	High
Overall	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Mod

Policy Diffusion Legend: Low: < 34%
 Moderate: 34 - 68%
 High: > 68%

Figure 2-2. Amason's policy analysis framework: Policy diffusion conclusions based on document review. (Amason, 2007b)

Abel, A-HEC Results, 2005	ITC Results, 2009	Sloan-C Results, 2009
Nurture Faculty Ideas	Recruitment	
Communication	Compensation (Incentives & Rewards)	
Technology Training/Support	Intellectual Property/Ownership	Technology Training/Support
Pedagogical Training/Support	Pedagogical & Technical Training /Support	Pedagogical Training/Support
Course Design & Development Training/Support	Course Design & Development Training/Support	Course Design & Development Training/Support
Scholarship of Teaching/Accepting Online as Quality	Buy-In to Online Instruction	Acceptance of Value & Legitimacy of Online
	Address Workload Issues	

Figure 2-3. A comparison of priority faculty support attributes as defined by Abel’s, ITC’s, and Sloan-C’s study results. (Abel, 2005; Instructional Technology Council, 2009, Allen & Seaman, 2009)

Abel’s Priority Rankings for Effective Distance Education Programming	Ranked Most Important
Executive leadership and support	15%
Faculty and academic leadership commitment	15%
Student services	12%
Technology infrastructure	12%
Course/instructional quality	9%
Financial resources and plan	9%
Training	7%
Adaptive learn-as-you-go attitude	7%
Communication	5%
Marketing	4%
Other	4%

Figure 2-4. Abel’s priority rankings for effective distance education programming based on the 21 institutions in the initial research sample. (Abel, 2005b)

Table 2-1. King's et al. Policy Analysis Framework related to faculty support

PAF Factor (King et al. 2000)	Attribute
Rewards: Stipends	The institution and its participating faculty have considered issues of workload and compensation.
Rewards: Promotion and Tenure	The institution and its participating faculty have considered issues of workload and compensation.
Support: Student Help	Provides orientation and training, including strategies for effective interaction.
Support: Technical Assistance	Technical support services, including helpdesk services.
Support: Training	Ongoing program of appropriate technical, design, and production support for participating faculty members; provides training and support.
Opportunities to learn about technology and new applications: Release Time	Institution and its participating faculty have considered issues of workload, compensation, ownership of intellectual property.
Opportunities to learn about technology and new applications: Training	Provides to those responsible for program development orientation and training.
Intellectual property: Copyright	Copyright law; institution and its participating faculty have considered issues of intellectual property.

Table 2-2. Levels of support analysis framework (Appendices C and D; follow-up interview transcripts)

Follow-up interview feedback analysis using the eight parts from the internet-supported learning survey.	Levels of Support 2-year institutions in Sample	Levels of Support 4-year institutions in Sample
	Low = only found in 1 out of 4 institutions Medium = found in 2 out of 4 institutions High = found in 3 or 4 institutions	Low = only found in 1 out of 4 institutions Medium = found in 2 out of 4 institutions High = found in 3 or 4 institutions
Part 1-Motivation		
Part 2-Commitment/Leadership		
Part 3- Program Level Support		
Part 4- Faculty Support		
Part 5- Student Support		
Part 8- Goals		

* = not enough information to code

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify if differences existed in distance education faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two year mission. This study also sought to find common attributes of quality faculty support programs and/or policies, and discriminate which practices and policies were more successful than others. The study also examined discrepancies in faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding these practices and policies. In other words, did a relationship exist between what the faculty thought were important support attributes and what the administration offered in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support? Analysis of the data could result in a "best practice" model to be used by faculty and administrators to improve their online distance learning programs.

In order to address the purpose of the study, four research questions were developed:

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to consider in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

This chapter describes the research methodology used to analyze the differences between four-year baccalaureate, degree-granting state colleges and two-year community colleges. It includes foundational supporting information on two dissertation studies, a description of the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) research methodology replicated in

this study, research questions used, selection of population samples, instrumentation/framework for analysis, and data collection and analysis methods.

Design Considerations

This study was founded on two previous dissertation studies and a national survey. The study was replicated using the 2005 Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) but with a different population sample. In Amason's (2007a) and Hodge's (2000) dissertations, they looked at distance education policies and practices of community colleges at a national level. Findings of these studies resulted in a need to look more closely at faculty support and incentives to improve the overall faculty/student experience (Amason, 2007a; Hodge, 2000).

Hodge (2000) conducted a quantitative study addressing the broad issues of distance education in post-secondary settings. Her study found three specific policy areas that were most affected in guaranteeing quality and equitability in distance education programs. The identified areas were: program development, infrastructure, and faculty and student support.

Amason (2007a) conducted a qualitative, normative, and mixed review study comparing distance education policies at the state, consortia, and institutional levels. By identifying the similarities and differences in these policies, his goal was to propose guidelines for community college online distance education programs. In his findings, Amason reported that faculty rewards were almost non-existent on all three levels. Amason (2007a) recommended that institutions and states consider engaging their faculty more in online teaching by offering more faculty incentives and avoid faculty resistance against distance education deployment.

The recommendations of Hodge and Amason provided the foundation for continued data collection in this area. The correlation between faculty support quality and those institutions with distance education policies in place was significant in both of these research studies (Amason, 2007a; Hodge, 2000). The authors also identified online faculty support as a challenge

that needed further investigation. The findings of researchers reinforced the idea that this area of online faculty support is critical.

Rob Abel, president and founder of the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness, (A-HEC), conducted a nationwide survey with follow-up interviews in 2005 with 21 universities and community colleges that regarded their institutions' online education programs as being successful. The intent was to draw information from the resource persons closest to the direct impact of distance education in their respective institutions, and understand their perceptions as they related to students, faculty, and administration. The research study consisted of three parts: 1) a survey questionnaire first submitted via the web, 2) a phone interview, and 3) another web-survey submitted that asked respondents to rank specific criteria compiled from the first two steps of the research project (Abel, 2005c). Based on the perspective of each institution, Abel (2005c) sought to find key factors that would determine success in online higher education programs. Findings from this report revealed that executive leadership, support faculty, and academic leadership commitment were the top three criteria for higher education distance education success (Abel, 2005b). In regard to specificity about faculty support, his data showed that faculty online support was more successful in community colleges. He found that these institutions did a good job in nurturing "grass roots efforts" of faculty (Abel, 2005c, p. 23). This support finding was noted as a key factor in promoting faculty to accept and take ownership of improving distance education efforts.

Participants

The state of Florida provides public support for three tiers of higher education institutions. As of January 2011, eleven comprehensive institutions awarded both undergraduate and graduate degrees, 19 institutions awarded an associate and undergraduate degree, and 9 institutions awarded only the associate degree (Florida Department of Education, 2010b). In

2000, Florida Statute 1004.73 approved the first baccalaureate, degree-granting institution to be St. Petersburg College (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, 2005). Beginning in 2005, Florida Statute 1004.73 authorized St. Petersburg College to offer four-year programs in nursing, education, and applied science with the authority to provide programs meeting local needs. In 2001, the Florida Legislature created Florida Statute 1007.33, which provided authorization for all community colleges in Florida to apply for baccalaureate status (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability, 2005). By the beginning of the academic year 2003-2004, Florida had four approved programs. Florida community colleges soon began applying for approval to become state baccalaureate, degree-granting schools. By January 2011, 19 institutions in Florida had made this transition.

For this study, 4 of the 19 Florida baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions were purposeful selected based on their longevity in the Florida College System. Broward College was excluded from the sample because it had been a past participant in Abel's (2005c) study (at the time it was still designated as a two-year community college). These baccalaureate schools in the study remained anonymous and were identified as Baccalaureate 1(B-1), Baccalaureate 2 (B-2), Baccalaureate 3 (B-3), and Baccalaureate 4 (B-4). In addition, 4 of the 9 two-year institutions were purposeful selected for inclusion in the study. This study limited its research to community colleges that were not applying for baccalaureate status in 2010 or 2011. The identity of these schools also remained anonymous and identified as Community College 1 (CC-1), Community College 2 (CC-2), Community College 3 (CC-3), and Community College 4 (CC-4).

Table 3-1 shows the demographic enrollment comparisons and percentages among the two- and four-year institutions along with the totals for the Florida College System. Not unexpectedly, the average size of the four-year institution was approximately 30% larger than the

two-year community college. In terms of demographics, the two samples roughly matched the system percentages, but the inclusion of one baccalaureate school in the four-year sample appeared to over-represent the percentage of Hispanic students for that group of institutions.

Primary contacts were made to each institution, and the primary contacts recommended the appropriate respondent for the research study. The respondent varied from a dean of the institution to the manager or director most involved with online programming. Invitations and phone calls were made to the respondents to inquire and ask permission to include them in the study. Formal permissions followed with signatures obtained prior to the start of the study. If the respondent did not want to participate, the primary contact of the institution was contacted again, and this person selected another individual. If the institution did not want to participate, another institution was purposeful selected.

Instruments

Instruments used in this study replicated the instruments used in the 2005 A-HEC study. They included a self-study survey and a follow-up list of interview questions.

A-HEC questionnaire: The internet-supported survey with 109 responses was distributed to a designated respondent of each institution. A five-point Likert scale measured specific areas related to the six factors mentioned in Abel's (2005c) study: 1) compelling motivation, 2) commitment and prioritization, 3) programmatic approach, 4) faculty support, 5) student services, and 6) goals and measurements. The survey for this study was modified slightly with goals, priorities, and measurements divided into separate parts to make the survey easier to complete by respondents. The items on the survey were not changed. While the survey has been used extensively, no psychometric characteristics appeared on it primarily because the unit of analysis is at the institution level, and not enough data computed the reliability and validity coefficients for the instrument.

A-HEC follow-up interview questions: After respondents completed the Internet-based surveys and a formative analysis was conducted on the responses, each initial respondent was contacted for a phone interview. Follow-up questions were developed based on the results of the survey data. Each respondent answered the same questions. Transcripts were created for all follow-up interviews. Follow-up interview questions are located in Appendix B.

Procedure

This study was conducted using quantitative methodology and based primarily on survey interviews and content analysis. It was a replication of a national survey conducted in 2005 by Abel and the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC). In May 2010, Dr. Abel granted permission to replicate his study. It was also structured using the research study background of two previous dissertation studies of Amason (2007a) and Hodge (2000). The goal was to refine these earlier studies and draw on their research and other studies to determine if a relationship existed between key factors and attributes of faculty support and practices conducted between traditional community colleges and baccalaureate schools in Florida.

Research was conducted in two steps with eight respondents: four from Florida community colleges and four from Florida baccalaureate schools. First, one respondent from each institution completed an internet-based 109-item survey. The respondents were allowed to answer the items based on their own perceptions and on the perceptions of faculty, students, and administrators from the respective schools. Abel (2005a) remarked, “While this introduces the possibility of bias by the respondent, this was considered acceptable because the purpose of the study was to understand the perceptions from the most knowledgeable contact, as opposed to trying to ‘ground-truth’ those perceptions” (p. 10).

The second step consisted of a phone interview with the initial respondents to gain more information about the online experience of each institution. Abel’s (2005a) original study

included a third step of sending out a follow-up self-study survey via the web after the interviews with the initial respondents. This survey with ranked and open-response items was used in the A-HEC's self-audit study. For the purpose of this study, Abel's (2007a) latter self-study survey was used as the initial questionnaire since it was considered an improved survey, and it also asked respondents to consider future implications and trends (Abel, 2005a).

Research Questions

The primary research question of the study was: Does a difference exist between online faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two-year mission? Other questions that supported the primary question were as follows:

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges? For example, do some strategies work better in larger schools with more resources? Or do some strategies work better in the schools that have been baccalaureate the longest? Also, can the effectiveness of the attributes be determined?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to include in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

Data Analysis

The survey questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS software and descriptive statistics were conducted on both the individual items and the composite sub-scores. Tables were generated to represent the overall results of the online survey and were presented for each of the eight parts of the survey. Another set of tables were generated to show the survey results by institution type (two-year versus four-year). Summaries were generated to report the analysis of the similarities

and differences of the overall results and the similarities and differences between the two-year institution results and the four-year institution results for each of the eight parts of the survey. The interview data were coded, analyzed, and reported. Tables generated from the follow-up interviews summarized comparisons between the participant responses at the two-year institutions' based on the eight parts of the survey and research questions. Comparisons were also made between the highest ranked items of Abel's national study and the highest ranked items from this research study's participants.

Table 3-1. Demographic enrollment information on the two samples compared with the Florida college system totals (2009-2010)

Characteristic	Two-Year Community College Sample		Four-Year College Sample		System Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	33,862	42.1	39,181	39.9	182,494	40.6
Female	46,575	57.9	59,118	60.1	266,975	59.4
White	38,428	47.8	33,216	33.8	228,737	50.9
Black	13,134	16.3	14,396	14.6	78,344	17.4
American Indian-Alaska Native	336	0.4	246	0.3	2,062	0.5
Asian or Pacific Islander	3,248	4.1	1,618	1.6	13,106	2.9
Hispanic	17,858	22.2	42,906	43.6	97,747	21.7
Unknown Ethnicity	5,640	7.0	3,869	3.9	21,425	4.8
Non-Resident Alien	1,787	2.2	1,764	1.8	8,048	1.8

Source: FL Department of Education 2010 Fact Book (Florida Department of Education, 2010a)

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to identify the differences in distance education faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two-year mission. This study also sought to find common attributes of quality faculty support programs and/or policies, and discriminate which practices and policies were more successful than others. The study also examined discrepancies in faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding these practices and policies. In other words, did a relationship exist between what the faculty thought were important support attributes and what the administration offered in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support? The findings of this research focused on practices that were the most effective for both faculty and administration.

In order to address the purpose of the study, four research questions were developed.

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to consider in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

This chapter reports the results and discussions of the data collected to address the four research questions. As described in Chapter 3, data collection took place in two phases, reflecting the mixed methods design of this study. In the first phase of data collection, respondents completed an eight-part internet-administered survey. In the second phase of data

collection, respondents participated in a 30- to 45-minute follow-up phone interview that focused on the particular online learning practices of the institution.

The results are presented in three sections. In Section 1, the overall results of the online survey are presented for each of the eight parts. In Section 2, the survey results are shown by the type of institution with which the respondent was affiliated (two-year versus four-year). Section 3 reports the qualitative results from the follow-up interviews.

For the first two sections, the mean was calculated for each item response. An index score was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the questions in each of the eight parts. A brief summary of the descriptive statistics is discussed in these sections, and the data are represented in tables located at the end of this chapter.

In Section 2, the descriptive information from the two- and four-year institutions was reported to analyze the similarities and differences between the two institution types. No attempt was made to get statistical data on the differences between the institutional types due to the small sample size; however, six separate independent t-tests were run to test if the means for the index scores were the same across institutional classifications. Table 4-31 shows the results of this analysis. The t-test values showed no significant differences. It should be noted that the test was run with very few degrees of freedom. All data reports for this section are located at the end of this chapter.

In Section 3, the results of follow-up interviews are discussed as a further attempt to answer the four research questions. This qualitative data helped to explain any differences found and also to highlight possible trends of the two- and four-year institutions in the sample. Further descriptive analyses are reported in Appendix C: Two-Year Institutions Faculty Support

Feedback from Follow-up Interviews and Appendix D: Florida Baccalaureate Faculty Support Analysis Feedback from Follow-up Interviews.

Section 1: Survey Results

A summary of the overall collected item response data and descriptive statistics data for each of the survey instrument's eight parts are briefly discussed in this section. Tables for each section are located at the end of this chapter.

The survey's introductory question solicited respondents to self-assess their degree of personal knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning. The scale for response runs from "1" (Little or No Experience) to "5" (Expert Level). Table 4-1 shows the descriptive information of this question. The sample mean was $\underline{M} = 4.25$ with $\underline{SD} = 0.71$. Participants rated themselves as being relatively knowledgeable about the topic.

Part 1 of the survey addressed the institution's compelling reasons to support online learning. Eleven questions targeted why an institution might support online learning. Responses ran from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "5" (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the motivation section of the survey are given in Table 4-2. The highest rated item focused on student service with $\underline{M} = 4.63$ and $\underline{SD} = .52$. The lowest rated items were on personalized learning and competition from other institutions with $\underline{M} = 3.63$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.92$. An index score was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 11 questions from Part 1. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-3. The sample mean was $\underline{M} = 4.16$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.59$, which suggested a high level of motivation.

Part 2 of the survey considered the role of leadership in the institution's online education initiatives, priorities, and commitments. Responses ran from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "5" (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the eight questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-4. The highest rated item centered on the clarity of selection criteria

for faculty who teach online courses with $\underline{M} = 4.30$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.46$. The lowest rated item pertained to the effectiveness of review processes with $\underline{M} = 3.2$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.89$. An index score (Commitment/Leadership), similar to that generated for Part 1 of the survey, was formulated by calculating the mean of the responses from the eight questions from Part 2. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-5. The mean for the Commitment/Leadership dimension was $\underline{M} = 3.80$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.63$, which suggested a moderate level of Commitment/Leadership.

Part 3 of the survey considered how the institution created a more effective learning experience at the program level. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 11 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-6. The highest rated item highlighted the enhancement of courses through internet-supported learning with $\underline{M} = 4.30$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.46$. The lowest rated item referred to the involvement of enrollment management and/or marketing with $\underline{M} = 2.88$ and $\underline{SD} = 1.13$. An index score for Program Level Support was formed by calculating the mean of the responses from the 11 questions from Part 3. The results of this calculation are reported in Table 4-7. The mean for the Program Level Support dimension was $\underline{M} = 3.72$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.47$, which suggested a moderate level of Program Level Support.

Part 4 of the survey considered how the institution supported faculty working together to create a better student experience and how the administration supported faculty in improving the online experience. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 16 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-8. The highest rated item emphasized the effectiveness of one-on-one instructional design consultation with $\underline{M} = 4.63$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.52$. The lowest rated item addressed the creation of an effective full-time web or email helpdesk for faculty with $\underline{M} = 2.75$ and $\underline{SD} = 1.67$. An index

score for Faculty Support was formed by calculating the mean of the responses from Part 4's 16 questions. The results of this calculation are reported in Table 4-9. The mean for the Faculty Support dimension was $\underline{M} = 3.75$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.66$, which suggested a moderate level of Faculty Support.

Part 5 of the survey considered how the institution supported the online student experience. Responses ran from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "5" (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 13 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-10. The highest rated item addressed the priority of student learning with $\underline{M} = 4.63$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.74$. The lowest rated item addressed the creation of an effective full-time technical helpdesk for students with $\underline{M} = 2.75$ and $\underline{SD} = 1.58$. An index score for Student Support was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 13 questions from Part 5. The results of this calculation are reported in Table 4-11. The mean for the Student Support dimension was $\underline{M} = 3.71$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.57$, which suggested a moderate level of Student Support.

Part 6 of the survey considered the measures of success the institution used to benchmark its success. Responses ran from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "5" (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the nine questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-11. The highest rated item underscored the clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported course with $\underline{M} = 4.25$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.46$. The lowest rated item pertained to the setting of enrollment targets for internet-supported learning initiatives with $\underline{M} = 2.75$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.71$. An index score for Measurement was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the nine questions from Part 6. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-13. The mean for the Measurement dimension was $\underline{M} = 3.57$ and $\underline{SD} = 0.41$, which suggested a moderate level of Measurement.

Part 7 of the survey asked the respondent to rank-order items related to improving the Internet-supported learning efforts of the institution. The actual items and their ranks are listed in Table 4-14. Overall, respondents ranked improving course quality as the most important action they could take, followed by adding richer media/interactivity to the online experience and improving student retention.

Part 8, the final section of the survey, asked respondents to rate 20 possible goals with respect to their expectation of whether or not these goals would be major factors in their institution's internet-supported learning initiatives during the next three years. Responses ran from "1" (Definitely Not a Factor) to "5" (One of a Few Top Influential Factors). The descriptive statistics for the 20 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-15. Items that were highly rated included developing a new breed of faculty who were comfortable with internet and computer technology ($\underline{M} = 4.38$, $\underline{SD} = 0-.52$), increasing student demand for internet-supported learning ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.89$), proliferation of consumer electronics ($\underline{M} = 4.00$, $\underline{SD} = 0.76$), and the availability of digital content from publishers ($\underline{M} = 4.00$, $\underline{SD} = 1.07$).

Section 2: Survey Results by Institution Type

In Section 2, the survey results are shown by the type of institution with which the respondent was affiliated (two-year versus four-year). The tables, located at the end of this chapter, show the breakdown of responses by institutional classification: two-year or four-year colleges.

The survey's introductory question solicited respondents to self-assess their degree of personal knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning. The scale for responses ran from "1" (Little or No Experience) to "5" (Expert Level). Table 4-16 shows the descriptive information of this question by institutional classification. In the sample, individuals from both two-year and four-year institutions reported the same level of personal knowledge,

experience, and background in filling out the survey. On the “1” to “5” scale, the means of 4.25 indicated a relatively high level of knowledge and experience by the survey respondents.

Part 1 of the survey addressed the institution’s compelling reasons to support online learning. Eleven questions addressed why an institution might support online learning. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the motivation section of the survey, split by institutional type, are given in Table 4-17. Respondents from the two-year sample rated growing student enrollments as their highest factor related to motivation ($\underline{M} = 4.50$, $\underline{SD} = 0.58$), while respondents from the four-year sample were more concerned about student service ($\underline{M} = 5.00$, $\underline{SD} = 0.00$). An index score was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 11 questions from Part 1. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-18 by institutional classification (two-year versus four-year). In the sample, the four-year institutions reported relatively higher levels of motivation ($\underline{M} = 4.43$, $\underline{SD} 0.35$) for pursuing online learning than two-year institutions ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.71$). The ranges on the individual questions were higher for two-year institutions, suggesting more variability in that group regarding the reasons they might pursue online or distance learning opportunities.

Part 2 of the survey considered the role of leadership in the online education initiatives, priorities, and commitments of the institution. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the eight questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-19 by institutional classification. Respondents from the two-year sample rated their highest concerns regarding the clarity of criteria for selection of faculty who can teach an online course ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$). Respondents from the four-year sample were more pre-occupied with the evidence surrounding their institution’s commitment to

achieving success in internet-supported learning ($\underline{M} = 4.50$, $\underline{SD} = 0.58$). An index score for Commitment/Leadership was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the eight questions from Part 2. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-20 by institutional classification. In the sample, the four-year institutions reported relatively higher levels of Commitment/Leadership ($\underline{M} = 4.13$, $\underline{SD} = 0.46$) with regard to their actions with online learning than two-year institutions ($\underline{M} = 3.47$, $\underline{SD} = 0.66$). As was true with the section on Motivation, the ranges on the individual questions were higher for two-year institutions, suggesting more variability in that group regarding the commitment of the institution's leadership in pursuing distance learning.

Part 3 of the survey considered how the institution created a more effective learning experience at the program level. Responses ran from "1" (Strongly Disagree) to "5" (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 11 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-21 by institutional classification. Respondents from the two-year sample had their highest ratings on course enhancements ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$) and program ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$) through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning. Respondents from the four-year sample rated the same course enhancements ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.96$) and the formulation of complete academic programs with internet-supported learning equally ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$). An index score for Program Level Support was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 11 questions from Part 3. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-22 by institutional classification. The sample profiles for Program Support were similar across the institutional types.

Part 4 of the survey considered how the institution supported faculty working together to create a better student experience, and how the administration supports faculty in improving the

online experience. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 16 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-23 by institutional classification. Respondents from the two-year sample gave two items their highest ratings: the provision of instructional design consultation for faculty who desired it ($\underline{M} = 4.75$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$) and the implementation of clear and effective policies for the ownership of online materials ($\underline{M} = 4.75$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$). Respondents from the four-year sample were most concerned with the implementation of an effective helpdesk for use by faculty involved in internet-supported learning ($\underline{M} = 4.50$, $\underline{SD} = 0.58$). An index score for Faculty Support was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 16 questions from Part 4. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-24 by institutional classification. The sample profiles for Faculty Support were also similar across the institutional types (two-year: $\underline{M} = 3.7$, $\underline{SD} = 0.95$ versus four-year: $\underline{M} = 3.80$, $\underline{SD} = 0.35$).

Part 5 of the survey considered how the institution supported the online student experience. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the 13 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-25 by institutional classification. Respondents from the two-year sample gave two items their highest ratings: a concern about downtime of the online course management system ($\underline{M} = 4.75$, $\underline{SD} = 0.58$) and the emphasis of student learning outcomes ($\underline{M} = 4.75$, $\underline{SD} = 1.00$). Respondents from the four-year sample also centered their concerns on student learning outcomes ($\underline{M} = 4.75$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$). An index score for Student Support was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the 13 questions from Part 5. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-26 by institutional classification. The sample profiles for Student Support were only slightly higher in the sample for the four-year institutions ($\underline{M} = 3.90$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$ versus $\underline{M} = 3.52$, $\underline{SD} =$

0.64). With minor exceptions, both groups reported having a number of mechanisms in place to support student learning efforts through online learning.

Part 6 of the survey considered the measures of success the institution used to benchmark its success. Responses ran from “1” (Strongly Disagree) to “5” (Strongly Agree). The descriptive statistics for the nine questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-27 by institutional classification. Respondents from the two-year sample gave two items their highest ratings: a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported course ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$) and program ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$). Respondents from the four-year sample also highly rated the components of a quality internet-supported course ($\underline{M} = 4.25$, $\underline{SD} = 0.50$).

An index score for Measurement was generated by calculating the mean of the responses from the nine questions from Part 6. The results of this calculation are given in Table 4-28 by institutional classification. The sample profiles for Measurement were only slightly higher in the sample for the four-year institutions ($\underline{M} = 3.78$, $\underline{SD} = 0.28$ versus $\underline{M} = 3.36$, $\underline{SD} = 0.45$). With minor exceptions, both groups reported having a wide array of benchmarks to provide feedback on student success in this area.

Part 7 of the survey asked the respondent to rank-order related to improving the institution’s internet-supported learning efforts. The actual items and their ranks are listed in Table 4-29 by institutional classification. The rankings were similar for both groups, with improving course quality taking the top spot for the two- and four-year institutions.

Part 8, the final section of the survey, asked respondents to rate 20 possible goals with respect to their expectation of whether or not they would be major factors in their institution’s internet-supported learning initiatives during the next three years. Responses ran from “1”

(Definitely Not a Factor) to “5” (One of a Few Top Influential Factors). The descriptive statistics for the 20 questions in this section of the survey are summarized in Table 4-30 by institutional classification. Based on the sample information, both groups endorsed four similar items: 1) recruiting and hiring faculty familiar with the newer technology, 2) looking at different ways of packaging digital information, 3) increasing student demand for internet-supported learning, and 4) increasing the proliferation of mobile learning devices.

Summary of Survey Results

Though the survey results were not statistically significant due to the small sample size, four-year institutions, in the sample, provided a pattern of rankings for the eight parts of the survey that were slightly higher than two-year institutions in the sample. Four-year institutions rated the questions higher in the following survey parts: Motivation, Student Support, Faculty Support, and Commitment/Leadership. Results were similar for two-year and four-year institutions for the following survey parts: Motivation, Faculty Support, Program Support, and Student Support. The rankings of index scores by means are summarized in Table 4-32 and 4-33 by two- and four-year type institutions.

To further analyze the similarities and differences of the two- and four-year institutions in the sample, a comparison was made between Abel’s highest rated factors of success indicators from the 21 initial community college and university respondents and the highest rated items from the institution groups in this study. Again, a similar pattern emerged with the four-year institutions in the sample selecting many of the same highest ranked items as Abel’s participants. The two-year institutions selected more different items for their highest ranked. Table 4-34 itemizes each of the highest ranked items on the survey for Abel’s group, the two-year sample group, and the four-year sample group. A summary of the results is located in Table 4-35.

Section 3: Follow-up Interview Analysis

In addition to collecting and examining the quantitative data using the survey tool, more information was collected to enrich the study and answer the study's four research questions. Based on the results of the survey data, follow-up questions were generated and phone call interviews were conducted with each survey respondent (Appendix B). The purpose of this section is to describe the findings from the follow-up interviews and present an analysis of the data in an attempt to answer the study's research questions. To preserve confidentiality, the two-year community college respondents—purposeful selected from the Florida College System—were identified and cited as CC-1, CC-2, CC-3, and CC-4. The four-year baccalaureate school respondents—purposeful selected from the Florida College System—were identified and cited as B-1, B-2, B-3, and B-4. Citations for respondents include dates that the interviews were conducted.

In the first part of the follow-up phone interview, respondents were asked to share how long their institution had provided online course and/or programs for students. The average time for two-year institutions was 11.6 years and the average time for four-year institutions was 12.5 years. According to the participants' responses in the sample, both two-year and four-year institutions had provided online learning for more than a decade, with the baccalaureate's average number of years slightly higher than the community colleges.

The results of the follow-up phone interviews illustrated some of the trends previously noted. An analysis of this study's results attempted to understand the perception each institution held of its online programs, identify best practices of that institution, look for important patterns or nuances, and answer the study's research questions.

Research Question 1. What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?

Analysis: Research Question 1

To address this question, interviews were conducted with the same respondents who completed the survey, and the following similarities and differences were reported (Appendices C and D for a more descriptive analysis). Interview questions explored the similarities and differences between the online support programs at two and four-year institutions.

Similarities

Similarity #1: Online Policies and/or Procedures. The majority of the respondents spoke favorably of their policies and guidelines in place at their respective institutions. One difference that stood out in the interviews was from one four-year institution respondent who remarked that the policy guide was a part of the faculty contract.

She stated:

B-2: We have no separate online policy guide. We are unionized, and there is an appendix in the contract that deals with distance education. Everything is laid out in the contract. The [distance education] appendix has been in effect for six years (1/28/11).

Another respondent mentioned that recent negotiations with faculty were a positive move in supporting online faculty:

CC-4: We are on the same page only because we have recently negotiated these.

Two of the two-year institutions in the sample stated they were not unionized. These two institutions were small schools (1/28/11).

A respondent from one of these two schools shared this advantage:

CC-4: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process. We had no quality assurance or a defined process for course creation or faculty getting paid for course creation or no focus on best practices. Most recently, the administration approved a handbook detailing many of the criteria in the survey (procedures, goals, best practices, mandatory training). We are not unionized—it is easier to do this. Other colleges who are unionized have more of a challenge to do this (1/28/11).

Similarity #2: Faculty Perceptions of Administrative Support. Respondents from two of the four community colleges stated that a discrepancy existed between faculty and administrative perceptions and offerings. Respondents from two of the four baccalaureate schools also stated that a discrepancy existed in what faculty perceived as online support and what the administration delivered in the way of support. Most respondents stated that online needs were not met due to budgetary constraints. Another theme also emerged suggesting faculty acknowledged that leadership wanted to provide more support but could not do so due to these financial impacts.

One respondent stated:

CC-1: We would like to offer full-time support. When we had shortcomings in the budget, this went off the block. Leadership would like this—but can't do due to budget cuts (1/25/11).

Another respondent commented:

CC-2: Faculty understands we would like to give more but realize it is a financial situation (1/25/11).

Another respondent remarked:

B-2: I think, in general, they [faculty] think there should be more support from [administration], but when they look at other places, they know they are getting support (1/28/11).

Another respondent stated:

B-3: There is a disconnect in this partly because of budget restrictions. I used to be faculty so I have a good pulse (1/26/11).

Respondents from smaller schools stated they were impacted greatly by the budget and online support needs were strained.

One respondent commented:

C-4: We are small. The financials are not as robust. We have fewer technology tools. I have faculty who want to create podcasts, but we need a low cost solution for what they want to accomplish (1/28/2011).

Similarity #3: Professional Development. All respondents in the sample prioritized professional development initiatives as one of their top support offerings for faculty. They commented that faculty would also perceive this initiative as a priority need. All institutions in the sample developed and delivered their own trainings.

Similarity #4: Monetary and Release Time Incentives. Monetary incentives and release time for online faculty were offered in two two-year institutions and two four-year institutions. Faculty were paid for developing content but not paid extra for teaching online classes.

One two-year institution respondent stated:

CC-2: One of the biggest motivators is money for release time for faculty developing online courses. We don't offer release time. They [faculty] get paid the same for teaching any other class, but they get paid for being a content expert. They provide the content, meet with an instructional designer, determine how to meet objectives in course, what content to use, and then our team puts it online. For example, if their content is video/text that they use to meet objective in classroom, we will turn it into an appropriate online delivery method. (1/25/11)

Another two-year institution respondent said he gave faculty both release time and course development monetary incentives (CC-4, 1/28/11).

Two of the four-year institutions offered monetary incentives and both faculty members from these institutions perceived monetary incentives as a top priority of support.

One respondent from the sample stated:

B-1: We will compensate faculty for overhauling their course (1/25/11).

Another respondent commented:

B-2: In regards to academic freedom, faculty can change the master course. Incentives are paid to full-time faculty only. This is in accordance to the union contract. Every year I create a list of courses to develop online. Full-time faculty get to apply first to develop the courses and then adjunct. When you are a developer, you get priority selection to teach the course. In some areas, like math, we have more full-time faculty than we offer in sections. Math faculty love to teach online. We have a formalized process where the

developers select first, and faculty developers select by seniority, etc. It is an automated and formalized process. (1/28/11)

Differences

Difference #1: Survey Instrument Ratings. In a follow-up interview, the respondents were asked to share their perceptions as to what factors could explain the survey data that suggested the four-year institutions in the sample rated the questions higher than two-year institutions in the sample. The intent of this follow-up question was to explore why four-year institution participants in the sample rated the internet-Supported Learning Survey ratings higher overall than the two-year institution participants.

Similar themes emerged from both the two-year and four-year participant responses. The first theme centered on state reporting for baccalaureate schools. The second theme focused on more leadership attention drawn to baccalaureate online programs due to the newness of these programs. The third theme targeted economic factors of baccalaureate schools meeting the demands of nontraditional and traditional students and keeping up with growing enrollment numbers. Supporting statements from both two-year and four-year respondents in the sample reinforced these themes.

Statements from participants at two-year institutions suggested that baccalaureates were starting new online courses with new initiatives at higher levels, and state baccalaureate approval regulations were giving more attention to online programs.

One two-year respondent gave this rationale:

CC- 4: With all of the state regulations for baccalaureate approved status, baccalaureate leadership is investing support in distance education. Leadership in our school financially supports us, but I don't get folks coming back saying what else do you need (1/28/11).

Other statements heard from two-year institutions reflected on their own issues of still facing tough economic times of staffing and addressing online course quality.

For example, one two-year institution respondent stated:

CC-2: We've been doing it forever and may be burned out on it (1/25/11).

Another two-year institution respondent in the sample shared:

CC-4: Those that have moved to baccalaureate may have felt more academic leadership participation and more focus on mission and goals. Community colleges have continued to do what we've done but continuing to do better. Maybe baccalaureate schools are asking more questions about what they do rather than continue to do things the same way. (1/28/11)

While two-year institutions indicated such reasons, four-year institutions in the sample also suggested that state reporting could be a factor, as well as more of a focus on higher division online learning and increased enrollment of students.

One respondent stated:

B-1: Once we started in the baccalaureate programs there was more of a presence of higher division in online learning. This past semester they [online courses] have grown over 20% of their enrollment (lower than total college) but growing at a tremendous rate and some programs are fully online. We are at a point of refreshing. (1/25/11)

Another respondent shared:

B-2: Only because it is more recent and people are paying more attention to it. Baccalaureate programs are going through a process and programs are being scrutinized by the state (1/28/11).

One four-year institution respondent pointed out that baccalaureate schools did not get additional funding from the state to offer higher level programs:

B-3: The innovation of baccalaureate is carrying into online. There is no more money to support baccalaureate but more reporting has to be done for baccalaureate (1/26/11).

The enrollment driver and reporting piece was also echoed in this statement:

B-4: The difference I see is garnering enrollment, and one reason could be that the baccalaureate degree program itself is about process—the state reporting piece. There is more focus on what is happening and how the state is reporting results. (2/3/11)

Difference #2: Policies and Unionization. In the sample, all four of the two-year institutions reported they did not have approved policies for distance education for staff or

faculty. However, two reported they had guides and procedures they followed. These institutions also reported they were not unionized.

One two-year institution respondent stated it was easier to put procedures in place than to write procedures into policies:

CC-3: We don't have a policy. There is a difference between policy and procedures. I can write procedures easier than policy and include procedural things in policy. For example, for office hours, we've rewritten procedures under the policy to bring in more flexibility of online faculty and office hours. (1/25/11)

Of the four-year institutions in the sample, three of the four institutions reported having approved online policies. One institution reported that online procedures for staff and faculty were left up to the departments to implement. Of the five institutions in the sample that had procedures and policies in place, only two reported they involved faculty in developing them.

Difference #3: Leadership. For the four-year institutions, a different theme emerged in contrast to the two-year institutions. Three of the four baccalaureate schools in the sample remarked that past leadership was a hindrance in providing online support but that recent changes in leadership were healing the disconnect.

For instance, one respondent stated:

B-3: We have had a shift in new administration—last administration opposed programs online (1/26/11).

Another respondent shared:

B-4: It was tough for a while convincing administrators where online was going. Interim President knows academics and is a strong component of online learning. Past President was supportive in some ways but then in other ways he didn't understand. Then, walls were bulging due to increased enrollments, and he knew he had to do something and started buying in because of logistics. (2/3/11)

Difference #4: Faculty Helpdesk. One major differentiator between the two-year and four-year institutions in the sample was the offerings of full-time faculty helpdesks. No two-year

institutions offered this support but three out of the four four-year institutions did. Supporting comments about this service were positive and perceived as a high priority support for faculty.

One respondent said:

B-1: If a faculty gets locked out of the network, there is a helpdesk to offer help (1/25/11).

Another institution respondent has a full-time support ticketing system:

B-2: A student [or faculty] can send an email, and it becomes a ticket in the system or they can fill out a form online or email us. I can track all tickets and look at how many log in issues and can categorize all of this. I can be proactive and see where students [or faculty] are having problems. (1/28/11)

One respondent shared the expectation of his full-time support helpdesk to provide faculty with the hope that support requests are acknowledged within 24 business hours or quicker:

B-3: Faculty know they can count on a response within 24 hours and most are solved within 24 hours (1/26/11).

Difference #5: Mandatory Faculty Training. Mandatory faculty training was required more in two-year institutions than in four-year institutions. Three of the four two-year institutions required technical professional development for new faculty to learn the online system and two of the two-year institutions required existing faculty to take professional development offerings. Two of the four-year institutions required new faculty training. No four-year institutions in the sample required professional development for existing full-time or adjunct faculty.

One factor for this anomaly could be that more two-year institutions in the sample were not unionized compared to four-year institutions. Non-union institutions could have had more latitude to enforce mandatory training for existing faculty.

One two-year respondent stated:

CC-4: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process. Most recently, the administration approved a handbook detailing many of the criteria in the survey (procedures, goals, best practices, mandatory training). We are not unionized—it is easier to do this. Other colleges who are unionized have more of a challenge to do this. They [faculty] are trained on technical and pedagogical best practices. Faculty have to go through 40 hours of training and adjuncts have to go through 8 hours of online training. We pay our adjuncts to come but not full-time faculty. Because we have invested so much in training, our helpdesk is not bombarded with calls. (1/28/11)

Another two-year respondent commented:

CC-2: A major innovation or best practice implemented is certifying faculty to teach online and recertifying faculty to teach online. We have an online course for new faculty. Certification is only good for a year. Recertification courses are also offered—some are stand alones or we offer face-to-face trainings [for existing full-time and adjunct faculty]. (1/25/11)

Another respondent remarked:

C-4: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process (1/28/11).

Another two-year respondent shared:

CC-1: Training required is basic [platform] training, and once you complete the five modules, then you are able to get a course shell to begin teaching (1/25/11).

Another factor for the mandatory training discrepancy could be that more four-year institutions were driven by policy for online education requirements than two-year institutions. Policy approvals require faculty negotiations and could impact faculty contracts.

Difference #6: Instructional Designer Support. One differentiator of content development support between two- and four-year institutions was the availability of instructional design resources to help faculty develop courses. Only one two-year institution had instructional designer support while three of the four four-year institutions had instructional designers to assist in course development. The two-year institution that offered instructional design services also had a centralized team to put the course online.

One respondent stated:

CC-2: They [faculty] provide the content, meet with instructional designer, determine how to meet objectives in course, what content to use, and then our team puts it online (1/25/11).

One four-year institution respondent stated:

B-3: The development process is supported by instructional designers (1/26/11).

Another respondent stated:

B-2: Instructional designers are coaches and mentors. We have a team of four instructional designers and one manager to support faculty (1/28/11).

Another four-year institution respondent remarked about their team approach with instructional designers:

B-1: The idea was to get a team of people together to develop class materials with a design instructor technologist (1/25/11).

Research Question 2. What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?

Analysis: Research Question 2

To address this question, interviews were conducted with the same respondents who completed the survey, and the following information was reported (Appendices C and D for more detailed descriptions). The questions explored policies and practices that support faculty who develop and/or teach online. An attempt was made to discern if policies or procedures helped support faculty needs and determine if a difference existed in support practices between the two-year and four-year institutions.

Several themes emerged from asking the question if online policies or procedure guides were in place for online learning. In the sample, all four of the two-year institutions reported they did not have approved policies for distance education for staff or faculty. However, two reported they had guides and procedures they followed. These institutions also reported they were not unionized.

One two-year institution respondent stated it was easier to put procedures in place than to write procedures into policies:

CC-3: We don't have a policy. There is a difference between policy and procedures. I can write procedures easier than policy and include procedural things in policy. For example, for office hours, we've rewritten procedures under the policy to bring in more flexibility of online faculty and office hours. (1/25/11)

Of the four-year institutions in the sample, three of the four institutions reported having approved online policies. One institution reported that online procedures for staff and faculty were left up to the departments to put into place. Of the five institutions in the sample that had procedures and policies in place, only two reported they involved faculty in developing them.

The majority of respondents reported favorably of their policies or guides in place at their institutions. One difference that stood out in the interviews was from one four-year institution respondent who shared that the policy guide was a part of the faculty contract.

She stated:

B-2: We have no separate online policy guide. We are unionized, and there is an appendix in the contract that deals with distance education. Everything is laid out in the contract. The [distance education] appendix has been in effect for six years. (1/28/11)

Another respondent mentioned that recent negotiations with faculty were a positive move in supporting online faculty:

CC-4: We are on the same page only because we have recently negotiated these (1/28/11).

Two of the two-year institutions in the sample stated they were not unionized. These two institutions were small schools.

A respondent from one of these two schools shared that this [this what?] was an advantage:

CC-4: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process. We had no quality assurance or a defined process for course creation or faculty getting paid for course creation or no focus on best practices. Most recently, the administration approved a handbook detailing many of the criteria in the survey

(procedures, goals, best practices, mandatory training). We are not unionized—it is easier to do this. Other colleges who are unionized have more of a challenge to do this.
(1/28/11)

Research Question 3. Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?

Analysis: Research Question 3

To address this question, interviews were conducted with the same respondents who completed the survey and the following information was reported on the commitment of leadership in supporting online faculty needs (Appendices C and D for more descriptive information). Several themes emerged from these questions. Most respondents stated that while leadership expressed commitment to online education, budgetary constraints kept the administration from meeting many of the faculty's online education support needs. In regard to institutional developed policies for online education, three of the four four-year institutions had approved policies, yet only two respondents mentioned that faculty participated in the development of these. None of the two-year institutions reported having approved or adopted distance education policies, but they said they had institution guides and/or handbooks.

Respondents were asked if a relationship existed between what the faculty believed were important attributes of support and what the administration offered in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support (Appendix B). Two of the four community colleges stated a discrepancy existed between faculty and administrative perceptions and offerings. Two of the four baccalaureate schools stated a discrepancy also existed in what faculty perceived as online support and what administration delivered in the way of support. Most respondents stated that online needs were not met due to budgetary constraints. Additionally, another theme emerged which suggested faculty acknowledged that leadership wanted to provide more support but could not due to these financial impacts. Such statements supported this theme.

One respondent stated:

CC-1: We would like to offer full-time support. When we had shortcomings in the budget, this went off the block. Leadership would like this—but can't due to budget cuts (1/25/11).

A second respondent said:

CC-2: Faculty understand we would like to give more but realize it is a financial situation (1/25/11).

A third respondent remarked:

B-2: I think, in general, they [faculty] think there should be more support from [administration], but when they look at other places, they know they are getting support (1/28/11).

A fourth respondent shared:

B-3: There is a disconnect in this partly because of budget restrictions. I used to be faculty so I have a good pulse (1/26/11).

Smaller schools stated they were impacted greatly by the budget and online support needs were strained.

One respondent commented:

C-4: We are small. The financials are not as robust. We have fewer technology tools. I have faculty who want to create podcasts, but we need a low cost solution for what they want to accomplish (1/28/2011).

Respondents mentioned specific factors that influenced positive perceptions of the leadership commitment of faculty. For example, one two-year institution interviewee stated that the recent negotiations of the faculty contract helped leadership and faculty get on the same page in regard to online learning support.

One respondent commented:

CC-4: We are on the same page only because we have recently negotiated these things—we need to relook at it in three years to see what is working and not working. They [faculty] may not totally agree but we are at an even playing field. (1/28/11)

If this study were replicated, this factor may be one to consider for future research.

Another institution remarked that increasing internet bandwidth at the institution was helpful.

She said:

B-3: One of the things they [faculty] want is internet connectivity so it doesn't go down. The bandwidth improved, so they are happy about this (1/26/11).

For the four-year institutions, a different theme emerged in contrast to the two-year institutions. Three of the four baccalaureate schools in the sample remarked that past leadership was a hindrance in providing online support, but recent changes in leadership were healing the disconnect.

For instance, one respondent stated:

B-3: We have had a shift in new administration— last administration opposed programs online (1/26/11).

Another respondent remarked:

B-4: It was tough for a while convincing administrators where online was going. Interim President knows academics and is a strong component of online learning. Past President was supportive in some ways but then in other ways he didn't understand. Then, walls were bulging due to increased enrollments, and he knew he had to do something and started buying in because of logistics (2/3/11).

Research Question 4. What are recommended attributes for institutions to include in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

Analysis: Research Question 4

To address this question, interviews were conducted with the same respondents who completed the survey and the following information was reported (Appendices C and D for more descriptive information). Participants were asked to consider how their institution supported faculty working together to create a better student experience and how the administration supported faculty in improving the experience. This analysis was an attempt to explore more deeply what practices the institutions perceived as effective practices for distance education

faculty support programs. It was also an attempt to explore if effective practices differentiated between two-year and four-year institutions.

Several themes emerged from asking the following questions (Appendix B). The two-year institution respondents perceived that faculty's greatest support innovations were: 1) internal professional development offerings; 2) monetary or release time incentives for developing courses; 3) formalized course quality review processes; 4) technical support from learning management systems and 5) new faculty training, orientations, and certification processes. Additionally, three of the four two-year institutions in the sample noted that the most significant accomplishment of their institutions for all program level distance education initiatives were those focused on faculty support. No two-year institution in the sample reported the benefit of a full-time faculty or student.

Respondents of four-year institutions from the sample selected the same online faculty initiatives. However, major differentiators were the additional support of a full-time faculty helpdesk (technical and/or content development support), centralized technical and content support centers, instructional designers to help in content development, and additional software packages and tools to support eLearning for faculty and students.

Two themes emerged from many of the respondents' comments. One was the involvement of faculty in helping develop these online support initiatives, giving feedback, or participating on committees or task forces where ideas were brought to the table for review and/or approval.

For example, one respondent stated:

CC-4: Most of our things are faculty driven and [I] believe this is why we have such support. We know when you ask someone their opinion then there is buy in. This has been key to our success early on in getting faculty approved documents. Faculty were a part of the eLearning Committee and writing the eLearning Book. They felt they had some ownership in writing the book (1/28/11).

Another two-year respondent from the sample shared:

CC-3: Faculty were involved in developing an internal course review process (1/25/11).

A four-year respondent also reinforced this theme and stated:

B-1: [Sr. Management] got faculty involved from the ground up reviewing what was in our courses. Before, we just said, we know these are best practices. Now faculty tweak, improve and realize these ARE good ideas. This is how we have gotten buy-in— involving faculty in the standards and online course development process. (1/25/11)

The second theme that emerged from most respondents in the sample was the reference to strong relationships between faculty and administration and a supportive culture.

For example, one respondent stated:

CC-4: Administration listens to faculty and academic deans support faculty. Culture is very supportive (1/28/11).

Faculty Support Best Practices

Themes and patterns emerged from respondents discussing their best practices of faculty support. Key findings of faculty support initiatives are next described with supporting quotes from respondents who participated in the sample. Some of the practices were reported by both two- and four-year institutions, and some themes emerged just by institutional type. The following information was reported.

Internal Professional Development Offerings (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

All respondents in the sample prioritized professional development initiatives as one of their top support offerings for faculty, and they commented that faculty would also perceive this initiative as a priority need. All institutions in the sample developed and delivered their own trainings.

Mandatory faculty training was required more in two-year institutions than in four-year institutions. Three of the four two-year institutions required technical professional development for new faculty to learn the online system, and two of the two-year institutions required existing faculty to take professional development offerings. Two of the four-year institutions required

new faculty training. No four-year institutions in the sample required professional development for existing full-time or adjunct faculty.

One factor for this anomaly could be that more two-year institutions in the sample were not unionized compared to four-year institutions. Non-union institutions could have had more latitude to enforce mandatory training for existing faculty.

One two-year respondent stated:

CC-4: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process. Most recently, the administration approved a handbook detailing many of the criteria in the survey (procedures, goals, best practices, mandatory training). We are not unionized—it is easier to do this. Other colleges who are unionized have more of a challenge to do this. They [faculty] are trained on technical and pedagogical best practices. Faculty have to go through 40 hours of training and adjuncts have to go through 8 hours of online training. We pay our adjuncts to come but not full-time faculty. Because we have invested so much in training, our helpdesk is not bombarded with calls. (1/28/11)

Another two-year respondent said:

CC-2: A major innovation or best practice implemented is certifying faculty to teach online and recertifying faculty to teach online. We have an online course for new faculty. Certification is only good for a year. Recertification courses are also offered—some are stand alones or we offer face-to-face trainings [for existing full-time and adjunct faculty]. (1/25/11)

Another respondent remarked:

CC-1: We have mandated faculty professional development and a mandated course approval process. Another two-year respondent shared, Training required is basic [platform] training, and once you complete the five modules, then you are able to get a course shell to begin teaching. (1/25/11)

Another factor for the mandatory training discrepancy could be that more four-year institutions were driven by policy for online education requirements than in two-year institutions. Policy approvals require faculty negotiations and could impact faculty contracts.

Innovative practices for professional development were evident in more four-year institutions than in two-year institutions. One two-year institution stated that one of its goals was

to offer coaching and mentoring for its faculty, but no money was allotted in the budget to do this.

The respondents did offer an unofficial mentoring system:

CC-4: We have faculty leaders, and many faculty are contacts for others. They [faculty] share with their colleagues and have found their own mentors (1/28/11).

Two of the four four-year institutions in the sample offered curriculum support for faculty in the form of peer review processes.

One four-year institution respondent commented faculty viewed peer reviews as a priority support and this was a popular incentive:

BB-4: We have peer reviews for faculty. Other faculty critique online quality of their peers. They critique to help each other improve. We are trying coaching and mentoring strategies by trying one online faculty within each department to be a mentor and new faculty can go to this person for assistance (2/3/11).

Two of the four-year institutions offered online content development training and support for faculty designing courses.

One respondent shared that the training at his institution is required for any faculty developing online courses:

B-2: When faculty apply to develop a course and they are selected, there is a 30-hour training. By the time they are through the training, their first modules have been developed. This is job-embedded training (1/28/11).

Respondents from four-year institutions also remarked that faculty perceived one-on-one professional development meetings with their online support centers helpful, as well as online training videos, group training sessions, and regular and consistent professional development offerings.

One four-year institution respondent stated the administration has sent faculty to online conferences (B-3, 1/26/11).

Other professional development offerings from both two-year and four-year institutions included topics on video streaming, compressing PowerPoint, video and audio files, digital media, tutorials, course checklists, quality course matrices. Another service included technical training in uploading courses to electronic platforms.

Software packages and tools to support eLearning initiatives were not as prevalent in two-year institutions as in four-year institutions. For example, while one two-year institution offered an internal version of Quality Matters program for course quality review, one of the four-year institutions acquired a license for the published version. Other software packages mentioned by four-year institutions included Elluminate, web-conferencing software, Turn-it-in, Smart Thinking online tutorials, and Desire to Learn (DTL).

New Faculty Trainings, Orientations, and Online Certification Processes (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

Three of the four two-year institutions required technical professional development for new faculty, and two of the four-year institutions required new faculty training. Mandatory training requirements for new faculty varied across campuses.

For example, one respondent from a two-year institution stated:

CC-1: We have a new faculty support classroom and survival classroom in a sandbox environment. The basic new faculty training is required. Once you complete the five modules then you are able to get a shell. There are minimum standards expected of new faculty. They can go through a self-assessment checklist to ensure they have everything done and department chairs are working closely with faculty. Nothing else is required. If we see problems with existing faculty teaching online, we will pull that instructor in and do one-on-one support. (1/25/11)

Another two-year respondent remarked:

CC-2: A major innovation or best practice implemented is certifying faculty to teach online. We have an online course for new faculty—certification is only good for a year (1/25/11).

One four-year institution's new faculty training focused on developing course materials and centered on a team approach:

B-1: The idea was to get a team of people together from the four campuses to develop class materials together with a design instructor technologist. Then, we would have a consistent look and quality (1/25/11).

Another four-year institution required new faculty to gain knowledge of their learning management system processes through five levels of training:

B-4: The first three [levels] allow faculty to teach partially online and then fully online. They have to pass these before accessing the [their course] online. This is required (2/3/11).

Centralized Support Services and Leader Advocates (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

One similarity among all the institutions was centralized services and having advocates in leadership positions to support online learning. These services were also perceived as priority support initiatives of faculty, based on the respondents' comments from the sample. However, in comparing the services, the four-year institutions had slightly more resources connected to their services. Three of the four-year institutions had their own virtual college environments that managed all the online education programming. Most of the two-year institutions in the sample, however, stated that their learning management systems were a strong support.

For example, one respondent shared:

CC-1: We have the Learning Management System administrator—if there is glitch in the system, then someone can go in the classroom to work with faculty (1/25/11).

Another two-year respondent shared:

CC-3: A person works exclusively with our Learning Management System (1/25/11).

One two-year institution offered a dedicated website for online faculty (CC-4, 1/28/11).

For four-year institutions, common themes that emerged as priority support initiatives for faculty were centralized support for course development, which consisted of resources, team approaches, instructional designers, and leader advocates.

For example, one institution had a course refresher project that was team driven:

B-1: A team of people come together to develop class materials together with a design instructor technologist (1/25/11).

Another respondent shared:

B-2: Instructional designers are coaches and mentors. We have a team of four instructional designers and one manager for the [eLearning platform] to support faculty (1/28/11).

One institution offered faculty support teams for both course delivery and course development:

B-3: We are very centralized. We set the schedule, hire the adjuncts, we run the entire online program. We have a course delivery team. They [course development team] do the course copy and course prep and deals with any questions [from faculty] who are teaching. This year, we split out the course delivery phase and development phase. The development process is supported by instructional designers. Currently, we have over 530 sections of courses. They have a manager and a learning management system specialist. Course design works with those who are designing. There is a helpdesk number all faculty can call. It [the helpdesk] is run by a manager, learning specialist, and three part-time Learning Management System specialists. Tickets are developed and most of time tickets are accomplished. (1/26/11)

A centralized online faculty center offered at one of the four-year institutions was perceived as a priority support of faculty:

B-4: We have experienced people to help faculty innovate and create in online classrooms. We have state of the art equipment, managers, and student workers. We help faculty go through trainings to put their own courses online. We do not have instructional designers. Each department is responsible for their own content and putting it online. In the center, we also offer classes for faculty to improve online skills. The President sets aside money in the budget for the online faculty center. (2/3/11)

Another four-year institution had an automated proctor testing scheduling system that allowed students to schedule or change their proctored exam dates and times. Faculty perceived this as a priority support initiative because it reduced emails and calls from students who wanted to change their proctoring times.

This institution respondent shared:

B-3: We give really good support because we are so centralized (1/26/11).

In terms of leader support, one four-year institution respondent shared:

B-3: We are positioned well within the institution. For example, I sit on the academic leadership council (1/26/11).

Another four-year institution respondent shared:

B-4: The Dean [of distance education for the institution] has had the most impact on significant change regarding procedures and processes for online learning (2/3/11).

Formalized Course Review Processes (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

Formalized course review processes were evident in two of the four two-year institutions and two of the four-year institutions. For example, one respondent from a two-year institution shared:

CC-3: We have home grown courses and instituted an internal review and proposal process to ensure [course] quality. We make them [faculty] have one unit of the course built to review. We ask them to think through and address certain criteria. Faculty were involved when we developed this review process. We require that the person has taught the course face-to-face first and is familiar with course content. They must provide justification for doing it in a delivery method for online and share how they plan to accommodate for student/faculty interactions, group projects, pacing, different learning styles, students remaining on tasks, authentic tasks, student preparedness, etc. They share a portion course and course outline/syllabus. They have to demonstrate how they are going to teach course in different format. If it were a brand new course—it would go to curriculum committee before submitting to the state. (1/25/11)

A respondent from one two-year institution stated that his institution requires all online courses through a review from a subject-matter expert and two course reviewers for approval:

CC-4: We have mandated a faculty course approval process. We have pieces to help us ensure quality in courses and help faculty understand process of online learning and help administrators move courses through the process. We took the Quality Matters rubric and revised it to meet our needs. (1/28/11)

A respondent from a four-year institution from the sample discussed how the senior vice president was instrumental in getting faculty involved in developing and getting an internal course review process approved:

B-1: This is how we have gotten buy-in—involving faculty in the standards and online course development process (1/25/11).

A respondent from another four-year institution said that his institution created master courses as exemplars for faculty to use when developing their own courses:

B-2: Training is required of faculty who apply to develop a course and those selected attend a 30-hour training. By the time they are through the training, their first modules have been developed. This is job-embedded training (1/28/11).

Instructional Designers to Help in Content Development (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

One differentiator of content development support between two- and four-year institutions was the availability of instructional design resources to help faculty develop courses. Only one two-year institution had instructional designer support while three of the four four-year institutions had instructional designers to assist in course development.

A respondent from the two-year institution that offered instructional design services also had a centralized team to put the course online, saying:

CC-2: They [faculty] provide the content, meet with instructional designer, determine how to meet objectives in course, what content to use, and then our team puts it online (1/25/11).

One four-year institution respondent stated:

B-3: The development process is supported by instructional designers (1/26/11).

Another respondent stated:

B-2: Instructional designers are coaches and mentors. We have a team of four instructional designers and one manager to support faculty (1/28/11).

Another four-year institution respondent remarked about its team approach with instructional designers:

B-1: The idea was to get a team of people together to develop class materials with a design instructor technologist (1/25/11).

Monetary or Release Time Incentives for Developing Courses (Two- and Four-year Institutions)

Monetary incentives and release time for online faculty were offered in two two-year institutions and two four-year institutions. Faculty were paid for developing content but not paid extra for teaching online classes.

One two-year institution respondent stated:

CC-2: One of the biggest motivators is money for release time for faculty developing online courses. We don't offer release time. They [faculty] get paid the same for teaching any other class, but they get paid for being a content expert. They provide the content, meet with an instructional designer, determine how to meet objectives in course, what content to use, and then our team puts it online. For example, if their content is video/text that they use to meet objective in classroom, we will turn it into an appropriate online delivery method. (1/25/11)

Another two-year institution respondent stated that his institution gave faculty both release time and course development monetary incentives (CC-4, 1/28/11).

Two of the four-year institutions offered monetary incentives and the faculty from these institutions perceived this as a top priority of support.

One respondent from the sample stated:

B-1: We will compensate faculty for overhauling their course (1/25/11).

Another participant commented:

B-2: In regards to academic freedom, faculty can change the master course. Incentives are paid to full-time faculty only. This is in accordance to the union contract. Every year I create a list of courses to develop online. Full-time faculty get to apply first to develop the courses and then adjunct. When you are a developer you get priority selection to teach the course. In some areas, like math, we have more full time faculty than we offer in sections. Math faculty love to teach online. We have a formalized process where the developers select first, and faculty developers select by seniority, etc. It is an automated and formalized process. (1/28/11)

Full-time Faculty Helpdesk: Technical and/or Content Development Support (Four-year Only Institution)

One large difference between the two-year and four-year institutions in the sample was the offerings of full-time faculty helpdesks. No two-year institutions offered this support, but three out of the four four-year institutions did. Supporting comments about this service were positive and perceived as a high priority support for faculty.

One respondent shared:

B-1: If a faculty gets locked out of the network, there is a helpdesk to offer help (1/25/11).

A respondent from another institution said his institution has a full-time support ticketing system:

B-2: A student [or faculty] can send an email, and it becomes a ticket in the system or they can fill out a form online or email us. I can track all tickets and look at how many log in issues and can categorize all of this. I can be proactive and see where students [or faculty] are having problems (1/28/11).

One respondent shared that the expectation of his full-time support helpdesk is to provide faculty with the expectation that support requests are acknowledged within 24 business hours or quicker:

B-3: Faculty know they can count on a response within 24 hours and most are solved within 24 hours (1/26/11).

Making Connections between the Qualitative and Quantitative Data Results

The results of the two-year institution group quantitative data analysis by mean index scores were more similar to the two-year institution group qualitative data analysis reports than the four-year institution group. There were very little differences between the two groups when analyzing these mean scores. The index scores were ranked by means for all eight institutions in the sample (Table 4-32) and for each institutional type (Table 4-33). The lowest scores by means for the two-year institution in the sample were Measurement and

Commitment/Leadership. The lowest scores by means for the four-year institutions in the sample were Commitment/Leadership and Program Support. This analysis confirmed the need to conduct the follow-up interviews to gain a better understanding of the similarities and differences among the two institutional classifications.

To draw connections between the survey's data results and the follow-up interview results, several analyses were conducted. First, the Levels of Support Analysis Framework was developed (Table 4-34). It was designed to take selected key attributes and factors from the eight parts of the study's survey instruments and use them as a baseline for comparing the sample institutions' responses from follow-up interviews. The analysis grid helped document how the two-year institutions' distance education factors and faculty support indicators were similar or different among the two-year institution group and four-year institution group in the sample. The degree of support was evaluated by reviewing all of the follow-up interview transcripts and coding them in the following way: Low = only found in one of the four institutions within each group; Medium = found in two of the four institutions; and, High = found in three or four of the four institutions. Table 4-34 shows the relationship between the levels of support for each group.

This analysis suggested that the two-year institution sample had lower levels of support than the four-year institution sample in many of the survey's eight parts. Specifically, the two-year institutions in the sample were lower in the areas of Commitment/Leadership (Part 2) and Program Level Support (Part 3). The sample four-year institutions were higher in Motivation (Part 1), Commitment/Leadership (Part 2), and Program Level Support (Part 3) and Faculty Support (Part 4). These rankings were similar with Abel's highest indicators for success which were Leadership, Faculty Support, and Student Services (Figure 2-4).

A second analysis was conducted that compared the highest ranked success factor items of Abel's (2005a) initial internet-supported Learning survey study results with the highest ranked success factor items of this current survey's two- and four- year groups. By comparing the rankings additional similarities and differences were evaluated. The goal was to determine if a relationship existed in how the two- and four-year institutions in the sample perceived their highest ranked items for online success with Abel's 21 institutions' ranked highest items for online success. Table 4-35 shows how close the two sample groups came to identifying the same highest ranked items as Abel's group for each eight parts of the survey. The two- and four-year ranked comparisons were defined as follows: Same = highest ranked item was identical to Abel's highest ranked study item; Similar = the two- or four-year institution group in the sample ranked Abel's highest ranked item as their second highest ranked item; and, Different = the two- or four-year institution group did not select Abel's highest ranked item as their first or second choice.

The results of this analysis showed that the four-year institutions rated five of the highest ranked items the same and three similar. The two-year institutions rated only two the same, one similar, and five different. A summary of the similarities and differences of the highest ranked survey items in the sample schools compared to the highest ranked items of Abel's (2005a) study is in Table 4-36. The two-year institution group in the sample showed more of a difference in their highest ranked items from the Abel's 21 institution ratings in the following: 1) Commitment/Leadership (Part 2), 2) Program Level Support (Part 3), Faculty Support (Part 4), Student Support (Part 5), and Measurement (Part 6).

One last piece of data analyzed was institution size. The initial research study did not take into consideration the institution's size as a factor for success for effective online programming.

However, upon analyzing the data more closely, and studying the feedback analysis of the follow-up interviews, size of the institution became a consideration to further investigate. Table 4-37 reports the size of the institutions that participated in the study. This table was compared to the feedback analysis reported in Appendices C and D. Three of the four smallest schools were two-year institutions. Looking closer at the follow-up interview reports, these schools reported they were not unionized and did not have distance education policies in place. Questions could be raised as to whether size of the institution has an impact on the effectiveness of the attributes for supporting online teaching and learning. Another consideration is do some strategies work better in the schools that have been baccalaureate schools the longest?

Table 4-1. Respondent self-assessment of knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How would you gauge your personal knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning?	8	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.70711
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-2. Descriptive statistics for Part 1 of the survey (motivation)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student service is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	4.00	5.00	4.6250	.51755
Serving nontraditional students is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.70711
Providing greater access to learning is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	2.00	5.00	4.5000	1.06904
Providing superior teaching is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	3.00	5.00	4.5000	.75593
Providing access to our highly ranked programs is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	2.00	5.00	4.2500	1.03510
Providing personalized learning for each student is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	.91613
Providing innovative learning environments is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	8	2.00	5.00	3.8750	1.12599
Growing student enrollments is an important objective.	8	4.00	5.00	4.3750	.51755
Serving more students with limited physical facilities is an important objective.	8	2.00	5.00	3.8750	.99103
Our program(s) are experiencing competition from other local institutions.	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	.91613
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-3. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for motivation

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	8	3.00	4.82	4.1591	.59464
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-4. Descriptive statistics for Part 2 of the survey (commitment/leadership)

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is real (measurable) evidence that our institution is committed to achieving success in internet-supported learning.	8	2.00	5.00	4.1250	.99103
There are frequent communications from the administration indicating that internet-supported learning is important to our mission.	8	2.00	5.00	3.5000	1.06904
Financial support for what we need to succeed in internet-supported learning is apparent.	8	1.00	5.00	3.5000	1.19523
Administration and academic leadership work together to prioritize our online focus.	8	2.00	5.00	3.8750	.83452
We have selected some of our most successful programs and courses to focus our online efforts.	8	2.00	5.00	3.8750	1.24642
We have implemented an effective review process for selecting the best course or program candidates to move online.	8	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.88641
The criteria for selection of faculty that can develop online courses are clear.	8	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.53452
The criteria for selection of faculty that can teach an online course are clear.	8	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.46291
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-5. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for commitment/leadership

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment/Leadership	8	2.50	4.63	3.7969	.63365
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-6. Descriptive statistics for Part 3 of the survey (program level support)

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We are focused on supporting complete academic programs with internet-supported learning.	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	1.18773
We have a team process to redesign a program so that it is effective in the online format.	8	3.00	5.00	3.7500	.70711
Technical and/or instructional design support staff have been assigned to support internet-supported learning program teams and efforts.	8	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.75593
Our efforts to put course or program materials online always involve a project plan including schedule and milestones.	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	.91613
Institutional leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	8	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.75593
Academic leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	.91613
When putting a course or program online, special effort is invested to make sure that our institutions or departments' unique teaching approach (pedagogy) is reflected.	8	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.53452
Enrollment management and/or marketing are involved as part of our team that launches online programs.	8	1.00	4.00	2.8750	1.12599
When putting a course or program online, we usually have some targets for what constitutes "success."	8	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Our courses are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	8	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.46291
Our programs are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	8	3.00	5.00	4.1250	.64087

Table 4-7. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for program level support

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Program Support	8	3.18	4.55	3.7159	.47222
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-8. Descriptive statistics for Part 4 of the survey (faculty support)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have implemented an effective web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	8	2.00	5.00	4.1250	.99103
We have implemented an effective phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	8	2.00	5.00	4.1250	1.12599
We have implemented an effective full-time web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	8	1.00	5.00	2.7500	1.66905
We have implemented an effective full-time phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	8	1.00	5.00	2.5000	1.60357
We provide effective technical training courses or seminars for faculty who want to teach online.	8	4.00	5.00	4.3750	.51755
We require faculty to take a course in developing online materials and/or teaching online before they teach online.	8	1.00	5.00	4.0000	1.30931
We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty who desire it.	8	4.00	5.00	4.6250	.51755
We provide effective instructional or academic technology support staff from a centralized organization.	8	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.75593
Instructional or academic technology support staff understands and help with academic discipline specific pedagogy issues.	8	2.00	5.00	3.8750	1.12599
We have implemented clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials.	7	4.00	5.00	4.5714	.53452
Additional fees are paid to faculty to develop online courses.	7	1.00	5.00	3.4286	1.27242
A significant percentage (> 25%) of our successful internet-supported learning initiatives is grassroots faculty driven.	7	2.00	5.00	3.8571	1.06904
The scholarship of teaching is a priority in our department or institution as demonstrated by a viable program that nurtures and spreads best practices.	7	2.00	4.00	3.5714	.78680
Faculty receive effective and frequent communication from academic leaders regarding the importance of innovating in teaching and learning, including use of the internet where appropriate.	8	1.00	5.00	3.7500	1.28174
Faculty are, for the most part, highly committed to the success of our internet-supported learning efforts.	7	2.00	4.00	3.1429	.69007
Most faculty involved in developing and teaching internet-supported courses would agree that courses that are internet-supported are of higher quality than the equivalent classroom course.	7	1.00	5.00	3.4286	1.27242
Valid N (listwise)	7	2.00	5.00	3.8571	1.06904

Table 4-9. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for faculty support

	N	Descriptive Statistics			
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Faculty Support	8	2.69	4.81	3.7514	.66451
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-10. Descriptive Statistics for Part 5 of the Survey (Student Support)

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std.
					Deviation
We provide effective student services specifically for online students.	8	1.00	5.00	3.8750	1.24642
We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.	8	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.06904
We provide an effective full-time technical phone helpdesk for students.	8	1.00	5.00	2.7500	1.58114
We provide an effective technical web/email helpdesk for students.	8	3.00	5.00	4.3750	.74402
We provide an effective full-time technical web/email helpdesk for students.	8	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.77281
Downtime of our online course management system or other technology does not impact the effectiveness of our online courses or programs.	8	4.00	5.00	4.3750	.51755
We provide an effective online orientation for students taking internet-supported courses.	8	1.00	5.00	3.5000	1.30931
We provide an effective program advisor or coordinator who acts as a single point of contact to make sure any student issues are resolved in a timely manner.	8	1.00	5.00	2.8750	1.45774
We have implemented effective feedback from students regarding our internet-supported courses and/or programs using assessments given at least once per term.	8	2.00	4.00	3.7500	.70711
We provide easy to use phone-based and web-based registration for students.	8	2.00	5.00	4.0000	.92582
Students find the online experience to be easy and trouble-free.	8	2.00	4.00	3.3750	.74402
Student learning is the most important priority.	8	3.00	5.00	4.6250	.74402
Our internet-supported learning courses and programs help our students to use time more efficiently.	8	3.00	5.00	3.7500	.70711
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-11. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for student support

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student Support	8	2.85	4.62	3.7115	.56936
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-12. Descriptive statistics for Part 6 of the survey (measurement)

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have developed specific measurements of success that fit our needs.	8	2.00	4.00	3.5000	.75593
Our measurements of success are outlined for the next 2-3 years.	8	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.88641
We effectively measure student outcomes, and we use them as a key measure of success.	8	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.46291
We effectively measure student satisfaction and use it as a key measure of success.	8	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.46291
We compare graduation rates in internet-supported programs with the graduation rates in equivalent classroom-based programs to measure success.	8	2.00	5.00	3.5000	.92582
We have set enrollment targets for our internet-supported learning initiatives for the next 2-3 years.	8	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.70711
Growth in our online courses and programs, for the most part, has not come at the expense of growth in our on-campus courses and programs.	8	2.00	5.00	3.3750	1.18773
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported learning course.	8	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.46291
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported program.	7	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.57735
Valid N (listwise)	7				

Table 4-13. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for measurement

	N	Descriptive Statistics			
		Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Measurement	8	2.89	4.13	3.5712	.41171
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-14. Rank orders of importance of actions related to improving an institution's internet-supported learning efforts ($n = 8$)

Item	Rank
Improving course quality	1
Implementing a learning objects repository	16
Getting more faculty involved in or committed to our internet-supported learning initiatives	5.5
Improving student retention in internet-supported learning courses or programs	3
Putting more programs online	7
Adding more rich media and interactivity to our online experience	2
Getting better use of our course management system	13
Convincing the administration that online is important	12
Getting better at measuring student outcomes	4
Getting better at determining what courses or programs should be the focus of our internet-supported learning expenditures	8
Better reflecting our institution's unique pedagogy and culture in our internet-supported learning courses and programs	11
Obtaining more resources and support staff to make progress feasible	5.5
Achieve more effective marketing of our internet-supported learning courses and programs	14
Becoming more program-focused as opposed to course-focused	10
Achieving a more stable and reliable online learning technical environment	15
Improving student services for online students	9

Table 4-15. Descriptive statistics for Part 8 of the survey (goals)

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Significantly increased online competition	8	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.30931
Increasing faculty unionization	8	1.00	3.00	1.8750	.83452
Governmental enforcement of stricter accountability standards	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	.91613
Parents and/or students wanting more data on graduation and job placement rates	8	1.00	3.00	2.2500	.70711
Increasing market share of for-profit education providers	8	1.00	4.00	2.5000	1.06904
The need to work more with secondary schools to prepare and provide early start to college	8	1.00	4.00	2.7500	1.28174
Open source CMS, portal, or other learning software	8	1.00	4.00	2.6250	.91613
The rising costs of online marketing	8	1.00	4.00	2.3750	1.06066
More accessibility of higher bandwidth to the home through cable and DSL	8	2.00	5.00	3.6250	1.06066
Proliferation of iPods, cell phones, or other consumer electronics that may be capable of storing or accessing learning content	8	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.75593
Better self-paced courses that do not require instructors	8	1.00	3.00	2.0000	.75593
Global competition in online education	8	2.00	5.00	3.0000	.92582
Higher education/corporate partnerships to provide corporate education	8	2.00	4.00	2.5000	.75593
Increasing student demand for internet-supported learning	8	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.88641
Coursepaks, eBooks or other digital content from publishers	8	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.06904
New leadership and attitudes in the academy	8	2.00	4.00	3.1250	.83452
Online libraries and search engines like Google	8	2.00	4.00	3.1250	.64087
Open source content/course repositories like Merlot, SAIL, and MIT Open Courseware	8	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.75593
Reusable learning objects	8	2.00	4.00	3.1250	.83452
A new breed of faculty more comfortable with the internet and computer technology	8	4.00	5.00	4.3750	.51755
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-16. Respondent self-assessment of knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How would you gauge your personal knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning?	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
How would you gauge your personal knowledge, experience, and background with internet-supported learning?	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-17. Descriptive statistics for Part 1 of the survey (motivation) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student service is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Serving nontraditional students is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Providing greater access to learning is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.41421
Providing superior teaching is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Providing access to our highly ranked programs is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
Providing personalized learning for each student is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Providing innovative learning environments is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
Growing student enrollments is an important objective.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
Serving more students with limited physical facilities is an important objective.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
Our program(s) are experiencing competition from other local institutions.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
We have a good understanding of the needs of our students.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student service is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.00000
Serving nontraditional students is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
Providing greater access to learning is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.00000
Providing superior teaching is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	5.00	5.00	5.0000	.00000
Providing access to our highly ranked programs is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.50000
Providing personalized learning for each student is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Providing innovative learning environments is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	1.15470
Growing student enrollments is an important objective.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Serving more students with limited physical facilities is an important objective.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Our program(s) are experiencing competition from other local institutions.	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
We have a good understanding of the needs of our students.	4	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-18. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for motivation by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	4	3.00	4.73	3.8864	.70954
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	4	4.09	4.82	4.4318	.35111
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-19. Descriptive statistics for Part 2 of the survey (commitment/leadership) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is real (measurable) evidence that our institution is committed to achieving success in internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
There are frequent communications from the administration indicating that internet-supported learning is important to our mission.	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
Financial support for what we need to succeed in internet-supported learning is apparent.	4	1.00	4.00	2.7500	1.25831
Administration and academic leadership work together to prioritize our online focus.	4	2.00	4.00	3.5000	1.00000
We have selected some of our most successful programs and courses to focus our online efforts.	4	2.00	4.00	3.5000	1.00000
We have implemented an effective review process for selecting the best course or program candidates to move online.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
The criteria for selection of faculty that can develop online courses are clear.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
The criteria for selection of faculty that can teach an online course are clear.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
There is real (measurable) evidence that our institution is committed to achieving success in internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
There are frequent communications from the administration indicating that internet-supported learning is important to our mission.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Financial support for what we need to succeed in internet-supported learning is apparent.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Administration and academic leadership work together to prioritize our online focus.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We have selected some of our most successful programs and courses to focus our online efforts.	4	2.00	5.00	4.2500	1.50000
We have implemented an effective review process for selecting the best course or program candidates to move online.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
The criteria for selection of faculty that can develop online courses are clear.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
The criteria for selection of faculty that can teach an online course are clear.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-20. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for commitment/leadership by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment/Leader	4	2.50	4.00	3.4688	.66438
-ship					
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Commitment/Leader	4	3.63	4.63	4.1250	.45644
-ship					
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-21. Descriptive statistics for Part 3 of the survey (program level support) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We are focused on supporting complete academic programs with internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	1.15470
We have a team process to redesign a program so that it is effective in the online format.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
Technical and/or instructional design support staff have been assigned to support internet-supported learning program teams and efforts.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
Our efforts to put course or program materials online always involve a project plan including schedule and milestones.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Institutional leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	4	2.00	3.00	2.7500	.50000
Academic leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
When putting a course or program online, special effort is invested to make sure that our institutions or departments' unique teaching approach (pedagogy) is reflected.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Enrollment management and/or marketing are involved as part of our team that launches online programs.	4	1.00	4.00	2.5000	1.29099
When putting a course or program online, we usually have some targets for what constitutes "success."	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Our courses are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Our programs are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College

Table 4-21. Continued

Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics^b

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We are focused on supporting complete academic programs with internet-supported learning.	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
We have a team process to redesign a program so that it is effective in the online format.	4	3.00	5.00	3.7500	.95743
Technical and/or instructional design support staff have been assigned to support internet-supported learning program teams and efforts.	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
Our efforts to put course or program materials online always involve a project plan including schedule and milestones.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Institutional leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Academic leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
When putting a course or program online, special effort is invested to make sure that our institutions or departments' unique teaching approach (pedagogy) is reflected.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Enrollment management and/or marketing are involved as part of our team that launches online programs.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
When putting a course or program online, we usually have some targets for what constitutes success.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Our courses are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Our programs are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported learning.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Valid N (listwise)	4				

b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-22. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for program level support by institutional Classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Program Support	4	3.18	3.82	3.5455	.28748
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Program Support	4	3.18	4.55	3.8864	.60016
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-23. Descriptive statistics for Part 4 of the survey (faculty support) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College – Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have implemented an effective web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.41421
We have implemented an effective phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.50000
We have implemented an effective full-time web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	1.00	5.00	3.0000	2.30940
We have implemented an effective full-time phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	1.00	5.00	3.0000	2.30940
We provide effective technical training courses or seminars for faculty who want to teach online.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We require faculty to take a course in developing online materials and/or teaching online before they teach online.	4	1.00	5.00	3.7500	1.89297
We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty who desire it.	4	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.50000
We provide effective instructional or academic technology support staff from a centralized organization.	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
Instructional or academic technology support staff understand and help with academic discipline specific pedagogy issues.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.50000
We have implemented clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials.	4	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.50000
Additional fees are paid to faculty to develop online courses.	4	1.00	5.00	3.0000	2.30940
A significant percentage (> 25%) of our successful internet-supported learning initiatives is grassroots faculty driven.	4	1.00	5.00	3.2500	1.70783
The scholarship of teaching is a priority in our department or institution as demonstrated by a viable program that nurtures and spreads best practices.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
Faculty receive effective and frequent communication from academic leaders regarding the importance of innovating in teaching and learning, including use of the internet where appropriate.	4	2.00	4.00	3.5000	1.00000
Faculty are, for the most part, highly committed to the success of our internet-supported learning efforts.	4	1.00	5.00	3.5000	1.73205
Most faculty involved in developing and teaching internet-supported courses would agree that courses that are internet-supported are of higher quality than the equivalent classroom course.	4	2.00	3.00	2.7500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College

Table 4-23. Continued

Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics^b

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have implemented an effective web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We have implemented an effective phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We have implemented an effective full-time web or email helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	4.00	2.5000	1.00000
We have implemented an effective full-time phone helpdesk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	4	2.00	2.00	2.0000	.00000
We provide effective technical training courses or seminars for faculty who want to teach online.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We require faculty to take a course in developing online materials and/or teaching online before they teach online.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty who desire it.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We provide effective instructional or academic technology support staff from a centralized organization.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
Instructional or academic technology support staff understand and help with academic discipline specific pedagogy issues.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
We have implemented clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials.	3	4.00	5.00	4.3333	.57735
Additional fees are paid to faculty to develop online courses.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
A significant percentage (> 25%) of our successful internet-supported learning initiatives is grass-roots faculty driven.	3	3.00	4.00	3.6667	.57735
The scholarship of teaching is a priority in our department or institution as demonstrated by a viable program that nurtures and spreads best practices.	3	3.00	5.00	4.0000	1.00000
Faculty receive effective and frequent communication from academic leaders regarding the importance of innovating in teaching and learning, including use of the internet where appropriate.	3	3.00	4.00	3.6667	.57735
Faculty are, for the most part, highly committed to the success of our internet-supported learning efforts.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Most faculty involved in developing and teaching internet-supported courses would agree that courses that are internet-supported are of higher quality than the equivalent classroom course.	3	3.00	4.00	3.6667	.57735
Valid N (listwise)	3				

b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-24. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for faculty support by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Faculty Support	4	2.69	4.81	3.7031	.94975
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Faculty Support	4	3.44	4.25	3.7997	.34943
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-25. Descriptive statistics for Part 5 of the survey (student support) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We provide effective student services specifically for online students.	4	1.00	4.00	3.2500	1.50000
We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.	4	2.00	5.00	3.5000	1.29099
We provide an effective full-time technical phone helpdesk for students.	4	1.00	5.00	3.0000	2.30940
We provide an effective technical web/email helpdesk for students.	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
We provide an effective full-time technical web/email helpdesk for students.	4	1.00	5.00	3.0000	2.30940
Downtime of our online course management system or other technology does not impact the effectiveness of our online courses or programs.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We provide an effective online orientation for students taking internet-supported courses.	4	1.00	4.00	2.7500	1.25831
We provide an effective program advisor or coordinator who acts as a single point of contact to make sure any student issues are resolved in a timely manner.	4	1.00	4.00	2.5000	1.73205
We have implemented effective feedback from students regarding our internet-supported courses and/or programs using assessments given at least once per term.	4	2.00	4.00	3.5000	1.00000
We provide easy to use phone-based and web-based registration for students.	4	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.41421
Students find the online experience to be easy and trouble-free.	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Student learning is the most important priority.	4	3.00	5.00	4.5000	1.00000
Our internet-supported learning courses and programs help our students to use time more efficiently.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College

Table 4-25. Continued

Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics^b

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We provide effective student services specifically for online students.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We provide an effective full-time technical phone helpdesk for students.	4	2.00	3.00	2.5000	.57735
We provide an effective technical web/email helpdesk for students.	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
We provide an effective full-time technical web/email helpdesk for students.	4	2.00	5.00	3.0000	1.41421
Downtime of our online course management system or other technology does not impact the effectiveness of our online courses or programs.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We provide an effective online orientation for students taking internet-supported courses.	4	3.00	5.00	4.2500	.95743
We provide an effective program advisor or coordinator who acts as a single point of contact to make sure any student issues are resolved in a timely manner.	4	2.00	5.00	3.2500	1.25831
We have implemented effective feedback from students regarding our internet-supported courses and/or programs using assessments given at least once per term.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
We provide easy to use phone-based and web-based registration for students.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Students find the online experience to be easy and trouble-free.	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
Student learning is the most important priority.	4	4.00	5.00	4.7500	.50000
Our internet-supported learning courses and programs help our students to use time more efficiently.	4	3.00	5.00	3.7500	.95743
Valid N (listwise)	4				

b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-26. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for student support by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student Support	4	2.85	4.38	3.5192	.63859
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Student Support	4	3.46	4.62	3.9038	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-27. Descriptive statistics for Part 6 of the survey (measurement) by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have developed specific measurements of success that fit our needs.	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.81650
Our measurements of success are outlined for the next 2-3 years.	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
We effectively measure student outcomes, and we use them as a key measure of success.	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
We effectively measure student satisfaction and use it as a key measure of success.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
We compare graduation rates in internet-supported programs with the graduation rates in equivalent classroom-based programs to measure success.	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.81650
We have set enrollment targets for our internet-supported learning initiatives for the next 2-3 years.	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
Growth in our online courses and programs, for the most part, has not come at the expense of growth in our on-campus courses and programs.	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	1.15470
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported learning course.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported program.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We have developed specific measurements of success that fit our needs.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
Our measurements of success are outlined for the next 2-3 years.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
We effectively measure student outcomes, and we use them as a key measure of success.	4	4.00	4.00	4.0000	.00000
We effectively measure student satisfaction and use it as a key measure of success.	4	3.00	4.00	3.7500	.50000
We compare graduation rates in internet-supported programs with the graduation rates in equivalent classroom-based programs to measure success.	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
We have set enrollment targets for our internet-supported learning initiatives for the next 2-3 years.	4	2.00	3.00	2.7500	.50000
Growth in our online courses and programs, for the most part, has not come at the expense of growth in our on-campus courses and programs.	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported learning course.	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported program.	3	3.00	4.00	3.6667	.57735
Valid N (listwise)	3				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-28. Descriptive statistics associated with the index score for measurement by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Measurement	4	2.89	3.89	3.3611	.44790
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Measurement	4	3.56	4.13	3.7813	.27786
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-29. Rank orders of importance of actions related to improving an institution's internet-supported learning efforts

Item - Institution Classification = 2-Year College	Rank
Improving course quality	1.5 tie
Implementing a learning objects repository	16
Getting more faculty involved in or committed to our internet-supported learning initiatives	1.5 tie
Improving student retention in internet-supported learning courses or programs	5
Putting more programs online	9
Adding more rich media and interactivity to our online experience	4
Getting better use of our course management system	12.5 tie
Convincing the administration that online is important	11
Getting better at measuring student outcomes	3
Getting better at determining what courses or programs should be the focus of our internet-supported learning expenditures	7.5 tie
Better reflecting our institutions unique pedagogy and culture in our internet-supported learning courses and programs	10
Obtaining more resources and support staff to make progress feasible	6
Achieve more effective marketing of our internet-supported learning courses and programs	14
Becoming more program-focused as opposed to course-focused	12.5 tie
Achieving a more stable and reliable online learning technical environment	15
Improving student services for online students	7.5 tie
Item - Institution Classification = 4-Year College	Rank
Improving course quality	1
Implementing a learning objects repository	14
Getting more faculty involved in or committed to our internet-supported learning initiatives	4
Improving student retention in internet-supported learning courses or programs	2
Putting more programs online	7
Adding more rich media and interactivity to our online experience	3
Getting better use of our course management system	12
Convincing the administration that online is important	16
Getting better at measuring student outcomes	5
Getting better at determining what courses or programs should be the focus of our internet-supported learning expenditures	9
Better reflecting our institutions unique pedagogy and culture in our internet-supported learning courses and programs	13
Obtaining more resources and support staff to make progress feasible	6
Achieve more effective marketing of our internet-supported learning courses and programs	11 tie
Becoming more program-focused as opposed to course-focused	8
Achieving a more stable and reliable online learning technical environment	15
Improving student services for online students	11 tie

Table 4-30. Descriptive statistics for Part 8 of the survey (goals) by institutional classification
 Institution Classification = 2-Year College - Descriptive Statistics^a

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Significantly increased online competition	4	1.00	5.00	3.2500	1.70783
Increasing faculty unionization	4	1.00	3.00	1.7500	.95743
Governmental enforcement of stricter accountability standards	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
Parents and/or students wanting more data on graduation and job placement rates.	4	1.00	2.00	1.7500	.50000
Increasing market share of for-profit education providers	4	1.00	3.00	2.5000	1.00000
The need to work more with secondary schools to prepare and provide early start to college	4	1.00	4.00	3.2500	1.50000
Open source CMS, portal, or other learning software	4	2.00	3.00	2.5000	.57735
The rising costs of online marketing	4	1.00	3.00	2.0000	.81650
More accessibility of higher bandwidth to the home through cable and DSL	4	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.41421
Proliferation of iPods, cell phones, or other consumer electronics that may be capable of storing or accessing learning content	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
Better self-paced courses that do not require instructors	4	1.00	2.00	1.7500	.50000
Global competition in online education	4	3.00	5.00	3.5000	1.00000
Higher education/corporate partnerships to provide corporate education	4	2.00	3.00	2.2500	.50000
Increasing student demand for internet-supported learning courses	4	3.00	5.00	4.5000	1.00000
Coursepaks, eBooks or other digital content from publishers	4	2.00	5.00	4.0000	1.41421
New leadership and attitudes in the academy	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.81650
Online libraries and search engines like Google	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Open source content/course repositories like Merlot, SAIL, and MIT Open Courseware	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.81650
Reusable learning objects	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
A new breed of faculty more comfortable with the internet and computer technology	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College

Table 4-30. Continued

Institution Classification = 4-Year College - Descriptive Statistics^b

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Significantly increased online competition	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
Increasing faculty unionization	4	1.00	3.00	2.0000	.81650
Governmental enforcement of stricter accountability standards	4	2.00	5.00	3.7500	1.25831
Parents and/or students wanting more data on graduation and job placement rates.	4	2.00	3.00	2.7500	.50000
Increasing market share of for-profit education providers	4	1.00	4.00	2.5000	1.29099
The need to work more with secondary schools to prepare and provide early start to college	4	1.00	3.00	2.2500	.95743
Open source CMS, portal, or other learning software	4	1.00	4.00	2.7500	1.25831
The rising costs of online marketing	4	1.00	4.00	2.7500	1.25831
More accessibility of higher bandwidth to the home through cable and DSL	4	3.00	4.00	3.2500	.50000
Proliferation of iPods, cell phones, or other consumer electronics that may be capable of storing or accessing learning content	4	4.00	5.00	4.5000	.57735
Better self-paced courses that do not require instructors	4	1.00	3.00	2.2500	.95743
Global competition in online education	4	2.00	3.00	2.5000	.57735
Higher education/corporate partnerships to provide corporate education	4	2.00	4.00	2.7500	.95743
Increasing student demand for internet-supported learning courses	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
Coursepaks, eBooks or other digital content from publishers	4	3.00	5.00	4.0000	.81650
New leadership and attitudes in the academy	4	2.00	4.00	3.2500	.95743
Online libraries and search engines like Google	4	3.00	3.00	3.0000	.00000
Open source content/course repositories like Merlot, SAIL, and MIT Open Courseware	4	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.81650
Reusable learning objects	4	3.00	4.00	3.5000	.57735
A new breed of faculty more comfortable with the internet and computer technology	4	4.00	5.00	4.2500	.50000
Valid N (listwise)	4				

b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-31. t-test results by institutional classification (two-year, four-year; $N = 8$).

		Group Statistics			
	Institutional Classification	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Motivation	2-Year College	4	3.8864	.70954	.35477
	4-Year College	4	4.4318	.35111	.17556
Commit_Leader	2-Year College	4	3.4688	.66438	.33219
	4-Year College	4	4.1250	.45644	.22822
Prog_Support	2-Year College	4	3.5455	.28748	.14374
	4-Year College	4	3.8864	.60016	.30008
Fac_Support	2-Year College	4	3.7031	.94975	.47487
	4-Year College	4	3.7997	.34943	.17472
Stu_Support	2-Year College	4	3.5192	.63859	.31929
	4-Year College	4	3.9038	.50000	.25000
Measurement	2-Year College	4	3.3611	.44790	.22395
	4-Year College	4	3.7813	.27786	.13893

		Independent Samples Test		
		t-test for Equality of Means		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Motivation	Equal variances assumed	.217	-.54545	.39583
	Equal variances not assumed	.234	-.54545	.39583
Commitment/Leadership	Equal variances assumed	.155	-.65625	.40303
	Equal variances not assumed	.161	-.65625	.40303
Program Support	Equal variances assumed	.345	-.34091	.33273
	Equal variances not assumed	.360	-.34091	.33273
Faculty Support	Equal variances assumed	.855	-.09659	.50599
	Equal variances not assumed	.858	-.09659	.50599
Student Support	Equal variances assumed	.380	-.38462	.40552
	Equal variances not assumed	.382	-.38462	.40552
Measurement	Equal variances assumed	.162	-.42014	.26355
	Equal variances not assumed	.172	-.42014	.26355

Table 4-32. Ranking of index score by means

	Descriptive Statistics				
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	8	3.00	4.82	4.1591	.59464
Commitment/Leadership	8	2.50	4.63	3.7969	.63365
Faculty Support	8	2.69	4.81	3.7514	.66451
Student Support	8	2.85	4.62	3.7115	.56936
Program Support	8	3.18	4.55	3.7159	.47222
Measurement	8	2.89	4.13	3.5712	.41171
Valid N (listwise)	8				

Table 4-33. Ranking of index scores by means by institutional classification

Institution Classification = 2-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^a					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	4	3.00	4.73	3.8864	.70954
Faculty Support	4	2.69	4.81	3.7031	.94975
Program Support	4	3.18	3.82	3.5455	.28748
Student Support	4	2.85	4.38	3.5192	.63859
Commitment/Leader -ship	4	2.50	4.00	3.4688	.66438
Measurement	4	2.89	3.89	3.3611	.44790
Valid N (listwise)	4				
Institution Classification = 4-Year College Descriptive Statistics ^b					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	4	4.09	4.82	4.4318	.35111
Student Support	4	3.46	4.62	3.9038	.50000
Faculty Support	4	3.44	4.25	3.7997	.34943
Commitment/Leader -ship	4	3.63	4.63	4.1250	.45644
Program Support	4	3.18	4.55	3.8864	.60016
Measurement	4	3.56	4.13	3.7813	.27786
Valid N (listwise)	4				

a. Institution Classification = 2-Year College. b. Institution Classification = 4-Year College

Table 4-34. Levels of support analysis framework (Appendices C and D; follow-up interview transcripts)

Follow-up interview feedback analysis using the eight parts from the internet-supported learning survey.	Levels of Support 2-year institutions in Sample	Levels of Support 4-year institutions in Sample
	Low = only found in 1 out of 4 institutions Medium = found in 2 out of 4 institutions High = found in 3 or 4 institutions	Low = only found in 1 out of 4 institutions Medium = found in 2 out of 4 institutions High = found in 3 or 4 institutions
Part 1-Motivation	Medium	High
Part 2-Commitment/Leadership	Overall: Low	Overall: High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • budgets for online learning • positive faculty perception of leadership support • online advocates in leadership • state reporting: online initiatives • distance education policies 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>
Part 3- Program Level Support	Overall: Low	Overall: High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learning management system • centralized support • full-time HelpDesk for students & faculty • mandatory new faculty training • instructional designers 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p> <p>Low</p> <p>High</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>
Part 4- Faculty Support	Overall: Medium	Overall: High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • technical assistance • design & production support • pedagogical professional development • monetary incentives and rewards • policies or guidelines • resources • faculty bargaining unit 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>
Part 5- Student Support	*	*
Part 6- Measurement/Quality	Overall: Medium	Overall: Medium
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • formalized course review process • design & production support 	<p>Medium</p> <p>Low</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p>
Part 7- Priorities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal faculty professional development • Improving course quality 	<p>High</p> <p>High</p>	<p>High</p> <p>High</p>
Part 8- Goals	*	*

* = not enough information to code

Table 4-35. Internet-supported Learning (IsL) survey results: A comparative analysis (Source: Abel, 2005a; Abel, 2005c)

	Abel IsL Survey Results	Replicated IsL Study 2-yr institutions	Replicated IsL Study 4-yr institutions
Part 1: Motivation	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Similar	Same
Student service is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission	Highest rated item	2 nd highest rated item	Highest rated item (tied with #5)
Growing student enrollments is an important objective		Highest rated item	Average rated item
Providing superior teaching is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.			Highest rated item (tied with #1)
Part 2: Commitment/Leadership	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Different	Same
There is real (measurable) evidence that our institution is committed to achieving success in internet-supported learning.	Highest rated item	3 rd highest rated item	Highest rated item
The criteria for selection of faculty that can develop online courses are clear.		Highest rated item	Ranked high but not the highest
Part 3: Program Level Support	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Different	Same
We are focused on supporting complete academic programs with internet-supported learning.	Highest rated item	Average rated item	Highest rated item (tied with #31,24)
Our courses are enhanced through the process of incorporating internet-supported Learning		Highest rated item	Highest rated item (tied with # 24,22)
Technical and/or instructional design support staff has been assigned to support internet-supported learning program teams and efforts.		Average rated item	Highest rated item (tied with #22,31)
Part 4: Faculty Support	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Different	Similar
We have implemented an effective web or email help desk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.	Highest rated item	Rated high but not the highest	Second highest rated item
We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty that desire it.		Highest Rated item (tied with #42)	Highest rated item (tied with #34)
We have implemented clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials.		Highest rated item (tied with #39)	
We have implemented an effective phone help desk for use by the faculty involved in internet-supported learning.			Highest rated item (tied with #39)
Part 5: Student Support	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Different	Same
We provide effective student services specifically for online students.	Highest rated item	Average rated item	Highest rated item (tied with #50 and #52)
We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.			Highest rated item (tied with #49 and #52)
We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.			Highest rated item (tied with #49 , #50)

Table 4-35. Continued

	Abel IIS Survey Results	Replicated IIS Study 2-yr institutions	Replicated IIS Study 4-yr institutions
Downtime of our online course management system or other technology does not impact the effectiveness of our online courses or programs.		Highest rated item (tied with #60)	
Student learning is the most important priority.		Highest rating (tied with #54)	
Part 6: Measurement	Original Study (Abel, 2005a)	Different	Similar
We effectively measure student outcomes, and we use them as a key measure of success.	Highest rated item	Average rated item	Second highest rating (tied with #62, #66, #69)
We have developed specific measurements of success that fit our needs.			Second highest rating (tied with #64, #66, #69)
We compare graduation rates in internet-supported programs with the graduation rates in equivalent classroom-based programs to measure success.			Second highest rating (tied with #64, #62, #69)
We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality internet-supported course.		Highest rated item	Second highest rating (tied with #64, #62, #66)
Part 7: Ranked Priorities for Improvement Online Learning over Next 12 Months	(Peer Group Study (Abel, 2005c))	Same	Same
Improving Course Quality	Highest ranked item	Highest ranking (tied with #76)	Highest ranking
Getting more faculty involved in or committed to our internet-supported learning initiatives			
Improving student retention in internet-supported learning courses or programs			2 nd highest ranking
Part 8: Major Goals over the Next 3 years	(Peer Group Study (Abel, 2005c))	Same	Similar
Increasing student demand for internet-supported learning	Highest rated item	Highest rated item (tied with #109)	2 nd highest rated item
A new breed of faculty more comfortable with the internet and computer technology		Highest rated item (tied with #103)	
Proliferation of iPods, cell phones, or other consumer electronics that may be capable of storing or accessing learning content			Highest rated item

Table 4-36. Summary of similarities and differences of highest ranked survey items in sample schools compared to highest ranked items of Abel's 2005(a) study

Internet-supported Learning Self-study Audit Factors of Success	2-year institutions in Sample	4-year institutions in Sample
Part 1: Motivation	Similar	Same
Part 2: Commitment/Leadership	Different	Same
Part 3: Program Level Support	Different	Same
Part 4: Faculty Support	Different	Similar
Part 5: Student Support	Different	Same
Part 6: Measurement	Different	Similar
Part 7: Priorities next 12 months	Same	Same
Part 8: Goals Next 3 years	Same	Similar

Table 4-37. Fall 2009-2010 headcounts for participating institutions (FLDOE, 2010a)

Institutional Classification	Institution Code	Headcount
Florida Baccalaureate (approx. total headcount average = 28,000)	B-2	59,120
	B-3	7,556
	B-4	17,356
	B-1	29,282
Florida Community College (approx. total headcount average = 8,000)	CC-4	2,902
	CC-1	17,853
	CC-3	1,251
	CC-2	10,036

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify if differences existed in distance education faculty support programs and policies in Florida's baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two year mission. This study also sought to find common attributes of quality faculty support programs and/or policies, as well as discriminate which practices and policies were more successful than others. The study also examined discrepancies in faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding these practices and policies. In other words, did a relationship exist between what the faculty thought were important support attributes and what the administration offered in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support? The findings of this research focused on practices that were the most effective for both faculty and administration.

In order to address the purpose of the study, four research questions were developed:

- What similarities and differences exist in distance education faculty support programs in community colleges and baccalaureate state institutions?
- What is the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges?
- Does a discrepancy occur between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies?
- What are recommended attributes for institutions to consider in developing a distance education faculty support program model?

For this study, 4 of the 19 Florida associate dominate/ baccalaureate, degree-granting institutions were selected, based on their longevity in the Florida College System. In addition, 4 of the 9 Florida associate/two-year institutions were purposefully selected for inclusion in the study, given the probability they would not seek baccalaureate program approval in 2010 or 2011. All eight institutions selected in the study remained anonymous. Research was conducted

in two steps with the eight respondents. First, one respondent from each institution completed an internet-based, eight-part *Internet-supported Learning(IsL)* survey. The instrument used in this study was a replication of a national survey conducted in 2005 by Abel and the Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (Abel, 2005c). Respondents then participated in a 30 to 45minute follow-up phone interview and were asked 15 questions, which were based on the research questions of this study and the results of the electronic survey. All respondents were asked the same questions. The respondents were allowed to answer the items based on their own perceptions and on the perceptions of faculty, students, and administrators from their respective schools.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from the quantitative analysis indicated no significant differences between the Florida two- and four-year institutions in the sample in comparing the similarities and differences of distance education practices and policies. However, the qualitative analysis of the data suggested that the baccalaureate schools in the sample were applying more effective practices and support than the community colleges in the sample with a two-year mission. Specifically, the follow-up interview results inferred that similarities and differences existed between the groups, and that the four-year institutions perceived their levels of distance education support to be higher in commitment of leadership, program level support, and faculty support.

Finding 1: Commitment of Leadership

In this study, four-year institutions considered their leadership as having a positive impact on their success. This perception was evidenced in the Levels of Support Analysis Framework and the comparative analysis table of highest ranked survey items from the two- and four-year institutions in the sample and Abel's (2005a) community colleges and universities in

his study. Specifically, the four-year institutions in the sample ranked as their highest item from the Commitment/Leadership: Part 2 survey that their higher administration leaders demonstrated measurable evidence of their commitment to the institution's online system and support of faculty. Contributing factors to support this analysis were found in four-year institution leaders approving distance education policies, supporting baccalaureate new program needs including new online programs, and becoming involved in new program initiatives as part of the baccalaureate state approval process. In contrast, two-year institutions in the sample did not have adopted policies in place for online learning, and their leadership was not involved in baccalaureate distance education initiatives. Also, faculty perceived leadership commitment as not being as strong as four-year institutions in the sample, and a discrepancy appeared between what faculty believed were important in online education support and what the community college administration offered.

Finding 2: Program Level Support

In this study, four-year institutions considered program level support as having a positive impact on their success. This perception was evidenced in the Levels of Support Analysis Framework (Table 4-36) and the comparative analysis table of highest ranked survey items from both the two- and four-year institutions in the sample, as well as Abel's 21 institutions from his initial case study (Abel, 2005a). Specifically, the four-year institutions in the sample ranked the focus on complete academic programs as their highest item under the Program Level Support: Part 3 of the Internet-supported Learning survey. Four year institutions in the sample provided program level support through centralized online services. Services included enhanced learning management systems, trained technical support, assistance from instructional designers, and full-time helpdesks for students and faculty. Another program level support common to the four-year institutions was academic administrators hired as advocates whose roles were to support faculty

and deliver support services for online faculty. Many of these individuals were advocates for online faculty on decision-making committees, and they oversaw centralized services that supported faculty who designed and delivered online programs/courses. In contrast, two-year institutions did not have the same level of support in their centralized support centers to provide professional development and training for faculty. Budget restraints were shared as the primary reason not to have the resources they needed to provide instructional design help for faculty or provide a full-time helpdesk to assist faculty and students.

Finding 3: Faculty Support

The findings for faculty support suggested that institutions, which did a better job of involving faculty from the “bottom up” and supporting faculty with multiple resources and incentives, perceived their online practices as being effective. The four-year institutions in this sample shared evidence of their faculty taking more ownership in helping improve the distance education, planning, development and implementation practices for their respective institution. The factors that contributed to effective faculty support were institutional mechanisms in place that provided: 1) a faculty voice in decision-making endeavors related to online learning; and 2) multiple resources to support enhanced learning management systems, design and production, technical and pedagogical professional development, and monetary incentives and rewards to faculty developing online courses. This pattern of support was consistent with the Levels of Support Analysis Framework and the comparative analysis of highest ranked items under the Faculty Support: Part 4 of the Internet-supported Learning survey. The four-year institutions ranked their implementation of a helpdesk to support faculty and one-on-one instructional design consultation efforts as their highest ranked items. These highest ranked items were also consistent with Abel’s highest ranked items from his 21 institutions in his national case study (Abel, 2005a).

The practice of faculty decision-making in online programming was stronger at the four-year institutions in this study. Abel's (2005a) case study agreed with this study's findings. In the first phase of his study, Abel (2005a) found that faculty online support was more successful in community colleges. He reported that these institutions did a good job in nurturing "grass roots efforts" of faculty (Abel, 2005c, p. 26). In this study, the institutions that involved faculty "from the ground up" had increased motivation and engagement from faculty. Also, as indicated from the follow-up interviews, distance education guides and policies were more readily approved due to the input of faculty.

Personalized and customized resources to help faculty design courses appeared to be lacking in the two-year institutions in the sample. Also, lacking were the policies in place to advocate for more resources, incentives, as well as faculty being more involved in online decision-making strategies, new initiatives, or professional development needs.

Hodge's (2000) analysis agreed with this current study's findings in that faculty support practices were needed to improve quality and equitability of distance education programs. In the current study, this researcher found that faculty support initiatives were ranked as one of the top three priority areas for both the two- and four-year institutions in this study, and faculty rewards and incentives were more evident and consistent among the four-year institutions in the sample. In these institutions, faculty were paid for developing content, but they were not paid extra for teaching online classes. One two-year institution gave faculty both release time and course development monetary incentives. Two of the four-year institutions offered monetary incentives, and faculty from these institutions perceived this monetary incentive as a top priority of support. In one sample school, incentives were paid to full-time faculty due only to union contract regulations. No indication was apparent of faculty resistance from those schools that did not

offer faculty incentives. In contrast to this study's findings, Amason's (2005a) reported that faculty rewards and incentives were almost non-existent at the institution, state, and consortium levels.

According to Wolcott and Shattuck's (2007) study, a relationship existed between incentives and faculty being motivated by the incentives. In their research, they noted that intrinsic motivators influenced faculty to participate more in online education. Intrinsic motivators included desires to teach online, to learn new technology, to improve one's skills, to achieve personal goals, to be innovative, and to seek new challenges. Extrinsic motivators were defined as teaching online because it was a requirement, receiving positive reinforcement from the university for teaching online, and being given monetary rewards (Wolcott & Shattuck, 2007).

In summary, the current study's top-ranked critical factors for distance education success were similar to both Amason (2007a) and Abel's (2005b) studies. The highest ranked overall critical factors for this study were Motivation (Part 1), Commitment/Leadership: Part 2 and Faculty Support (Part 4). Amason (2007a) found that executive leadership, support faculty, and academic leadership commitment were the top three criteria for higher education distance education success (Abel, 2005b). Abel (2005a) ranked the highest ingredients of success factors as 1) executive leadership and support, 2) faculty and academic leadership commitment, and 3) student services. Of all three studies, leadership and faculty support were consistently rated at the top.

Conclusion of Findings

The discussion of the findings was an attempt to provide insight into the factors that contributed to the higher level of support for the four-year institutions in the sample and to identify the gaps in the policies and practices of the two year institutions. The findings from the

qualitative analysis in this study inferred that the greater the levels of support found in distance education practices and policies, the higher the institutions ranked themselves as having quality distance education programs. This researcher concluded from the study that the two-year institutions in the sample were less supported than the four-year institutions in the sample. Specifically, they had fewer centralized resources, fewer best practices, and less faculty support. Further explanations of these derived conclusions are next discussed.

One of the research questions investigated was if discrepancies existed between faculty perception and administrative offerings regarding practices and policies. Patterns in the data analysis identified fewer discrepancies between the leadership and faculty's perception of effective practices, policies, and offerings from the four-year institutions in the sample. Based on the survey data analysis, the study participants in the four-year institutions ranked higher their goal to develop complete academic programs online and not just focus on developing and offering online courses. The literature suggested that the development of programs took cooperation and strategic planning from both the leadership and faculty to design and provide the resources needed to fully develop online academic programs (Abel, 2005c). In the Levels of Support Analysis Framework under the category of Commitment/Leadership, the two-year institutions in the sample were coded with a "low" rating, but the four-year institutions were coded with a "high" rating. The need for increased budgets in online learning, better communication between faculty and higher education leaders, and having academic advocates for online learning were suggested ways to increase the support at the two-year institutions, based on the practices and ratings of the four-year institutions.

The need for leadership commitment was evident in this study and consistent with Abel's (2005a) study. In fact, Abel (2005c) concluded that when institutions designed and developed

full academic programs online versus only putting courses online, those institutions perceived themselves achieving online education success four times as much as those institutions that were focused only on single course development (Abel, 2005e). This commitment required a higher level of strategic planning and faculty buy-in, as well as the support of leadership to systemize the process throughout the entire institution. All of these factors shifted the focus to new approaches for learning, marketing differently to recruit and attract students, and meeting quality assurance benchmarks both at the student assessment level and program evaluation level (Rovai & Downey, 2010; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2009a).

The findings of this research also suggested that two-year institutions had fewer resources and utilized fewer best practices. The four-year institutions in this study addressed the value of customizing best practices to meet specific institutional goals and the importance of including faculty to determine the best practices to meet those goals. Examples of specific benchmarks included more in-depth resources that provided faculty assistance in developing courses, acquiring quality assurance tools and processes for evaluating online courses, and meeting the professional development needs of the faculty. Abel (2005a) agreed with this practice and found that those institutions that created their own best practices around their program goals, which addressed faculty, student, and staff needs, were the most successful.

In the current study, an effort was made to determine what resources and effective best practices were present in community colleges and baccalaureate schools in the sample. This study showed evidence that the four-year institutions put more value on program quality and measurements of success. Abel (2005c) agreed with this research and reported stronger learner outcomes of students occurred when the focus of program quality was in place. The current research found that with more dedicated resources supporting online teaching and learning,

institutions could focus more on developing full academic programs. With regard to Hodge's (2000) study, the findings of the current study were similar. In this study, all eight institutions reported using these practices. However, the degree to which they were present or practiced required deeper analysis. Two tables were constructed annotating the feedback from each respondent for each participating institution. This information helped clarify the depth of practice reported by both institutional types (Appendices C and D). For example, all institutions in the current study's sample reported the support of pedagogical and technical services and also training for faculty teaching online. The four-year institutions seemed to offer more resources, such as full-time technical support and centralized services with instructional designer help for content development. As an illustration, the use of learning management systems (LMSs) was widely employed by many institutions in the sample for faculty to post online materials, resources, and course content. From the survey results, the offer of effective technical training and instructional design consultation were rated high. All eight institutions in the sample ranked the following item the highest: "We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty who desire it" (Appendix A). Three of the four two-year institutions and two of the four four-year institutions required mandatory training for course development.

Findings also suggested that two-year institutions had less faculty support than the four-year institutions in the study. The creative and value-added decision-making of all major stakeholders in a collaborative environment was reported by the four-year institutions as having the greatest success. This study's best practice findings were consistent with faculty support best practices found in Abel's (2005c) study. In looking at the relationship between distance education faculty support practices and policies in community colleges and state colleges, this

study found that three of the four-year institutions from this sample were unionized and had approved distance education policies. Among the two-year institutions, all were non-union institutions and did not have approved distance education policies. Three of the four two-year institutions reported they had eLearning and/or guidelines in place (Appendices C and D). It is necessary to look at whether or not having approved online policies improves effective online practices and faculty support at the community college level. Institutional distance education policies were evident in four-year institutions and not two-year institutions. Amason (2007a) found that when policies were closer in proximity to the institution and the student, distance education programs were stronger at community colleges and had the greatest policy diffusion. Amason also found that when policies were not in place, faculty factors were the most ignored, such as faculty rewards.

In the current study, the respondents were asked the following additional question to understand the perceptions of faculty regarding motivating factors to work in distance education: “Why do faculty like to teach online?” In the sample, the responses for both institutional groups were similar. The most common responses were love for teaching online, playing with technology, interest in future aspects of technology in education, flexibility, and the convenience to work from home. The majority of the responses appeared to be intrinsic motives. Only one respondent gave monetary incentives as a reason to teach online. These findings support past research (Wolcott & Shattuck, 2007).

However, discrepancies were found when respondents were asked a different question related to faculty support. Respondents were asked to identify the top priorities of support for faculty. Two of the four-year institutions said monetary incentives were perceived by faculty as a

top priority of support. Six of the eight institutions in the sample offered some type of monetary support to faculty for attending training or developing courses.

Overall, based on the results of the study, the two-year institutions may have been more effective if they had greater levels of support in centralized services, academic advocates in higher administration positions, a full-time helpdesk, course management and technical support, clear policies, instructional designer services, and monetary incentives for faculty designing online work.

Implications for Practice

It is necessary to look at the levels of support at the two-year program level and determine why they are lower, or why the four-year institutions in the sample were doing a better job in providing leadership commitment, resources, and faculty support. The demand and growth of online learning at community colleges has created a need to explore the critical factors to make online learning successful at these two-year institutions. According to Allen and Seaman (2010), almost 30% of college students took one or more college courses online.

Implications for Practice 1: More Leadership Support for Two-year Institutions

Future researchers should look at how higher education leaders can be more strategic in including distance education programming in their long-term plans and providing key resources to support faculty (Allen & Seaman, 2010; Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010). The involvement and collaboration with faculty on these endeavors are critical factors. Leaders should consider involving faculty on meeting access plus the needs of the 21st century learner, and provide the flexibility that students demand. For example, in this study, the highest ranked index mean score of the survey for both the two- and four-year institutions in this study was Motivation: Part 1—a mean of 3.8864 for the two-year institutions in the sample, and a mean of 4.4318 for the four-year institutions in the survey. Participants selected reasons why

their respective institution supported online learning. The most common motivation theme for providing online courses and programs from both groups was access and demand for students. This theme may be the common denominator for success, and the most important motive for both groups to improve their distance education programs.

The focus on programs—and not on courses—is one leadership tactic to examine to accomplish this goal (Abel, 2005e; Allen & Seaman, 2010). This organizational change would also strengthen the perceptions of what faculty consider the administration is doing in regards to specific offerings because communication and involvement outreach would be more transparent (Rovai & Downey, 2010).

Institutions in the sample reported that communication needed improvement. Communication was rated with an average mean on the survey. The item associated with this practice on the survey was: “Faculty receive effective and frequent communication from academic leaders regarding the importance of innovating in teaching and learning, including use of the internet where appropriate” (Appendix A). The leadership, overall, supported distance education at the institutions. The respondents stated they would like to do more for online education at their institutions, but that budgetary constraints hampered the acquisition of additional resources. Some respondents reported that past leadership hindered the online learning growth at respected campuses, and these institutions were behind in where they needed to be in offering quality course offerings to online students.

Implications for Practice 2: Providing More Quality Resources for Two-year Institutions

The quality of distance education programs has been a recurring and rising concern, even after accountability and accreditation policies were put in place in the early 2000s, and the “best practice” statement was formalized (Allen & Seaman, 2010; Commission on Higher Education, 2001; Middle States Commission on Higher Education, 2002). Online institutions continued to

be scrutinized over the five “best practice” areas, which included institutional context and commitment, curriculum and instruction, faculty and student support, and evaluation and assessment. The research has continued to see the quality of distance education courses and programs as a major concern. In this study, the institutions rated improving course quality as their primary goal. According to Abel’s (2005a; 2005c) studies, improving course quality was also ranked as the number one goal of community colleges and universities. Faculty, instructional designers, and course developers need to look at quality matrices that focus on course quality, but more importantly on student-centered and learning-centered program quality. Providing support resources for specific programs would generate teamwork and collaboration, promote project plans, prioritize resources, create faculty input and leadership, and involve other departments such as admissions (Abel, 2005e).

The survey data analysis from the sample institutions suggested that priorities for the future need to be placed on 21st century learning tools, course quality, and electronic devices to store, access, and retrieve learning content. Further research in examining new technologies to support online teaching and learning should be considered. Also, consideration should be given in using distance education centralized services to help faculty integrate Web 2.0 tools, as compared to industry trends. The focus would not be on “what” but “why” these technologies would produce the best results and products. For example, the IMS Global Learning Consortium, in its Learning Impact 2010 Report, examined the reasons why initiatives were implemented with the goal of looking at “high level impact” tools (IMS Global Learning Consortium, 2010, p. 1).

Implications for Practice 3: Improving Faculty Support Initiatives at Two-year Institutions

The findings of the analysis also suggested that two-year institutions did not provide as much faculty support as the four-year institutions in the sample. The data analyzed did not

indicate that two-year institutions were not providing services and meeting faculty needs. The data suggested that those services were not at the same level of degree as the four-year institutions. For example, two-year institutions provided a helpdesk, but not a full-time helpdesk. Two-year institutions in the sample offered professional development and technical assistance, but did not provide instructional designers or centralized services where faculty could go and work with technical assistants to develop and upload their courses. Resources appeared to be more prevalent at the four-year institutions in regard to providing monetary incentives and rewards for faculty. Two-year higher administration leaders could explore some of the distance education organizational planning at four year institutions for allocating funding for key faculty support resources. According to the 2010 Managing Online Education (MOE) Survey results, almost 75% of the participants from 183 colleges and universities reported that a primary reason faculty were resistant to online teaching was due to the lack of resources provided for them (Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010).

Recommendations for Further Study

Due to the results of this study and the analyses of previous studies, further research should be contemplated to explore the following considerations in an attempt to better understand key factors that impact effective faculty support for online learning in community colleges and baccalaureate schools:

1. Consider two-year institutions modeling what four-year institutions are doing to maintain and accelerate their distance education programs. Specific emphasis should be given to researching funding prospects to attain more resources, to explore ways to move distance education guidelines into policies, to provide more in-depth centralized services with resources specific to the needs of the faculty, and to ensure faculty are included in decision-making regarding effective online programming and course quality.
2. Consider looking closer to see if a relationship exists between faculty support and community colleges that are unionized. Questions to ask should include: Does faculty unionization have an impact on policies being approved and/or adopted? Does unionization play a role in whether or not institutions mandate training for faculty?

3. Consider these questions: Does a relationship exist between effective faculty support for online learning and the size of the institutions? For example, do larger institutions provide more support than smaller institutions?
4. Consider looking deeper at institutions that have centralized services for offering distance education resources, products, and support. Also, conduct more in-depth studies to focus on the impact of those centralized services at the department level or at the institution level. For example, those services, which are centralized at the department or school level, may create more of an environment in which faculty are more directly involved with decision-making, and resources are closer to faculty versus services that are more centralized. There may also be negative factors as well related to centralized services. Questions to explore further could be: Does proximity of centralized services play a factor in the effectiveness of services provided for faculty? Do institutions with satellite campuses have greater challenges in meeting faculty support needs for online teaching and/or development? Are faculty support services diffused the farther away the services are located? Is centralizing a good or bad thing at the institutional or state levels? What relationships exist between centralized services and marketing policies, competition, and program control?
5. Consider the impact of budget on faculty support services that are centralized and/or decentralized. Questions to ask should include: Does the proximity of services impact quality faculty support? Does receiving more technical and/or instructional support at a university-wide centralized service have greater impact due to pooling resources to meet the needs of all faculty? If centralized services are at the school or department level, does this create additional budget constraints?
6. Consider looking more closely at institutions where faculty are involved in major decision-making for online learning. Also, conduct research to see if faculty have leader advocates positioned to inform higher administration of faculty needs. Communication between faculty and administration could play a major factor in strengthening faculty support. Are faculty support budgets diffused the farther away the services are located? Which services or practices enhance technical assistance, design and production support, pedagogical support, or incentives and rewards?
7. Consider if “state reporting” is a factor for drawing more focus on distance education practices. Because of state regulations imposed on Florida state baccalaureate schools, leadership in these sample four-year institutions seemed to be more invested in distance education initiatives than community college leaders.
8. Conduct more research on leadership dispositions and the role leadership plays in distance learning that is the most effective in supporting faculty. Two underlying themes were found in this study. The first theme was that the administration was supporting the faculty in many ways, but that faculty members were unaware due to poor communication—on the administration’s part—in sharing knowledge about the resources available. The faculty may perceive that the administration is not listening to their needs. But the reality may be that what faculty see is important is actually being implemented in the institution. However, the administration may be doing a poor job in communicating that the support

exists or the support may be isolated in specific departments, schools, or other satellite campuses. The second theme in this study was that those college presidents, who believed online learning was an effective deliverable system for providing student access, supported faculty more in online resources. A question to ask should be: Does a correlation exist between the dispositions of presidents who support online learning and the services and support that are actually delivered to and for the faculty?

9. Investigate the role of faculty as coaches and mentors for one another, as well as the role innovative collaboration experiences have on effective online faculty support. Faculty need the same support as students do, and innovative technologies such as Wikis, blogs, and other sophisticated social networking systems can enhance the collaboration and provide more contact opportunities for part-time and full-time faculty (Puzziferro & Shelton, 2010).
10. Remember that academic freedom and right of ownership were not discussed in this study—two topics that could be researched in more detail in future studies.
11. Remember that the most common motivation theme for providing online courses and programs from both groups was access and demand for students. This access and demand for students theme was reported by three out of the four community colleges and four out of four baccalaureate schools in the sample. Meeting students' needs and expectations may be the common denominator for success and the most important motive for both groups to improve their distance education programs. This motivation theme is worth further exploration.

APPENDIX A SURVEY INSTRUMENT

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

1. Thank you for participating in the Internet-Supported Learning Survey

Dear Participant,

This web survey is designed to learn your perceptions of your institution's Internet-supported key initiatives and distance education approaches. You were selected to complete this questionnaire based on your knowledge and understanding of the impact distance education as made on your institution and your insights in the overall perceptions of faculty, students, and administration at your institution.

This questionnaire has eight parts that focus on the following: motivation, commitment/leadership, program level support, faculty support, student support, measurement, priorities, and goals. It will take an average of 30 minutes to complete. The questionnaire tool will allow you to go back in the survey to previous pages and update existing responses until the survey is finished or until you have exited the survey. After the survey is finished, you will not be able to re-enter the survey.

You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer and your answers will be reported anonymously. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law, and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript.

To start the survey, click on the "Next" button below.

Permission was granted to use this replicated survey tool by Dr. Ron Abel, President and founder of Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC) on May 18, 2010. This survey tool was used in the 2005 A-HEC study. To review the A-HEC site, visit www.a-hec.org.

2.

Please enter your name and job title. Also, briefly share why you are the most appropriate person to complete this survey for your institution.

(Please note that your responses will be reported anonymously).

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

Please select your primary job title. If your specific job title is not listed, please select a title that is closest to it. This information is helpful in identifying the job role at the institution that has the most responsibility in understanding the impact of online education for students, faculty, and administration.

- President, CEO, or Executive Director
- Provost, Vice-Provost, VP of Academic Affairs, or Chief Operating Officer (COO)
- Financial Officer
- Dean or Academic Department Chair or Vice President
- Vice President, Dean or Director of Continuing Education or Professional Studies
- Program Chair
- Faculty Member - full time
- Faculty Member - adjunct
- Teaching Assistant
- Academic or Instructional Technology Support Staff
- Vice president or Director of Academic or Instructional Technology
- Information Technology Support Staff
- Chief Information Officer or Equivalent
- Vice President or Director of Enrollment or Equivalent
- Vice President or Director of Marketing or Equivalent
- Program Advisor, Coordinator, or Equivalent
- Vice President or Director of Distance Learning, Distance Education, e-Learning or Online Education
- Vice President, Dean, Associate Vice President, or Associate Dean of Professional Studies, Continuing Education, or University College
- Instructional or Curriculum Designer
- Director, Vice President, or Dean of Entrepreneurial Affairs or Corporate Relations

Please enter your email address. (Please note that your response will be reported anonymously).

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

The question below is based upon your own personal knowledge and experience.

	Little or no experience	Not very experienced	Somewhat experienced	Highly experienced	Expert level
1. How would you gauge your personal knowledge, experience, and background with Internet-supported learning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

PART ONE: MOTIVATION - Consider the compelling reasons your institution supports online learning. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved. It should take into account your perceptions as it relates to students, faculty, and administration. Choose the best response for each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
2. Student service is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
3. Serving non-traditional students is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
4. Providing greater access to learning is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
5. Providing superior teaching is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
6. Providing access to our highly ranked programs is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
7. Providing personalized learning for each student is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
8. Providing innovative learning environments is one of the top priorities of our institutional mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
9. Growing student enrollments is an important objective.	<input type="radio"/>				
10. Serving more students with limited physical facilities is an important objective.	<input type="radio"/>				
11. Our program(s) are experiencing competition from other local institutions.	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

12. We have a good understanding of the needs of our students.

13. In your opinion, what is the single most important motivation for your institution to provide Internet-supported courses and/or programs?

PART TWO: COMMITMENT/LEADERSHIP - Consider the role of leadership in the institution's online education initiatives, priorities, and commitments. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved. It should take into account your perceptions as it relates to students, faculty, and administration. Choose the best response for each item.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. There is real (measurable) evidence that our institution is committed to achieving success in Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
15. There are frequent communications from the administration indicating that Internet-supported learning is important to our mission.	<input type="radio"/>				
16. Financial support for what we need to succeed in Internet-supported learning is apparent.	<input type="radio"/>				
17. Administration and academic leadership work together to prioritize our online focus.	<input type="radio"/>				
18. We have selected some of our most successful programs and courses to focus our online efforts.	<input type="radio"/>				
19. We have implemented an effective review process for selecting the best course or program candidates to move online.	<input type="radio"/>				
20. The criteria for selection of faculty that can develop online courses are clear.	<input type="radio"/>				
21. The criteria for selection of faculty that can teach an online course are	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

clear.

PART THREE: PROGRAM LEVEL SUPPORT - Consider how your institution is creating a more effective learning experience at the program level. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
22. We are focused on supporting complete academic programs with Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
23. We have a team process to redesign a program so that it is effective in the online format.	<input type="radio"/>				
24. Technical and/or instructional design support staff have been assigned to support Internet-supported learning program teams and efforts.	<input type="radio"/>				
25. Our efforts to put course or program materials online always involve a project plan including schedule and milestones.	<input type="radio"/>				
26. Institutional leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	<input type="radio"/>				
27. Academic leadership has played an active role in selecting the most impactful programs to focus our efforts.	<input type="radio"/>				
28. When putting a course or program online, special effort is invested to make sure that our institutions or departments unique teaching approach (pedagogy) is reflected.	<input type="radio"/>				
29. Enrollment management and/or marketing are involved as part of our team that launches online programs.	<input type="radio"/>				
30. When putting a course or program online we usually have some targets for what constitutes success.	<input type="radio"/>				
31. Our courses are	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

enhanced through the process of incorporating Internet-supported learning.

32. Our programs are enhanced through the process of incorporating Internet-supported learning.

PART FOUR: FACULTY SUPPORT - Consider how your institution supports faculty working together to create a better student experience and how administration supports faculty in improving the online experience. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Disagree
33. We have implemented an effective web or email help desk for use by the faculty involved in Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
34. We have implemented an effective phone help desk for use by the faculty involved in Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
35. We have implemented an effective 24 X 7 web or email help desk for use by the faculty involved in Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
36. We have implemented an effective 24 X 7 phone help desk for use by the faculty involved in Internet-supported learning.	<input type="radio"/>				
37. We provide effective technical training courses or seminars for faculty that want to teach online.	<input type="radio"/>				
38. We require faculty to take a course in developing online materials and/or teaching online before they teach online.	<input type="radio"/>				
39. We provide effective one-on-one instructional design consultation for those faculty that desire it.	<input type="radio"/>				
40. We provide effective instructional or academic technology support staff from a centralized organization.	<input type="radio"/>				
41. Instructional or	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

academic technology support staff understand and help with academic discipline specific pedagogy issues.					
42. We have implemented clear and effective policies for ownership of online materials.	<input type="radio"/>				
43. Additional fees are paid to faculty to develop online courses.	<input type="radio"/>				
44. A significant percentage (> 25%) of our successful Internet-supported learning initiatives are grass-roots faculty driven.	<input type="radio"/>				
45. The scholarship of teaching is a priority in our department or institution as demonstrated by a viable program that nurtures and spreads best practices.	<input type="radio"/>				
46. Faculty receive effective and frequent communication from academic leaders regarding the importance of innovating in teaching and learning, including use of the Internet where appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>				
47. Faculty are, for the most part, highly committed to the success of our Internet-supported learning efforts.	<input type="radio"/>				
48. Most faculty involved in developing and teaching Internet-supported courses would agree that courses that are Internet-supported are of higher quality than the equivalent classroom course.	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

PART FIVE: STUDENT SUPPORT - Consider how the institution supports the online student experience. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
49. We provide effective student services specifically for online students.	<input type="radio"/>				
50. We provide an effective technical phone helpdesk for students.	<input type="radio"/>				
51. We provide an effective 24 X 7 technical phone helpdesk for students.	<input type="radio"/>				
52. We provide an effective technical web/email helpdesk for students.	<input type="radio"/>				
53. We provide an effective 24 X 7 technical web/email helpdesk for students.	<input type="radio"/>				
54. Downtime of our online course management system or other technology does not impact the effectiveness of our online courses or programs.	<input type="radio"/>				
55. We provide an effective online orientation for students taking Internet-supported courses.	<input type="radio"/>				
56. We provide an effective program advisor or coordinator who acts as a single point of contact to make sure any student issues are resolved in a timely manner.	<input type="radio"/>				
57. We have implemented effective feedback from students regarding our Internet-supported courses and/or programs using assessments given at least once per term.	<input type="radio"/>				
58. We provide easy to use phone-based and web-based registration for students.	<input type="radio"/>				
59. Students find the online experience to be easy and trouble-free.	<input type="radio"/>				
60. Student learning is the most important priority.	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

61. Our Internet-supported learning courses and programs help our students to use time more efficiently.

PART SIX: MEASUREMENT - Consider the measures of success the institution uses to benchmark their success. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. Your response should be based on the Internet-supported learning efforts with which you are currently involved.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
62. We have developed specific measurements of success that fit our needs.	<input type="radio"/>				
63. Our measurements of success are outlined for the next 2-3 years.	<input type="radio"/>				
64. We effectively measure student outcomes, and we use them as a key measure of success.	<input type="radio"/>				
65. We effectively measure student satisfaction and use it as a key measure of success.	<input type="radio"/>				
66. We compare graduation rates in Internet-supported programs with the graduation rates in equivalent classroom-based programs to measure success.	<input type="radio"/>				
67. We have set enrollment targets for our Internet-supported learning initiatives for the next 2-3 years.	<input type="radio"/>				
68. Growth in our online courses and programs, for the most part, has not come at the expense of growth in our on-campus courses and programs.	<input type="radio"/>				
69. We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality Internet-supported course.	<input type="radio"/>				
70. We have a clear understanding, definition, or standard for what constitutes a quality Internet-supported program.	<input type="radio"/>				

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

Please answer the following question with a short textual phrase that best conveys your meaning.

71. Our most significant accomplishment with respect to Internet-supported learning is:

Please answer the following question with a short textual phrase that best conveys your meaning.

72. Our most important measurement of Internet-supported learning success is:

Please answer the following question with a short textual phrase that best conveys your meaning.

73. The area related to Internet-supported learning we most need to improve is:

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

PART SEVEN: PRIORITIES - Rank the following 16 items in importance (1 highest and 16 lowest) for the next 12 months in terms of improving your institution's Internet-supported learning efforts.

74. Improving course quality
75. Implementing a learning objects repository
76. Getting more faculty involved in or committed to our Internet-supported learning initiatives
77. Improving student retention in Internet-learning supported courses or programs
78. Putting more programs online
79. Adding more rich media and interactivity to our online experience
80. Getting better use of our course management system
81. Convincing the administration that online is important
82. Getting better at measuring student outcomes
83. Getting better at determining what courses or programs should be the focus of our Internet-supported learning expenditures
84. Better reflecting our institutions unique pedagogy and culture in our Internet-supported learning courses and programs
85. Obtaining more resources and support staff to make progress feasible
86. Achieve more effective marketing of our Internet-supported learning courses and programs
87. Becoming more program-focused as

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

opposed to course focused

88. Achieving a more

stable and reliable online

learning technical

environment

89. Improving student

services for online students

PART EIGHT: GOALS - Review the items below and rate them on the scale provided if you expect them to be a major factor in your institution's Internet-support learning initiatives as they evolve over the next three years.

	Definitely not a factor	Probably not a factor	Somewhat a factor	A major factor	One of a few top influential factors
90. Significantly increased online competition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
91. Increasing faculty unionization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
92. Governmental enforcement of stricter accountability standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
93. Parents and/or students wanting more data on graduation and job placement rates.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
94. Increasing market share of for-profit education providers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
95. The need to work more with secondary schools to prepare and provide early start to college	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
96. Open source CMS, portal, or other learning software	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
97. The rising costs of online marketing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
98. More accessibility of higher bandwidth to the home through cable and DSL	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
99. Proliferation of iPods, cell phones, or other consumer electronics that may be capable of storing or accessing learning content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
100. Better self-paced courses that do not require instructors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
101. Global competition in online education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
102. Higher education/corporate partnerships to provide	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

January, 2011 Internet-Supported Learning Survey

corporate education					
103. Increasing student demand for Internet-supported learning	<input type="radio"/>				
104. Coursepaks, eBooks or other digital content from publishers	<input type="radio"/>				
105. New leadership and attitudes in the academy	<input type="radio"/>				
106. Online libraries and search engines like Google	<input type="radio"/>				
107. Open source content/course repositories like Merlot, SAIL, and MIT Open Courseware	<input type="radio"/>				
108. Reusable learning objects	<input type="radio"/>				
109. A new breed of faculty more comfortable with the Internet and computer technology	<input type="radio"/>				

3. Congratulations!

Thank you for participating and completing the Internet-Supported Survey.

APPENDIX B
FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many years have online courses been offered at your institution?
2. In reviewing the data from the survey, the sample size was small and the sample mean results were not statistically significant, but the trend suggested that 4-year institutions rated the questions higher than the 2-year institutions. What factors do you think could possibly explain this?
3. In an open-ended question on the survey, you stated that your most significant accomplishment with respect to internet-supported learning was _____. Can you expand on this? (Best Practices)
4. In the survey, you stated that your most important motivation for your institution to provide online courses and/or programs was _____. Can you expand on this? (Part 1: Motivation)
5. The results of the survey indicated commitment and leadership was not statistically significantly different but that the perceptions of leadership were higher at 4-year institutions. Is there a relationship between what the faculty believe are important support attributes and what the administration offers in pedagogy, technical, or incentive support? (Part 2: Commitment/Leadership)
6. Is there an online policy or procedure guide for online learning? (Part 3: Program Level Support)
7. In the data results of the survey, there tended to not be much difference in levels of faculty support between baccalaureate and community colleges. The levels look approximately the same at 2- and 4 -year institutions. Can you share what faculty say is working in terms of support? (Part 4: Faculty Support)
8. What are top support offerings for faculty? (Part 4: Faculty Support)
9. Do faculty need more support in a particular area(s)? (Part 4: Faculty Support)
10. Why do faculty like to teach online?(Part 4: Faculty Support)
11. The survey data suggested that full-time support for faculty and students were rated low across both baccalaureate institutions and community colleges. Do you have a full-time support for faculty or for students? If a faculty member has a problem with their course or course software, where would they go for help? How available is help? (Part 4: Faculty Support)

12. In the data results of the survey, there was a modest difference in levels of student support between baccalaureate schools and community colleges. Sample profiles for student support were only slightly higher in the sample for 4-year institutions. Can you share what students say is working in terms of support? Not working? (Part 5: Student Support)
13. In the survey, you responded that your institution's most important measurement of internet-supported learning success is _____. Can you expand on this? (Part 6: Measurement)
14. Both 2- year and 4-year colleges ranked "improving course quality" as the highest ranking with "improving student retention" as second." The 2-year group rated their perceptions of understanding quality online learning and support higher than 4-year institutions. Are you doing anything in conjunction with online learning to improve the quality of courses and improve student retention? (Part 6: Measurement/Part 7 Priorities)
15. Is there any other information that we have not covered that you might want to add?

APPENDIX C
TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS FACULTY SUPPORT FEEDBACK FROM FOLLOW-UP
INTERVIEWS

	CC-1	CC-2	CC-3	CC-4
*Student Headcount	>15,000	>10,000	>1,000	>2,500
Faculty Bargaining Unit	Yes	Yes	No	No
Written DE Guidelines for Faculty	No DE Policy for Faculty – no formal policy in place	No DE Policy for Faculty Yes – eLearning Guidelines were approved by President (faculty had input)	No DE Policy for Faculty but have written procedures	No DE Policy for Faculty Recently negotiated DE Guidelines with faculty/Have eLearning Handbook (involved faculty in decision-making)
Centralized DE Services	Yes - Learning Management System (LMS)	Yes - eLearning separate facility Service puts courses online for faculty & creates alternative delivery from F2F	Yes - Learning Management System (LMS)	Offers dedicated website for online faculty
Leadership Support	Leadership is not giving push-back on distance learning initiatives Concerned with faculty still wanting to operate in traditional paradigm	Online Learning Center has their own Provost program systems in place Leadership would like to support full-time Help Desk but cannot due to budget constraints	Leadership would like to give more but can't – faculty understand Leadership supportive of learning management system and internal PD	President is pro-distance education/makes financial commitments when he can/ listens to faculty supportive culture for online
Rewards & Incentives	Not mentioned	\$\$ for only developing online courses (content expert stipends) No release time for course development	Not mentioned	\$\$ and release time for developing online courses/ Adjuncts paid to attend trainings but not FT faculty
Mandatory Trainings	Yes - New Faculty Only	Yes - New Faculty Certification Yes – Existing Faculty/Recertification Yes – Course Development Training for faculty developing courses	Not mentioned	Yes (new and existing faculty) for technical, pedagogical, and course development process

	CC-1	CC-2	CC-3	CC-4
Technical Professional Development Support & full-time Helpdesk	No full-time Tech Support – mandatory PD for new faculty – complete 5 modules to get a course shell	No full-time Tech Support No weekend support for students or faculty	No full-time Tech Support	No full-time Tech Support but have a faculty helpdesk
Pedagogical Professional Development Support	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty /Mandatory faculty PD (new faculty certification and recertification requirements for existing faculty)	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty / Mandated faculty PD/Adjuncts Paid but not FT faculty
Design and Course Quality Production Support	No - Instructional Designers Mandated Course Approval Process (five modules)	Yes - Instructional Designers Formal Course Review Process for Course Quality Control – Created master courses as exemplars for faculty to use when developing their own courses Training required for faculty developing courses	No - Instructional Designers Course Review Process (faculty involvement and buy-in) Formal Course Proposal Approval System - require F2F teaching of course & Proposal Plan for teaching online prior to getting a DE course (faculty involvement and buy-in)	No - Instructional Designers Mandated Course Approval Process – formal review with a subject-matter expert and two course reviewers for quality control/revised Quality Matters rubric used
Online Resources	Not mentioned	need course quality resources	Not mentioned	Fewer Technology Tools – use low cost solutions for online deliverables; revised Quality Matters rubric to meet own needs
Economic Drivers	Budget Constraints	Budget Constraints – Staffing constraints and need of course quality resources	Extreme Financial Constraints	Extreme Financial Constraints

* Fall 2009-2010 Headcounts for Participating Institutions (Source: FLDOE, 2010a)

APPENDIX D
 FLORIDA BACCALAUREATE FACULTY SUPPORT ANALYSIS FEEDBACK FROM
 FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEWS

	B-1	B-2	B-3	B-4
*Student Headcount	>25,000	>55,000	>7,000	>15,000
Faculty Bargaining Unit	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Written DE Guidelines for Faculty	Yes/DE Policy	Yes DE Policy in faculty contract addendum	Yes/DE Policy	No DE Policy for Faculty/ Guidelines left up to departments
Centralized DE Services	Yes Team Approach with faculty and design instructor technologists	Yes 4 Instructional Designers and Manager/ISDs coach and mentor DE faculty	Yes Set online schedule, hire online adjuncts, and run online programming/course delivery team does course copy, course prep, and responds to faculty questions Automated proctor testing scheduling system for students to schedule their proctor exams	Yes Faculty Online Center
Leadership Support	More presence when Baccalaureate programs started/State Reporting Focus Sr. VP involved faculty in approving an internal course review process President is pushing the one college concept to be more cohesive – his message is sharing, consistency, and improvement	Relatively strong relationship with faculty and administration Difficult time this year due to starting contract negotiations Faculty would like to see more support but understand budgetary constraints	New President is Supportive – Past President was not Faculty would like to see more support but understand budgetary restrictions Online administrator sits on the academic leadership council	More presence when Baccalaureate programs started/State Reporting Focus/Past President Not as Supportive but Bought in due to space issues Faculty Online Center – supported by President’s budget Dean responsible for DE has leadership impact on positive changes Enrollments driving Leadership to be more supportive of DE; recent negotiations helped; past

	B-1	B-2	B-3	B-4
				president could have been more supportive ; Interim President is supportive
Rewards & Incentives	\$\$ for overhauling courses	\$\$ paid to full-time faculty only (in union contract)	Only pays faculty to develop courses if faculty are asked to develop or give release time	
Mandatory Trainings	Yes - New Faculty Team approach to putting courses online & Learning Management System (LMS)	Yes – for faculty course developers Yes – for new faculty – 12 hours initial LMS training/8 additional hours for certification		Yes – new Faculty to learn Learning Management System (LMS)
Technical Professional Development Support & full-time Helpdesk	Yes – full-time Tech Help Learning Management System required for new faculty	Yes – full-time Tech Help Institution wide ticketing system for both students and faculty	Yes – full-time Tech Help Centralized service provides learning management system (LMS) specialists for faculty and one manager	No full-time Tech Help Learning Management System required for new faculty
Online Resources		Certified Quality Matters Rubric Process for Course Reviews Need to do a better job of supporting web-enhanced courses – no instructional help for these courses	Increased bandwidth helped internet connectivity	Faculty Online Center has state of the art equipment, managers, and student workers to support online faculty -
Pedagogical Professional Development Support	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty Administration says this is a high need for faculty eLearning staff meets one-on-one with faculty	Developed & Delivered Own PD/High priority for Faculty Peer Reviews are priority for Faculty – moving to faculty mentoring
Design and Course Quality Production & Review Support	Yes – Instructional Designers Course Review/Refresh	Yes – Instructional Designers Need more quality in courses	Yes – Instructional Designers Centralized service supports course	No – Instructional Designers Faculty Online Center provides

	B-1	B-2	B-3	B-4
	<p>Process (faculty involvement and buy-in)</p> <p>Sr. VP involved faculty in approving the internal course review process</p> <p>Team approach with design instructor technologist</p>	<p>Formalized process using the certified version of Quality Matters – FT faculty developing get priority selection of courses to teach/30 hour job-embedded modules</p> <p>Team of 4 instructional designers and one manager support online faculty</p>	<p>development with instructional and course designers</p>	<p>assistant to faculty developing courses. Faculty put their own courses online. Online Faculty Center provides training for faculty to put courses in the online platform</p>
Economic Drivers	Budgetary Constraints	Budgetary Constraints	Budgetary Constraints	Budgetary Constraints

* Fall 2009-2010 Headcounts for Participating Institutions (Source: FLDOE, 2010a)

APPENDIX E
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL OF PROTOCOL AND CONSENT
LETTER



PO Box 112250
Gainesville, FL32611-2250
352-392-0433 (Phone)
352-392-9234 (Fax)
irb2@ufl.edu

DATE: July 29, 2010

TO: Rebecca Lynn Shermis
1623 Floyd Street
Sarasota, FL 34239

FROM: Ira S. Fischler, PhD; Chair *ISF*
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02

SUBJECT: Approval of Protocol #2010-U-0614
**A Study of Distance Education Faculty Support Programs and Policies at
Community Colleges**

SPONSOR: None

I am pleased to advise you that the University of Florida Institutional Review Board has recommended approval of this protocol. Based on its review, the UFIRB determined that this research presents no more than minimal risk to participants. Your protocol was approved as an expedited study under category 7: *Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.*

Given this status, it is essential that you obtain signed documentation of informed consent from each participant. Enclosed is the dated, IRB-approved informed consent to be used when recruiting participants for the research. If you wish to make any changes to this protocol, *including the need to increase the number of participants authorized*, you must disclose your plans before you implement them so that the Board can assess their impact on your protocol. In addition, you must report to the Board any unexpected complications that affect your participants.

It is essential that each of your participants sign a copy of your approved informed consent that bears the IRB approval stamp and expiration date.

Your approval is valid through **July 26, 2011**. If you have not completed the protocol by this date, please telephone our office (392-0433), and we will discuss the renewal process with you. It is important that you keep your Department Chair informed about the status of this research protocol.

ISF:dl

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

DATE

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Dear [Interview Participant]:

Approved by
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02
Protocol # 2010-U-0614
For Use Through 07-26-2011

I am a graduate student at the University of Florida School of Human Development and Organizational Studies, Higher Education Administration. I am in the research gathering phase of my dissertation which focuses on distance learning education. Specifically, I am looking at the differences in distance education faculty support practices and policies in Florida's baccalaureate degree granting institutions and Florida's community colleges with a two-year mission. I am interested in finding if perceptions vary in how they perceive the successfulness of their online practices and policies specifically related to faculty support. I also want to find if there are common attributes of quality faculty support programs and policies among community colleges and baccalaureate institutions.

I am requesting your voluntary services to complete a 30-item electronic questionnaire and participate in a follow-up phone interview.

You were recommended by a primary contact of the college as the most knowledgeable resource person who understands the impact of distance education at your institution as well as having insights into the overall perceptions of faculty, students, and faculty.

As a participant you would be involved in two parts of the study. The initial phase of the study asks participants to complete a 30 item questionnaire in an electronic format. As part of the second phase of the study, I am requesting a follow-up interview with you to gain more information on The interview will last approximately 45 minutes. The schedule of questions is enclosed with this letter. You will not have to answer any question you do not wish to answer.

Your interview will be conducted by phone after I have received a copy of this signed consent from you in the mail. With your permission I would like to audiotape this interview. Only I will have access to the tape which I will transcribe, removing any identifiers during transcription. The tape will then be erased. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law and your identity will not be revealed in the final manuscript.

There are no anticipated risks, compensation or other direct benefits to you as a participant in the survey and interview. You are free to withdraw your consent to participate and may discontinue your participation in the survey and interview at any time without consequence.

If you have any questions about this research protocol, please contact me at (410) 736- 8645 or my faculty supervisor, Dr. David Honeyman, at (352) 273-4315. Questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant may be directed to the IRB02 office, University of Florida, Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611; (352) 392-0433.

Please sign and return this copy of the letter in the enclosed envelope. A second copy is provided for your records. By signing this letter, you give me permission to report your responses anonymously in the final manuscript to be submitted to my dissertation chair and committee as part of my final dissertation.

Sincerely,

Becky L. Shermis

Approved by
University of Florida
Institutional Review Board 02
Protocol # 2010-U-0614
For Use Through 07-26-2011

I have read the procedure described above for the dissertation research on distance learning education. I voluntarily agree to participate in the survey and interview and I have received a copy of the description.

Signature of participant

Date

I would like to receive a copy of the final "interview" manuscript.

YES

NO

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Abel, R. (2005a). *Achieving success in internet-supported learning in higher education: Case studies illuminate success factors, challenges, and future directions*. Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC). Retrieved April 13, 2009, from <http://www.a-hec.org/>
- Abel, R. (2005b). *Conducting a self-audit of your institution's online learning activities: Lessons from the recently completed study: Achieving success in Internet-supported learning in higher education*. Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC). March 2005. Retrieved May 14, 2010, from http://www.a-hec.org/e-learning_study/html
- Abel, R. (2005c). *Internet-supported learning self-study (IsL)*. Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC). Retrieved May 23, 2010, from http://www.a-hec.org/research/study_reports/IsL0205/measures.html
- Abel, R. (2005d). *Internet-supported learning self-study (IsL) Self-audit framework*. Alliance for Higher Education Competitiveness (A-HEC). Retrieved June 11, 2010, from http://www.a-hec.org/research/study_reports/IsL1105/self-audit_framework.html
- Abel, R. (2005e). Implementing best practices in online learning: A recent study reveals common denominators for success in Internet-supported learning. *Educause Quarterly*, 28(3). Retrieved April 22, 2010, from <http://www.educause.edu/>
- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2006a). *Making the grade*. Retrieved April 14, 2009, from <http://www.sloan-c.org/publications/survey/survey06.asp>
- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2006b). *Growing by degrees*. Sloan Consortium. Retrieved April 14, 2009, from http://www.sloanc.org/publications/survey/pdf/making_the_grade.pdf
- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2008). *Staying the course: Online education in US, 2008*. Sloan Consortium, 1-28. Retrieved April 13, 2009, from http://www.sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/pdf/staying_the_course.pdf
- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2009). *Learning on demand: Online education in the United States, 2009*. Sloan Consortium, 1-23. Retrieved May 21, 2010, from <http://www.sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/pdf/learningondemand.pdf>
- Allen, I. E., & Seaman, J. (2010). *Class differences: Online education in the United States, 2010*. Sloan Consortium. Retrieved February 22, 2011, from http://sloanconsortium.org/publications/survey/class_differences and http://sloanconsortium.org/sites/default/files/class_differences.pdf

- Amason, R. F. (2007a). *Normative analysis of Internet-mediated distance education policies in selected large community colleges and their related state systems*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Amason, R. F. (2007b). *Normative analysis of internet-mediated distance education policies in selected large community colleges and their respective state systems*. Paper presented at the Dissertation Defense on October 30, 2009. University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Black, L. M. (2007). A history of scholarship. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *The handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 3-14). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2010). Classification description: Undergraduate instructional program classification. Stanford, CA. Retrieved April 13, 2011, from http://classifications.carnegiefoundation.org/descriptions/ugrad_program.php
- Clark, T. (2007). Virtual and distance education in North American schools. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *The handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 473-490). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Commission on Higher Education. (2001). *Best practices for electronically offered degree and certificate programs*. Retrieved February 27, 2009, from http://www.google.com/search?sourceid=navclient&ie=UTF-8&rlz=1T4GGLL_enUS354US355&q=best+practices+for+electronically+offered+degree+and+certificate+programs
- Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). (2009). *Important questions about accreditation, degree mills and accreditation mills*. Retrieved April 15, 2009, from <http://www.chea.org/degremills/default.htm>
- Daniel, J., Mackintosh, W., & Diehl, W. C. (2007). The mega-university response to the moral challenge of our age. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of Distance Education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 609-620). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Ellis, A., & Phelps, R. (1999). Staff development for online delivery: A collaborative team-based action learning [Electronic version]. *Australian Journal of Educational Technology*. Retrieved from <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/brisbane99/papers/ellisphelps.pdf>
- Evans, T., & Nation, D. (2007). Globalization and emerging technologies. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 649-660). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Feasley, C., & Bunker, E. L. (2007). A history of national and regional organizations and the ICDE. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 15-30). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

- Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). (2009). *Long range program plan FY 2009-10-FY 2013-14*. Retrieved December 10, 2010, from <http://www.fldoehub.org/CCTCMIS/c/Documents/Fact%20Books/fb2010.pdf>
- Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). (2010a). *The fact book: Report for the Florida college system*. FLDOE Division of Accountability, Research, and Measurement. Tallahassee, FL.
- Florida Department of Education (FLDOE). (2010b). *Florida College System approved bachelor's degree programs*. Retrieved December 15, 2010, from http://www.fldoe.org/cc/students/bach_degree.asp
- Gerson, S.M. (2000). E-CLASS: Creating a guide to online course development for distance learning faculty [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 3(4), 1-11. State University of West Georgia, Distance & Distributed Education Center. Retrieved July 16, 2008, from http://www.elml.ch/website/en/download/publications/eclass_gerson.pdf
- Graff, R. (2008). *Faculty perceptions of readiness to teach online*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- Gualtieri, L. N. (2008). Predictions for 2009. *eLearn Magazine*. Retrieved August 14, 2009, from <http://www.elearnmag.org/subpage.cfm?section=articles&article=72-1>
- Hanna, D. E. (2007). Organizational change in higher distance education. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 501-514). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Hentschke, G.C., Lechuga, V.M., & Tierney, W.G. (2010). *For-profit colleges and universities: Their markets, regulation, performance, and place in higher education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.
- Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, Pub. L. No. 110-315, § 3078). Retrieved January 12, 2009, at http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_public_laws&docid=f:publ315.110.pdf
- Hodge, E. M. (2000). *A study of the development of community college distance education policies*. Unpublished dissertation, University of Florida, Gainesville.
- IMS Global Learning Consortium. (2010). *The learning impact 2010 report: High value projects that leading institutions, schools, and governments are implementing to improve access and affordability to high quality educational experiences*. IMS Global Learning Consortium, Inc. February, 2010. Retrieved April 29, 2010, from <http://www.imsglobal.org/articles/feb2010LearningImpact.cfm>

- Instructional Technology Council (ITC). (2006). *Third annual survey on distance education*. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from <http://www.itcnetwork.org/mod/resource/view.php?inpopup=true&id=77>
- Instructional Technology Council (ITC). (2007). *Trends in e-learning: Tracking the impact of e-learning in higher education: 2006 distance education survey results*. Retrieved March 23, 2009, from <http://4.79.18.250/file.php?file=/1/ITCAnnualSurveyMarch2008.pdf>
- Instructional Technology Council (ITC). (2008). *Distance education survey results: Tracking the impact of elearning at community colleges*. Retrieved June 5, 2010, from <http://www.itcnetwork.org/file.php?file=%2F1%2FITCAnnualSurveyMarch2009Final.pdf>
- Instructional Technology Council (ITC). (2010). The CDW-G 2010 annual surveys: CIOs and faculty differ on education technology. eLiterate, December 6, 2010. Retrieved February 10, 2011, from <http://www.itcnetwork.org/resources/articles-abstracts-and-research/244-the-cdw-g-2010-annual-surveys-cios-and-faculty-differ-on-education-technology.html?catid=48%3Alibrary-articles-abstracts-research>
- Karlen, J. M. (2007). Accreditation and assessment in distance learning [Electronic version]. *Academic Leadership Online Journal*, 1(4). Retrieved August 6, 2008, from http://www.academicleadership.org/emprical_research/ACCREDITATION_AND_ASSESSMENT_IN_DISTANCE_LEARNING.html
- Keegan, D. (1980). On defining distance education. *Distance Education*, 1(1), 13-36.
- King, J. W., Nugent, G. C., Russell, E. B., Eich, J., & Lacy, D. D. (2000). Policy frameworks for distance education: Implications for decision makers [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 3(2). Retrieved May 27, 2009, from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/king32.html>
- Koehler, M. J., Punyashloke, M., Hershey, K., & Peruski, L. (2004). With a little help from your students: A new model for faculty development and online course design [Electronic version]. *Journal of Technology and Teacher Education*, 12. Retrieved March 12, 2008, from <http://www.questia.com>
- Lezberg, A. K. (2007). Accreditation: Quality control in higher distance education. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 403-418). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Maguire, L. L. (2005). Literature Review: Faculty participation in online distance education: Barriers and motivators [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration*, 8(1). Retrieved June 26, 2008, from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdl/spring81/maguire81.htm>

- Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). (2002). Distance learning programs: Interregional guidelines for electronically offered degree and certificate programs [Electronic version]. *MSCHE Publication*. Retrieved June 12, 2008, from <http://www.msche.org/publications/distguide02050208135713.pdf>
- Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (2005). *Distance education: A systems view* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Mullins, C. (2007). Community colleges. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 491-500). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2002). *A profile of participation in distance education: 1999-2000*.
- Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA). (2005). *Authorizing community colleges to award baccalaureate degrees is one of several options to expand access to higher education, No. 05-20*. Retrieved May 13, 2010, from <http://www.oppaga.state.fl.us/reports/pdf/0726rpt.pdf>
- Pappas Consulting Group Inc. (2007). *Proposing a blueprint for higher education in Florida: Outlining the way to a long-term master plan for higher education in Florida: Summary Report*. Retrieved May 14, 2010, from http://www.flbog.org/about/_doc/fbd/StructureReport.pdf
- Puzziferro, M., & Shelton, K. (2010). Seven updated principles for supporting online faculty. *Distance Education Report, 14*(4), 3-6.
- Rahman, M. (2001). Faculty recruitment strategies for online programs [Electronic version]. *Online Journal of Distance Learning Administration, 4*(4). Retrieved February 8, 2009, from <http://www.westga.edu/~distance/ojdla/winter44/rahman44.html>
- Schlosser, L. A., & Simonson, M. (2006). *Distance education: Definition and glossary of terms* (2nd ed.). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, Inc.
- Simonson, M. (2007). Institutional policy issues for distance education. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 355-362). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- United States Government Accountability Office GAO). (2010). For-profit colleges: Undercover testing finds colleges encouraged fraud and engaged in deceptive and questionable marketing practices. GAO-10-948T, August 4, 2010 Report. Retrieved December 3, 2010, from <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-10-948T>
- Wedemeyer, C. A., & Najem, R. E. (1969). *AIM - From concept to reality: The articulated instructional media program at Wisconsin*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Publications in Continuing Education.

- Weiner, W. F., McVeigh, P., Clever, K., Brasington, D., & King, M. J. (1997). Reinventing the community college for the 21st century [Electronic version]. *Inquiry*, 1(1), 20-30. Retrieved March 6, 2008, from <http://www.vccaedu.org/>
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WICHE - WCET). (2009a). Online education programs marked by rising enrollments, unsure profits, organizational transitions, higher fees, and tech training for faculty. *Managing Online Education: The Campus Computing Project*. October, 2009. Retrieved February 5, 2011, at <http://wcet.wiche.edu/wcet/docs/moe/ManagingOnlineEd2009-ExecSummary.pdf>
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WICHE - WCET), UT TeleCampus, & Instructional Technology Council. (2009b). Best practice strategies to promote academic integrity in online education, version 2.0. Retrieved January 5, 2011, at <http://wcet.wiche.edu/wcet/docs/cigs/studentauthentication/BestPractices.pdf>
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education: Cooperative for Educational Technologies (WICHE - WCET). (2010). Faculty training is a major investment for online education programs: ADA compliance remains a major vulnerability. *Managing Online Education: The Campus Computing Project*. November 2010. Retrieved February 5, 2011, at <http://wcet.wiche.edu/wcet/docs/moe/ManagingOnlineEd2010-ExecSummaryGraphics.pdf>
- Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE). (2001). Best practices for electronically offered degree and certificate programs. Retrieved September 15, 2009, from http://www.ncahlc.org/download/Best_Pract_DEd.pdf
- Wolcott, L. L., & Shattuck, K. (2007). Faculty participation: Motivations, incentives, and rewards. In M. G. Moore (Ed.), *Handbook of distance education* (2nd ed.) (pp. 377-390). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Becky L. Shermis was born in 1958 in San Bernardino, California. The oldest of five children, she lived in California, Utah, Oklahoma, and settled in Texas where she graduated from North Garland High School near Dallas. She attended Texas Christian University for 3.5 years, and graduated from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education, Music Education K-12, and Piano Pedagogy, and then pursued a teaching career for 10 years in Austin, Texas, working mainly with gifted K-5 students. She continued her academic studies at the University of Texas at Austin, earning a Master of Science degree in Special Education and Gifted Education, later achieving an endorsement in Gifted Education.

She then moved to Indianapolis, taught gifted education for one year, pursued a principal's license, and became an assistant principal and principal while in Indiana. Her husband's career moved her to Florida where she became an executive director for a large school district in south Florida. She then accepted a position as dean of the graduate school of education for Kaplan University. After four years, she became a director of product design and development for the education domain with Laureate, Education, Inc.

She and her family, husband Mark and son Ryan, moved to Gainesville, Florida, where she began her doctorate studies. She completed her Doctor of Education degree in Higher Education Administration in May 2011.