

Graduate Coursework in College Counseling:
An Exploratory Study of the Certificate Programs Training Pathway in the United States

by

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Dedication

Dedicated to the late
Ms. Maggie Miller

Former school counselor at Okemos High School and DeWitt High School

The first college counselor with whom I interacted
when I started in college admissions at Western Michigan University.

Maggie's Motto: "Never Give Up."

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Abstract

This research is a qualitative case study of graduate certificate programs offered in college counseling in the United States. This study presents historical and current information about eight different college counseling certificate programs and seven themes that describe these programs in the context of national college access and college readiness goals. Eight programs were identified at four schools in California, one school in Michigan, one school in Minnesota, and one school in Massachusetts. These certificate programs have a bifurcated history and have existed since 1990. Results of the study revealed: the two major types of college counseling certificate programs, their role in creating private counseling practices, the types of readings in the programs, as well as the variability of the courses, subjects, and instructional faculty. This research fills a gap in the literature, provides recommendations for advancing these certificate programs within the emerging academic discipline of college counseling, and suggests future related research that should be conducted. Overall, this study raises the visibility of this training pathway.

Keywords: graduate coursework, college counseling, admission counseling, college access, certificate programs, college readiness

Chapter One: Introduction

In an ideal setting, every high school student considering a postsecondary education encounters a culture, a search, applications, and a decision. These four elements comprise the basic, major aspects of college counseling for high school students in America. The culture refers to the existence (or lack thereof) of a college-going culture within a high school and the community in which the setting promotes the pursuit of a college education (Holcomb, 2012). The search is a high school student's quest for a college with the best "fit" (where fit is defined by each particular student). The applications are the forms that a high school student completes to apply for admission and to apply for financial aid. The decision is two-fold: whether to pursue a college education and the selection of a specific postsecondary institution. While simplistically portrayed in this way, the process of preparing for, applying to, and enrolling in college is much more complex than that and requires expertise, information, and support. Altogether, this process and these steps are commonly known as "college counseling" (McDonough, 2005; Conley, 2011).

College counseling—also known as college access counseling, college admissions counseling, and college readiness counseling—is the education and facilitation of required steps to assist students in preparing for, applying to, and enrolling in college (Savitz-Romer, 2012). In its June 1990 Statement on Precollege Guidance and Counseling and the Role of the School Counselor, the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC, 1990) described college counseling in this manner: "The vast array of postsecondary opportunities and

the attendant requirements for access, coupled with rising college costs and the complexity of the financial aid system, call for a guidance support system to assist students and their parents”

(p. 1). The complexity and intricacies of these processes require a body of knowledge and implementation of best practices to achieve national college completion goals established by the federal government and several national organizations (Obama, 2012, January 24; The College Board, 2011a; Lumina Foundation, n.d.). Simmons (2011) refers to the content of these complex processes as “requisite specialized knowledge” (p. 243). This knowledge is referred to as graduate coursework in college counseling.

Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to fill a gap in the literature on graduate coursework in college counseling. In the 25 years that graduate coursework in college counseling has existed, little is known about it. In addition, it has primarily existed informally and is slowly being recognized in a formal, academic context. This study will document current practices in graduate coursework in college counseling, raise awareness of it, and provide recommendations for its future as an emerging academic discipline. The history and evolution of this graduate coursework has not been well documented. This study seeks to chronicle that information as a foundation for understanding the origins of this educational offering. In addition, there are a variety of other reasons that support the need for this research. Since the establishment of these graduate certificate programs in college counseling range from 1990 to 2011, there is significance in comparing and contrasting the programs and course offerings. This research will enable college/university educators to gain knowledge about the role, content, and depth of these programs. Some of the certificate programs are a part of extension operations, not housed within an academic school or college. Gaining knowledge on how these programs were established will

assist in understanding the goals they seek to accomplish and whether that is aligned with national college access and college readiness goals. Savitz-Romer (2012) supports the exploration of this training pathway, noting that it would “give rise to effective training models” (p. 22). Savitz-Romer (2012) also states that “certification programs are yet another route to college readiness counseling” (p. 6). Furthermore, it is not known as to the type of education professional who is completing these certificates and for what reasons. Nor has any information been revealed about the instructional faculty within these certificate programs. From a national perspective, there is no known accreditation, endorsement, or national evaluation for the creation or recognition of these certificates by a particular national agency. Beneficiaries of this research will include colleges/universities with existing certificate programs in college counseling, as well as colleges/universities that seek to offer such a certificate program. In addition, professional associations like NACAC and The College Board are well-positioned to take the results of the study and apply them by providing leadership and action in this emerging academic discipline, which could include the establishment and implementation of standards for these programs. This research is critical and lays a foundation for future research on this topic. Given the rich history of this topic and the need for reviewing and potentially enhancing college counseling training in the United States, the time is ideal for this study.

Research Question

To fill a research gap initially identified by Savitz-Romer (2012), this exploratory study examines existing certificate programs in college counseling (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). The goals of the study are to describe, analyze, and make recommendations for the current and future certificate programs. Specifically, the research question of this study is:

What are the design and composition of graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the context of national college access and college readiness goals in the United States?

Five sub-questions are addressed to adequately provide evidence for this question:

- 1) What are the existing certificate programs in college counseling at institutions of higher education in the United States?
- 2) What are the steps and reasons that led to the creation of them?
- 3) What educational content related to college access and college readiness is included?
- 4) What types of students are being targeted for and enrolling in these programs?
- 5) What are the backgrounds of the individuals serving as the instructional faculty?

This research documents and analyzes the current state of affairs in graduate certificate programs in college counseling. The most recent reference to these certification programs in the literature has been cited by Savitz-Romer in 2012. Documenting the formation and rationale of these programs will provide a context as to the goals for each particular educational setting. Critically examining the content of the various courses that comprise these certificate programs will provide insight about the type of topics being covered within the courses comprising the certificate program. This study lays the foundation for future studies that may explore the effectiveness, the impact, and the value of these certificate programs.

Emergence of College Counseling

College counseling in America has emerged as a critical issue because more college graduates are needed to maintain a skilled work force, to sustain the economy through wages and tax revenues, and to fulfill the expectations of job roles (The Partnership for 21st Century Skills, n.d.; U.S. Department of Education, 2011, March). According to The College Board (2012a),

“over the next decade, the nation needs 22 million students to earn a college degree to meet the demands of the workforce, but America is expected to fall short of this goal by at least three million” (p. 1). The College Board (2011, April) also cites that “too few students are graduating from high school ready for college,” citing an education deficit (p. 2). Several national goals for college completion have been established. U.S. President Barack Obama in 2009 set a goal for the country in his address to Congress: “By 2020, America will once again have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world” (n.p.). Other national organizations focused on this effort include Lumina Foundation, The College Board, The Education Trust, and The National College Access Network (NCAN) (Lumina, 2011; The College Board, 2011b; Education Trust, 2009; NCAN, n.d.). Together, these organizations seek to increase the number of bachelor degree holders between now and 2025 (Lumina, 2011; The College Board, 2011b; Education Trust, 2009; NCAN, n.d.). The Lumina Foundation (n.d.), which is focused on “access to and success in education beyond high school” (n.p.), has established a national priority on college access and success by creating what it refers to as “The Big Goal.” According to Lumina, that Big Goal is “to increase the proportion of Americans with high-quality degrees and credentials to 60% by the year 2025” (n.d., n.p.). The College Board (2011b) in 2008 created the Commission on Access, Admissions, and Success in Higher Education, which “established 10 interdependent recommendations to reach its goal of ensuring that at least 55% of Americans hold a postsecondary degree by 2025,” a part of what it calls the College Completion Initiative (n.p.). The Education Trust is focused on closing gaps in college enrollment, especially among low-income students and students of color (Education Trust, 2009). NCAN (n.d.) has adopted Lumina Foundation’s 60% goal. Holcomb (2012) cites the “deployment of college counseling as a major college and career readiness initiative” (p. 3) in the United States and that the “arena of

college counseling represent[s]... one of the most dynamic areas of contemporary education reform and policy” (p. 8). According to the U.S. Department of Education, 86% of high school students in America plan to attend college (The College Board, 2011, April). Overall, the United States of America is seeking to be the “world leader in percentage of college-educated citizens” (Bautsch & Martin, 2011, p. 1). Increasing the number of college-educated citizens requires individuals trained in college counseling.

Four primary groups of professionals currently provide college counseling to high school students: high school counselors, college admissions professionals, college access professionals (often from community-based organizations), and independent consultants/counselors (Savitz-Romer, 2012; Daun-Barnett & Behrend, 2011). High school counselors (public or private) are professionals who handle “college counseling, personal counseling, academic counseling, scheduling, and testing” (McDonough, 2005, p. 73). In a recent survey, 94% of high school counselors indicated that college counseling is a part of their job responsibilities (The College Board, 2012c). College admissions professionals are recruiters employed by colleges and universities to facilitate the steps to enrollment in a particular school (Henderson, 2008). College access professionals are individuals who serve in a “field occupied by organizations working to ensure that all students graduate from high school with the ability to enter college and successfully obtain a degree” (Social Impact Research, 2010, September, p. 1). College access professionals may assist students through a college access network, as is the case in Michigan (MCAN, n.d.a). Independent educational consultants/counselors are “skilled professional(s) who provide counseling to help students and families choose a school, college, or other program that is a good personal match...” (IECA, 2011, n.p.). According to Holcomb (2012), “college

counseling refers to all of these scenarios” (p. 3), meaning that all of these audiences apply the knowledge and techniques of college counseling.

For these groups of educational professionals to deliver college counseling to high school students, they must be appropriately educated and trained. The College Board (2012a) cites that a lack of training “stands in the way of real progress” (p. 1). Figure 1 below illustrates the current training pathways for college counseling.

Figure 1 Training Pathways for College Counseling

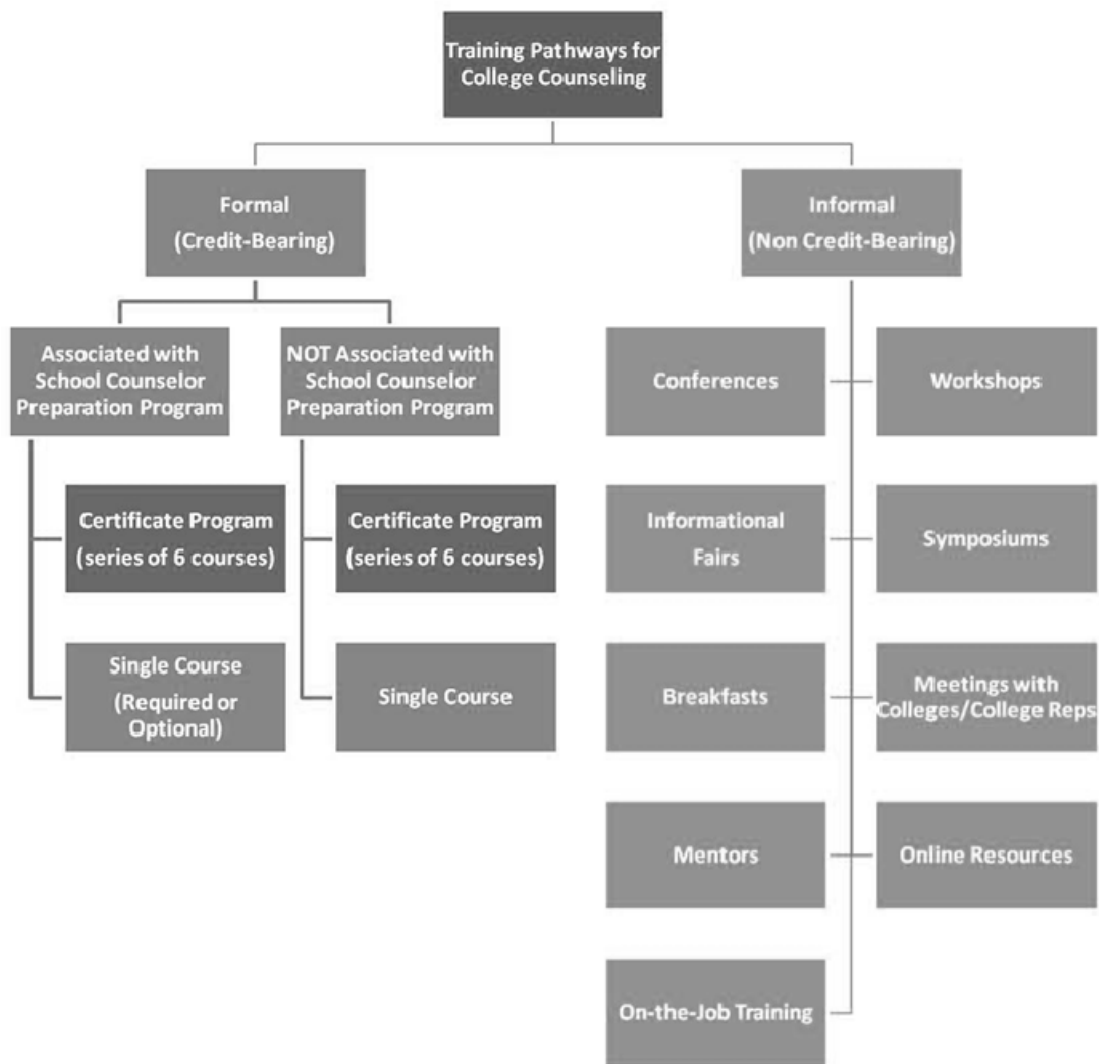


Figure 1 portrays the two current primary paths for learning college counseling skills, techniques, and information: formal and informal (Daun-Barnett & Bezek, 2010). A challenge of delivering college counseling effectively is that historically this training has been provided informally through non-credit-bearing experiences such as professional conferences, institutes, webinars, and on-the-job training (Daun-Barnett & Bezek, 2010). Formal training, on the other hand, is credit-bearing college coursework, which may or may not include a credential upon completion (Daun-Barnett & Bezek, 2010). As Figure 1 depicts, college counseling training is available within a school counselor preparation program, as a single course, or within a certificate program. In his research on Hispanic leadership certificates in the State of Virginia, Cuartas (2006) refers to formal education as “the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded education system...a variety of specialized programmes and institutions for full-time technical and professional training” (p. xxi). A certificate program in college counseling can be considered formal education, since Cuartas (2006) refers to informal education as “the truly lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educative influences and resources in his or her environment...” (p. xxi). Since 1986, there has been a call for such coursework and a credential, specifically a certification (The College Board, 1986, October; Holmes, et al., 1986).

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The existing literature on the training pathways of college counseling primarily focuses on the role of traditional school counselors and rarely includes the other roles providing this type of counseling: college admission professionals, college access professionals, and independent counselors. Historically, this counseling has been conducted solely by school counselors (Holcomb, 2012). However, the landscape of college counseling is changing. The formal role of college access professionals has recently been established, yet there is very little research on these roles and college counseling. For example, in Michigan, nearly 50 Local College Access Networks (LCANs) have formed with individuals providing college counseling in various capacities (MCAN, n.d.). The College Board (2012d) is one of the first organizations to cite college access groups and professionals other than school counselors as necessary and critical to increase college-going rates. As multiple surveys and reports have noted, school counselors do not have sufficient time to provide this college counseling, so other roles have emerged to fill that gap (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011a, November; Bridgeland & Bruce, 2012). In addition, the inclusion and promotion of a college-going culture has led to an expansion of individuals focused on college counseling (Holcomb, 2012). The lack of literature on training pathways outside of the traditional school counselor role necessitates the research planned as part of this study. The roots of this topic will first be shared. The background information to support and explain this research topic derives from multiple sources: NACAC, The College Board, The National College Counseling Project, the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the

Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), proposals, opinion articles, and the origin of certificate programs.

History

More than 30 counselors, authors, researchers, leaders, and educators since 1986 have cited the need for training in college counseling and postsecondary advisement (i.e., Holmes, et al., 1986). The earliest, formally-documented calls for this type of training appeared in 1986 in two different reports: The National College Counseling Project's *Frontiers of Possibility* report and The College Board's *Keeping the Options Open* report (Holmes et al., 1986; The College Board, 1986, October). In that same year, Hart and Jacobi (1992) cited that Herr "reported that little or no attention is paid to the counselor's role in advising and preparing students for college" (p. 55). According to Burtnett, three years later in 1989, NACAC surveyed counselor education programs, noting that only four of 125 departments included any courses in precollege guidance and counseling (this phrase is the precursor to the shortened name of college counseling). NACAC also in 1989 created the Commission for the Advancement of Professional Standards (CAPS), which was responsible for examining "a number of issues dealing with the quality of counseling programs and counseling personnel," and launched a membership survey to collect information to build a "comprehensive curricula for school and college admission counselors" (National Association for College Admission Counselors, 1990, February, n.p.). The National Association for College Admission Counselors (1990, February) considered the potential offering of certification of counselors with survey questions on that very topic. Those findings on "professional preparation and credentialing matters" were released by the National Association for College Admission Counselors in May 1990 to the membership and represented the voice of more than 800 members (n.p.). "CAPS has determined that there is a body of

knowledge, as well as a definable set of skills and competencies that counselors should possess to deliver precollege guidance and counseling...” stated Burnett (1989, p. 3). This statement was one of the first formal recognitions that there was a body of knowledge connected to college counseling. Burnett (1989) further criticized that few high schools provided sufficient training in the transition from school to college. That remains an issue yet today (The College Board, 2012c).

The first known courses in college counseling were launched coincidentally in the same month and year: July 1991—on both coasts of the United States (McGowan, 1990; A.S. McGowan, personal communication, October 14, 2011; M. Johnson, personal communication, April 30, 2012). The School of Education at Long Island University launched “Education 859” (Counseling for the College Admissions and Selection Process) while the University of California-Riverside launched two online courses: College Counseling Process along with Admissions Testing and Documents (McGowan, 1990; A.S. McGowan, personal communication, October 14, 2011; M. Johnson, personal communication, April 30, 2012). The course at Long Island University became the first required college counseling course as part of any school counseling preparation program at that time (A.S. McGowan, personal communication, October 14, 2011). NACAC in 2010 identified 42 programs with a college counseling course among schools with school counselor programs (O’Connor, 2010, December 23).

NACAC’s Leadership and Role

Throughout NACAC’s history as a professional association, it has advocated for college counseling education and training. Founded in 1937, NACAC (2012c) is “dedicated to serving students as they make choices about pursuing postsecondary education” (n.p.). This section

highlights 13 of those efforts that have taken place over the past few decades. NACAC formed CAPS in 1989 as a six-member team to examine “a number of the issues dealing with the quality of counseling programs and counseling personnel at both the secondary school and collegiate levels” (Flanigan, 1990, February 1). According to NACAC, the work of this Commission ended in 1991, with the issuance of NACAC’s Statement on Counselor Competencies, which “avoided prescribing narrow training options or credentialing” (NACAC, 1991, n.p.). In lieu of such credentialing, NACAC focused on its own offerings such as conferences and later published several editions of a textbook for training purposes (NACAC, 1991; NACAC, 2005a; NACAC, 2008a; NACAC, 2012d).

During NACAC’s 1996 national conference, its Professional Development Committee was given the assignment of “reexamining the possibility of establishing a certification process for college admission counseling” (NACAC, 1996). According to NACAC’s historical website, this committee recommended not to proceed with formal certification (NACAC, 1996). Again, in lieu of such formal credentialing, it proposed three actions: 1) promote the Statement of Counselor Competencies; 2) develop a way to recognize experience; and 3) promote a college counseling curriculum within graduate programs (NACAC, 1996). The 1997 Assembly of NACAC requested that the Professional Development Committee create a certificate program using NACAC’s existing resources (NACAC, 1998). According to NACAC, in April 1998, the Committee:

proposed a framework for professional competency recognition. Proposed competency designations—bronze through platinum—would reflect growing levels of knowledge, contribution to the profession and association, leadership, and longevity. The advantages

of such a program would include greater recognition of the profession, increased inter-association relationships, links with graduate programs, and revenue enhancement (n.p.).

There is no indication that these competency designations were ever implemented.

NACAC continued its efforts in support of graduate coursework in college counseling in 2003 by commissioning the Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate Coursework. According to NACAC, this committee was a subcommittee of the NACAC Professional Development Committee and its charge was to “design and implement a graduate level course in college admission counseling that would be marketed/offered to appropriate institutions of higher learning” (NACAC, 2003, n.p.). In addition, the committee was charged with researching current offerings, reviewing current accreditation requirements, and exploring ways to increase awareness of offerings (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October). Robert Bardwell from the New England Association for College Admission Counseling (NEACAC) was selected as the chair of this committee (NACAC, 2003). During its existence, the committee reviewed graduate courses that incorporated college counseling (NACAC, 2003). The committee in 2004 issued a formal report of its findings (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October). As of the issuance of the report, only nine colleges offered “graduate credit towards a degree in school counseling for a course relating to college admission counseling” (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October, p. 1). The 13-page report discussed the importance of college admission counseling, highlighted the nine colleges, outlined the ways that NACAC members could advance the cause, and provided a sample course outline along with a bibliography of resources (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October). The report also mentioned the need “to overcome the resistance of college counseling coursework’s incorporation into the school counselor curriculum” (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October, p. 4). The

creation of the textbook, *Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling*, emerged as a recommendation from that report (NACAC, 2005a).

Referred to by NACAC as the first official textbook for graduate coursework in college counseling, the *Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling* was first made available in 2005 with 20 chapters as a “print-your-own” PDF style resource available on NACAC’s website (NACAC, 2005a). According to NACAC (2005a), this publication served two purposes: graduate course textbook and a resource for counselors. The second edition was published as a hardcover text by NACAC in 2008 and featured a companion CD of resources (NACAC, 2008a). The third edition was released in September 2012 at the NACAC national conference (NACAC, 2012e). This most recent edition is described by NACAC (2012e) in its acknowledgments section as “a relevant, timely and industry-recognized resource for those whose responsibility it is to shepherd students and families through the transition from high school to postsecondary education” (n.p.). Note that NACAC is inclusive of all types of individuals who play those roles. According to NACAC (2012e), the third edition includes more research and links theory to practice. A companion website is new for the third edition and is designed to offer resources that complement the textbook (NACAC, 2012e). The website that promotes the third edition refers to the newest edition as being “dramatically re-envisioned” because of the combination of theoretical and practical content (NACAC, 2014). That same website uses the phrasing “postsecondary planning” to describe the primary purpose of the textbook (NACAC, 2014). NACAC references that three groups of experts contributed to the content: “nationally recognized practitioners, industry leaders, and counselor educators” (NACAC, 2012e, n.p.). According to NACAC, “*Fundamentals* is essential for those looking to understand the most salient issues in college admission practices as well as for those who are committed to improving

the college going and completion rates of all students” (NACAC, 2012e, n.p.). The site states that the textbook can be used in graduate program curriculum, such as the certificate programs in college counseling (NACAC, 2012e). The site that promotes this textbook also contains four sample syllabi (NACAC, 2012e). To date, no organization external to NACAC has evaluated its textbook.

NACAC’s website about the *Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling* features four sample syllabi from college admission counseling courses across the country: Lindenwood University, Long Island University (C.W. Post Campus), the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, and an unidentified school (NACAC, 2012e). The Lindenwood sample was from a 2008 “College Admission Counseling” course taught by Mark Giesmann (NACAC, 2012e). The sample from the unidentified school was from an unknown year, but was taught by Bardwell. The Long Island University sample was from a 2007 “Counseling for the College Admission and Selection Process” course taught by Dr. Arthur McCann (NACAC, 2012e). The University of Massachusetts Amherst sample was from a 2007 “Counseling the College Bound Student” course taught by Bardwell (NACAC, 2012e). Based on language on the NACAC website, these sample syllabi are intended to assist individuals who are interested in teaching a college admission counseling course (NACAC, 2012e).

The NACAC College Admission Counseling Graduate Coursework Special Interest Group (SIG) is one of 22 interest groups that focus on specific topics within the organization (NACAC, n.d.d). This SIG is “focused on reaching out to counseling education programs, which encourage the addition of college admission counseling coursework as well as encourage NACAC members to advocate for more training in school counseling preparation programs” (NACAC, 2012a). This group was formed after the Ad Hoc Committee on Graduate

Coursework concluded its work (R. Bardwell, personal communication, January 17, 2012).

Members of this group gather at the NACAC annual conferences and contribute electronically through an online bulletin board (R. Bardwell, personal communication, January 17, 2012). As of December 2013, Bardwell confirmed this SIG had 24 members (personal communication, December 29, 2013). In a sense, members of this group are empowered to serve as advocates of this cause.

Besides publishing a textbook and supporting the SIG, NACAC has attempted to influence boards of education, government entities, and colleges in expanding and requiring these courses (O'Connor, 2009, February 13; NACAC, n.d.a). For example, since 2008, NACAC (n.d.b) has published policy briefs advocating for changes in college counseling preparation. The first policy brief was released during NACAC's 2008 Legislative Conference (D. Hawkins, personal communication, September 26, 2012). According to Hawkins, NACAC's Director of Public Policy and Research, NACAC distributed the policy brief to more than 300 congressional offices (D. Hawkins, personal communication, September 26, 2012). The intent was for it to be sponsored as part of the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (D. Hawkins, personal communication, September 26, 2012). One NACAC legislative document incorporated a bill and a graduate counseling curriculum pilot program (NACAC, n.d.c). In particular, this document sought to provide funding to colleges and universities to develop this graduate coursework for students in counseling programs (NACAC, n.d.c). The proposed pilot program required free enrollment for school counselors and completion of an assessment to evaluate the course (NACAC, n.d.c). In recent years, NACAC's state organizations have focused their work on advocacy at the state level (D. Hawkins, personal communication, September 26, 2012).

NACAC (2011) maintains a public website called “Graduate Course Information” which lists colleges and universities that offer graduate coursework in college counseling. Until 2013, this site listed four certificates in college counseling or college admission counseling (NACAC, 2011). The four identified certificates had been listed under the category of “Non-Degree Programs” and are housed at four campuses of the University of California system (NACAC, 2011). That category is to differentiate from master’s degree programs in school counseling and other fields. As of 2013, this site only lists graduate courses in college counseling offered in degree granting programs and that listing does not include any graduate certificate programs.

For nearly two decades, NACAC has offered a number of national conference presentations on the topic of graduate coursework in college counseling. One such presentation was delivered at the 2011 NACAC Annual Conference and was entitled, “The Future of Fundamentals—Addressing the Opportunity Gap for Professionals Seeking Training and Skills in the College Counseling Profession” (Bardwell, Savitz-Romer, Chen-Hayes, & Fraser, 2011). In 2009, Bardwell and O’Connor presented on college admission counseling coursework at NACAC’s Legislative Conference. This presentation focused on the importance of this coursework, how to get started, coursework format options, resources, tips, and the NACAC textbook (Bardwell & O’Connor, 2009).

Since 2004, NACAC has tracked the evolution and expansion of graduate courses in college counseling (Bardwell, et al., 2004, October). In that year, nine colleges with this graduate coursework were identified. By 2005, according to NACAC, nearly 30 colleges and universities were offering such graduate coursework in college counseling (NACAC, 2005b). NACAC past president Patrick O’Connor cited 42 colleges offering a course in college

admission counseling in an opinion piece published by *Diverse Education* magazine in 2010. NACAC has been the only known repository of such information (O'Connor, 2010).

NACAC published its first annual state of college admission report in January, 2003 to capture the essence of college admissions and college counseling (Hawkins, 2003). The 2003 edition provided this explanation of what “precollege counseling” included at that time:

“activities that help students (1) pursue the most challenging curriculum that results in enhanced postsecondary educational options, (2) identify and satisfy attendant requirements for college access, and (3) navigate the maze of financial aid, college choice, and other processes related to college application and admission” (Hawkins, 2003, p. 41).

In this report, NACAC also described the professionals working to provide college counseling as “pupil services personnel” (Hawkins, 2003, p. 41). That phrase appears to no longer be used. The *State of College Admission* reports continue to be published annually, with the tenth edition being issued in 2012 (Clinedinst, Hurley, & Hawkins, 2012).

In 2001, NACAC’s professional journal, the *Journal of College Admission*, published an article by Bernstein and Behrend entitled, “Designing a Graduate Course in Admission Counseling 101.” This article describes how a new course in college admission counseling at the University at Buffalo was offered in 2001 (Bernstein & Behrend, 2001). Bernstein and Behrend cite that the University of Maryland and the University of California-Los Angeles were the schools offering such a course, based on their search. The article describes the various sessions and types of instruction offered in this course. The article appears to have been published to foster the creation of such graduate courses across the country.

NACAC published a discussion paper in 2012 authored by Harvard professor Mandy Savitz-Romer. In this piece, Savitz-Romer calls for the professionalization of college knowledge training and strategically links college readiness with career readiness through her reference to this conceptually as a “college readiness workforce” (2012, p. 1). Savitz-Romer (2012) cites the lack of a “widely-accepted curriculum” for providing training and education for the populations who work with high school students to prepare them for college (p. 1). She elaborates on the gaps of skills and training needed for college preparation professionals, identifying the need for high quality training. “The absence of coursework addressing college counseling has left school counselors, admission personnel, independent, and non-profit college access workers without the theoretical foundations, best practices, and data that would otherwise inform their practice,” states Savitz-Romer (2012, p. 4). She points out the lack of research that focuses on this essential training and provides eight primary policy recommendations for advancing the training approach for college readiness counseling (Savitz-Romer, 2012). One of those recommendations, and the one selected for the focus of this study, is to “document the training models and formats being used today,” noting that the lack of documentation of the training has inhibited its visibility and credibility (Savitz-Romer, 2012, p. 22).

NACAC has been the leading advocate of graduate coursework in college counseling, incorporating it into its mission, putting it into practice, communicating its need, and offering resources to support its effectiveness. These efforts collectively demonstrate the initial initiatives to fill a gap in training, influence the transfer of knowledge, and positively impact the college-going culture in the United States. To this day, NACAC still cites graduate coursework in college counseling as a “key shortcoming” (NACAC, 2012b, n.p.).

The College Board's Role

Over several decades, The College Board has been playing a role in college counseling. Established in 1900, The College Board was created “to help high school students make a successful transition to higher education” (The College Board, n.d.). Since then, it has prompted research, offered advice, and advocated for college counseling effectiveness. In 1984, a 20-member Commission on Precollege Guidance and Counseling was formed to “study the uneven quality that characterizes precollege guidance and counseling services” (The College Board, 1986, p. vii). In 1986, that Commission issued a report entitled, *Keeping the Options Open*, which was an examination of students who had “limited access to postsecondary education” (The College Board, 1986, October, p. 1). One of the eight primary recommendations of this report included: “revise the training of school counselors to include the specific skills and knowledge necessary to enable them to take a more central role in schools” (The College Board, 1986, October p. 6). Through the Report, the Commission called for the creation of competencies and new courses (The College Board, 1986, October).

Twenty years later, in 2006, The College Board, under the branded identity of CollegeEd, issued a guide called, “Creating a College-Going Culture.” This 22-page document presents the rationale for creating and maintaining such a culture, how to assess a current college-going culture, and suggestions for short-term and long-term initiatives to facilitate a college-going culture (The College Board, 2006). This publication discusses the important role of resources and support which ultimately have a positive impact on recognition that college follows high school as part of a kindergarten through grade 16 (K-16) mindset (The College Board, 2006).

In 2008, The College Board launched the National Office for School Counselor Advocacy (NOSCA) through its Advocacy and Policy Center (NOSCA, 2012, May). NOSCA's

role it to serve as “advocates for school counseling that helps every student graduate from high school with the educational preparation and social capital necessary for success in college and life” (NOSCA, 2012, May). While graduate coursework in college counseling is not directly a goal, it does mention training of school counselors as important for achieving college and career readiness goals (NOSCA, 2012, May). NOSCA partners with the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), but not NACAC (NOSCA, 2012, May). NOSCA was one of the first organizations to use the phrase “college readiness counseling” and it first appeared in their publication entitled, *The Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling* (College Board, 2011, April). Furthermore, one of NOSCA’s priority areas in 2010-2015 is “transformation in school counseling practice” (NOSCA, 2012, May).

In December 2008, The College Board’s Commission on Access, Admissions, and Success in Higher Education, issued a report entitled, *Coming to Our Senses: Education and the American Future*. The second recommendation within that report was a call to improve middle and high school counseling (The College Board, 2008). Indirectly inferred was the need for more counseling, more and better training for the counselors, and the development of college-going cultures. Graduate coursework in college counseling, however, was not a primary focus. Furthermore, the report did not identify a lack of properly trained school counselors as one of its “seven great education challenges” (The College Board, 2008, p. 9). The report called for the creation of “robust college counseling programs” and building “college-going aspirations” (p. 22). Essentially, this recommendation called for the establishment of standards, the practice of college counseling, and sufficient staffing (The College Board, 2008). Related to graduate coursework in college counseling, the report states, “It goes without saying that counselors

should be professionally trained and certified and should benefit from opportunities for ongoing professional development” (The College Board, 2008, p. 23). This is one of the more recent mentions of certification; however, it neither defines what it means to be professionally trained, certified, nor what is meant by professional development. According to this publication, “counselors are trained and employed to counsel students about college and career possibilities and pathways; that is how they should be used” (The College Board, 2008, p. 23), thus justifying their focus on college and career readiness, versus administrative tasks that do not support such work.

Building from the 2008 Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education and its 2008 report, The College Board published a 215-page progress report called *The College Completion Agenda: 2010 Progress Report* (Lee & Rawls, 2010). This report highlighted the steps taken among the ten primary recommendations in the original 2008 report. Its second recommendation, “improve middle school and high school counseling” included college counseling and the report focused on four primary indicators of progress, one of which was professional development for secondary school college counselors (Lee & Rawls, 2010). Specifically, this report shared statistics from the NACAC Counseling Trends Surveys from 2006 through 2008 and the percentage of secondary schools covering professional development costs (Lee & Rawls, 2010). This report focuses on continuing professional development, citing that “the lack of professional development is detrimental to their (counselors’) ability to provide students with current and complete information” (Lee & Rawls, 2010, p. 35). This section concludes with a strong statement that the United States “lacks a measure to assess effectiveness of...[such] professional development...”, an indication of the deficiency of knowledge about these training pathways (Lee & Rawls, 2010, p. 35).

A year later, Lee, Edwards, Menson, and Rawls (2011) published an updated progress report. New indicators related to college counseling were added to the aforementioned four indicators: student-to-college-counselor ratio and implementation of the NOSCA's *Eight Components of College and Career Readiness Counseling* (Lee, Edwards, Menson & Rawls, 2011). The report notes, "some schools are trying to increase student access to college counseling by hiring counselors who are only responsible for helping the students complete college admission paperwork in high school" (Lee, Edwards, Menson, & Rawls, 2011, p. 45). This report indicates a decline of postsecondary admission counseling from the years 2004 to 2009, an additional reason to increase the training of all individuals involved in college counseling (Lee, Edwards, Menson, & Rawls, 2011).

Another update was published in 2013 to highlight efforts in 2012 (Hughes, 2013). This update discusses how college counseling includes procedural aspects and that "school counselors are the best-positioned professionals" to help students prepare for college, referring to that knowledge as critical (Hughes, 2013, p. 11). This 2012 document reports the findings from the 2012 national counselor survey, which includes insufficient training for college readiness counselors, in particular the need for college affordability planning (Hughes, 2013). Again, here is documented support of the need for graduate coursework in college counseling, especially on the topic of financial aid.

A third output related to The College Board's College Completion Agenda was the *State Policy Guide* which was published in 2011 (Bautsch & Martin, 2011). This practical guide, offered in conjunction with the National Conference of State Legislatures, states that professionally trained counselors are critical, college counseling should start as early as middle school, and a statewide focus on these issues can advance them (Bautsch & Martin, 2011). This

guide informs legislators that they should know the answer to this question: “Do school counselor training programs include course work on college and career counseling?” (Bautsch & Martin, 2011, p. 39). The report recommends that states “incorporate courses on college and career counseling into master’s degree programs for school counselors” (Bautsch & Martin, 2011, p. 43). Furthermore, it is one of the first times this type of recommendation is placed in print: “urge practicing school counselors who did not complete this kind of course work in their master’s training to take a college and career counseling certification course,” thus justifying the need for these courses and certification (Bautsch & Martin, 2011, p. 43).

In April 2011, The College Board issued the *Eight Components of College & Career Readiness Counseling*, which “chart a comprehensive, systemic approach for school counselors’ use to inspire all students to, and prepare them for, college success and opportunity—especially students from underrepresented populations” (Lee, Edwards, Menson & Rawls, 2011; The College Board, 2011, April, p. 2). The eight components are a framework for building a college-going culture. While it provides a roadmap, it lacks an alignment to training/education in order to implement these elements. None of the eight components focus on college counseling training, yet all require more educational training for counselors because they focus on the culture, the search, the applications, and the decision.

NOSCA, in partnership with Hart Research Associates and Civic Enterprises, in November, 2011 released the results of the largest national survey of middle and high school counselors at that time (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011a). This resulted in the report entitled *2011 National Survey of School Counselors: Counseling at a Crossroads* (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011). Many of the results focused on college counseling. The survey revealed that only 16% of these 5,308 counselors indicated they feel very well trained for their roles (Bridgeland & Bruce,

2011). A recommendation from that report calls for “mandatory coursework on advising for college readiness, access, and affordability,” (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011, p. 8). In addition, 65% of counselors indicated they would like to spend more time on building a college-going culture; and 74% of school counselors agreed they play a “unique role as student advocates who create pathways and support to ensure all students have opportunities to achieve postsecondary goals” (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011, p. 6). The most revealing finding related to college counseling was that only 16% felt their education prepared them “very well” for their roles/responsibilities (Bruce, Martin, & Pollock, 2011).

Issued also on the same day was a Literature and Landscape Review on the state of school counseling in America (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011b). This review documents the landscape of nearly 25 different topics related to school counselors. Bridgeland and Bruce (2011b) point out that the field of counseling is one of the lesser researched topics within education. In a section on “counselors as professionals,” it is noted that postsecondary admission counseling is a responsibility of school counselors, specifically noting that includes the college application process and financial aid (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2011b). According to Bridgeland and Bruce (2011b), “assistance with the college application process is among the most powerful ways that school counselors can impact college enrollment and attendance rates in secondary schools” (p. 22). In describing the type of pre-service training that school counselors receive, Bridgeland and Bruce (2011b) explain this training typically takes place at the graduate level, noting that among the courses included in such training, college counseling is not listed. Furthermore, based on an interview with Savitz-Romer, Bridgeland and Bruce (2011b) state that as of 2011, less than five states required “coursework in college advising for certification” (p. 12). Bridgeland and Bruce (2011b) also cite Perusse and Goodnough’s 2005 study in which

counselors were asked to rank graduate coursework relative to their work as a school counselor and “college counseling was not even listed among the graduate courses for counselors to rank” (p. 12). While the literature and landscape review highlighted research gaps, it failed to identify graduate coursework in college counseling as one of those gaps. Its bibliography by subject fell short by not including some of the literature related to this topic.

The College Board in 2012 issued state briefs on the 2011 National Survey of School Counselors (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2012). For example, the Michigan state brief features a focus entitled, “School counselors in Michigan desire increased training” (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2012, p. 5). It cites that “proposed amendments to certification...may better serve counselors and their students” (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2012, p. 5). According to the state brief, a lower percentage (60% in Michigan versus 68% nationally) of Michigan counselors receive training on college and career readiness (Bridgeland & Bruce, 2012).

Following the successful 2011 survey, NOSCA in 2012 repeated its national survey and presented the results in four categories, which included training as a category (The College Board, 2012b). New for the 2012 survey was a supplemental survey of more than 400 school administrators (principals, vice principals, and assistant principals) (The College Board, 2012c). Nearly 2,900 middle and high school counselors participated in the 2012 survey (The College Board, 2012c). Under the theme of “graduate schools not making college and career readiness a priority,” the survey results indicated that only five to 11% of counselors felt these topics were “extensively covered” in graduate school:

- College and career assessments;
- Academic planning for college and career readiness;
- College aspirations;

- Transition from high school graduation to college enrollment;
- Connect college and career exploration and selection processes;
- Enrichment and extracurricular engagement;
- College and career admission processes; and
- College affordability planning (The College Board, 2012c).

In addition, 67% of survey responders indicated that “college affordability planning” was not covered at all or inadequately covered (The College Board, 2012b). When asked if they needed additional training on certain topics, 43% to 66% of counselors responded that at least some additional training was needed (The College Board, 2012b). According to The College Board (2012c), “the largest training deficits appear in transitioning students from high school graduation to college enrollment and college affordability planning” (p. 4). According to The College Board (2012d), “counselors who report being better trained are more likely to work in schools with higher rates of college attendance” (p. 28). The report on the survey findings also revealed that of the counselors who did not attend a graduate program for school counseling, only 12% of school counselors have completed a specialized certificate program (The College Board, 2012c). While certification was briefly mentioned in the report, it did not reference certificates in college counseling, but instead focused on state certification. In addition, the report cites the need to improve graduate school curriculum with college access as being identified as “the most needed area of additional training” (The College Board, 2012d, p. 7). Questions in this survey only focused on school counselor preparation programs and did not reference certificate programs in college counseling.

This survey, findings, and report generated several recommendations by The College Board. A primary recommendation made is to “provide counselors, teachers, and administrators

pre-service and in-service training that aligns counselors' work to students' college and career readiness outcomes" (The College Board, 2012b, slide 31). The report calls for graduate schools to "take specific steps in curriculum and fieldwork performance measures to ensure professional school counselors are prepared to implement a comprehensive college and career readiness counseling program that links counselors' work with school and district goals" (The College Board, 2012d, p. 10). The College Board also recommends that the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) standards should be revised to include college and career student outcome measures (Bridgeland, & Bruce, 2011b, November). Finally, "offering a separate course in college and career readiness counseling" was recommended as part of actions for the future (The College Board, 2012d, p. 48).

Like NACAC, The College Board has taken an active role in calling attention to the need for graduate coursework in college counseling. Since 1984, various commissions of The College Board have researched and provided recommendations for necessary actions in order to advance the agendas related to college access and college readiness. NOSCA's leadership with the annual survey of counselors should expand beyond counselors to other providers of college counseling. In addition, that survey should demonstrate, through its results, whether efforts to increase graduate coursework in college counseling are taking place.

National College Counseling Project (NCCP) and *Frontiers of Possibility*

The National College Counseling Project (NCCP) was formed in September 1983 to examine "the status of college counseling in schools across the country" (Holmes, et al., 1986, p. 2). According to the NACAC website, NACAC (2012d) provided \$40,000 in funding as a primary sponsor of this research effort and report. Based on its research, NCCP produced a final report entitled *Frontiers of Possibility* in 1986 with its purpose being to "improve the quality of

college counseling by sparking analysis, debate, and initiatives” (Holmes, et al., 1986, p. 4).

This three-part study included a statistical survey, an expert report, and case studies. More than 1,100 high schools nationwide were reviewed for this study. According to its authors, “the quality of the college decision process for students remained the central focus of our research” (Holmes, et al., 1986, p. 8). The report cited the non-credit-bearing Harvard University Admissions Institute experience as an example of the professionalization of college counseling. Furthermore, the report cited “gaps in the preparation of school counselors, including the lack of specific preparation for assisting students in their transition from high school to college” (Holmes, et al., 1986, p. 30). Holmes et al. (1986) noted that such preparation was haphazard and a serious concern. However, the report did not address how to improve the preparation of those individuals providing college counseling.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is the newest, emerging stakeholder in the discipline of college admission counseling training. In ASCA’s national standards, preparation for postsecondary options is embedded, but only focuses on the identification of these options, not the particular steps to enroll in postsecondary options (ASCA, 2005). References to college access, college readiness, and college planning have been limited. For example, one of ASCA’s position statements is entitled, “The Professional School Counselor and Academic and College/Career Planning” and is one of the few references to planning for college (ASCA, 2012b). This statement discusses the role that school counselors play in helping students set postsecondary goals, facilitating the knowledge and skills to be college-ready, and how to help students make informed choices (ASCA, 2012b). Unfortunately, nearly all of the references focus primarily on career readiness, not college readiness. ASCA Assistant Director

Eric Sparks indicated that the 1997 national standards were being revised to incorporate new language referencing college readiness (personal communication, March 7, 2013). That interview also previewed other emerging efforts. On the horizon for ASCA is recognition of formal training related to college planning, similar to ASCA's Legal and Ethical Specialist Training (ASCA, 2012a). ASCA refers to this legal/ethical opportunity as a program and a certificate and includes reading 11 prescribed materials and taking an online quiz to receive the certificate (ASCA, 2012a). The cost is \$99-\$199 with an opportunity to earn five continuing education units (CEU) (ASCA, 2012a). In other efforts, ASCA annually dedicates its November publication to college planning and college readiness. While ASCA is participating in research, training, and resources relating to preparing for college, it is currently limited and evolving.

Southern Regional Education Board

The Southern Regional Education Board in 2008 launched the College Counseling Training Initiative (CCTI) (SREB, 2013). CCTI "works to increase the knowledge and skills of counselors who advise students on their postsecondary aspirations" (SREB, 2013, p. 1). The State of Michigan is one of the latest states to purchase membership into CCTI and offered it free of charge to 100 individuals beginning in September 2013 (MCAN, 2013). Offered in 12 online modules, CCTI is non-college-credit bearing, but is available for continuing education credit in many states (SREB, 2013). As of July 2013, 13 states purchased membership into CCTI in order to offer this training (SREB, 2013). CCTI represents yet another model of how college counseling is being offered in the United States.

Proposals and Advocacy

To this date, there are no state requirements built into school counselor licensures/certifications (MACAC, 2012). However, the Michigan Association for College Admission

Counseling's (MACAC) government relations members proposed in 2012 a series of amendments to the State of Michigan's School Counselor Administrative Certification Rules. The proposal requested a requirement of at least "three graduate level semester hours in state-approved coursework in college admission counseling and [at least]...three graduate level semester hours in state-approved coursework in career counseling" (MACAC, 2012, p. 1). The proposal outlined eight supporting statements as its rationale. This rationale included information about course completers, current statewide course offerings, recent studies, NACAC research, and the state of these affairs in Michigan (MACAC, 2012). MACAC was seeking for Michigan to become the first state in the United States to require such coursework (MACAC, 2012). While discussed at the April 2012 State of Michigan Board of Education meeting, there was no approval of the amendments (State of Michigan, 2012). The decision to require such a course rests with the state's colleges and universities, according to State Superintendent of Public Instruction Michael Flanagan (personal communication, April 27, 2012). In 2009, NACAC past president Patrick O'Connor drafted a letter to the Director of Domestic Policy Council at The White House. The letter requested a presidential Executive Order that included a required graduate course in college counseling, along with a requirement to hire only school counselors who completed such a course. According to O'Connor (2009), "the need for improved training in counseling in the college selection process is vast, the step initiating a solution is clear, at hand, and easy to complete, and the benefits are beyond measure" (p. 1).

Opinions and Debates

Graduate coursework in college counseling has been slow to evolve and grow because it can be considered controversial. Savitz-Romer (2012) cites debates throughout history regarding the "professional nature of college counseling" (p. 4). Since 2010, two primary, national vocal

advocates of graduate coursework in college counseling have been O'Connor and Bardwell (O'Connor, 2010; Bardwell, 2012, April). As school counselors, they have pushed for the expansion of such graduate coursework in publications such as *Diverse* magazine, *Educational Leadership* magazine, *Bridge Magazine*, and the *Huffington Post* (Bardwell, 2012, April; O'Connor, 2010, December; O'Connor, 2012, May; O'Connor, 2012, December; O'Connor, 2013, April).

As a past president of NACAC, O'Connor (2010) addresses this need for college admission counseling by citing various surveys, research, and publications. He describes that a "poll of new counselors in Michigan indicated 95% of respondents thought a course in college admission counseling should be offered in graduate school, and 61% thought it should be mandatory" (O'Connor, 2010, p. 17). O'Connor (2010) points out that students who are most disadvantaged by this lack of training are poor (low-income) students and students of color. Two years later, O'Connor (2012, May) calls attention to the 2012 College Board survey of counselors, embedding quotes that support the need for college counseling in an online column published by the *Huffington Post*. O'Connor (2012, December) uses one of his outlets to discuss his frustration with primary stakeholders (such as school board members, parents, elected officials) and their lack of realization of the importance of training in college counseling. He indicates that expansion of graduate coursework in college counseling is an easy fix and hopes that The College Board calling attention to it through their annual survey will serve as the impetus for advancing this needed change (O'Connor, 2012). O'Connor's (2013) most recent advocacy has been calling Michigan public policy makers to task by requiring the incorporation of a college course in college admission counseling, as previously referenced.

Bardwell (2012, April) earlier in 2012 cited McDonough's research, NACAC's *State of College Admissions*, and Public Agenda research in advocating for graduate coursework in college counseling. In his online-only published column, Bardwell (2012, April) states, "many school counselors don't receive adequate preparation in the area of college-admission counseling" (para. 6). Unfortunately, Bardwell cited data that was eight years old. Bardwell's support of graduate coursework in college counseling derives from serving as chair of NACAC's ad hoc committee on the topic. Bardwell also uses NACAC's annual conferences to present on this topic to raise awareness and gain support for this effort (Bardwell & O'Connor, 2009; Bardwell, McCann, & O'Connor, 2008; Bardwell, Bernstein, Mudge, & Zimring, 2005). Bardwell's earliest published commentary on this topic appeared in the New England Association for College Admission Counseling's (NEACAC) Spring 2008 newsletter. Entitled, *It's time to say "no more,"* the editorial calls for all members of NEACAC to advocate for graduate coursework in college counseling (Bardwell, 2008).

From individual actions to comprehensive research studies, the identification of and rationalization for graduate coursework in college counseling has existed since the early 1980s according to this review of the literature. The literature reviewed primarily chronicled the history, evolution, and key players in the emergence of graduate coursework in college counseling. It showcased the roles of advocacy and research in advancing this agenda that supports college access and college readiness national goals. The literature provides the context for understanding how college counseling and its associated graduate coursework came into existence. Both coursework and certificate programs have been mentioned, so it is relevant to explore the existence and history of certificate programs.

Certificate Programs

Throughout educational history, certificate programs have provided a body of knowledge in various academic disciplines. According to Cherif (2000):

A certificate program is a sequence of courses constituting a specific number of credit units or classroom hours that provides instruction in a coherent body of knowledge with a specialized field, and leads to the attainment of a specified set of learning objectives (p. 57).

In writing about certificate programs, Patterson (2001) offers a taxonomy for certificate programs, identifying seven variations of such programs. Based on his definitions, the terms “graduate certificate program” and “post baccalaureate certificate program” are applicable to this research (Patterson, 2001). Both types of programs require a bachelor’s degree for admission. Patterson also describes certificates as free-standing or add-on, depending on their alignment with an existing master’s or doctoral program. From the curricular perspective, Patterson states that certificate programs are typically shorter and more focused on a specialization. On average, Patterson indicates that the average number of credit hours for a certificate program is 17. Patterson was also just beginning to see the emergence of online delivery of these certificates as stated in his research back in the early 2000’s. Meanwhile, Cherif (2000) refers to these [certificate] programs being an “important integral force in promoting opportunities for professional career advancement, career transition, practical skills training, and personal development” (p. 57). In the case of graduate coursework in college counseling, this topical area has to do with practical skills training to assist high school students in preparing for and planning for college. Specifically, Cherif states that these programs “provide a foundation that enables students [the educational professionals] to acquire and/or identify the needed skills, methodologies, analytical tools, and resources to obtain proficiency in a subject area” (p. 57). In

this case, that subject area is “advising to enter college.” Similarly, Smith (2001) refers to certificates like college counseling as “contemporary curricular for evolving and emerging fields of practice” (p. 155). College counseling has been evolving for several decades.

From a historical perspective, Holt in 1991 provided needed background information about certificate programs, citing their origins to the late 1940s with resurgence in the 1970s. Holt (1991) points to the practicality and relevancy of certificate programs and that they “focus on areas of specialized knowledge or information and contain a number of courses and hours to meet the occupational, professional, or personal improvement needs of well-defined audiences” (p. 4). In this context, the occupational/professional needs are to help high school students. The well-defined audiences for certificates in college counseling are the various educational professionals who interact with those high school students in that environment, as previously described in the introduction. Holt (1991) synthesizes the essence of the certificates by stating, “they constitute a sequence, pattern, or group of courses developed, administered, and evaluated by faculty or faculty-approved professionals” (p. 5). She elaborates, indicating that completion of a certificate program indicates the acquisition of proficiencies, where proficiencies are defined as “skills, knowledge, and experiences” (Holt, 1991, p.7). Holt emphasizes that certificate program content tends to be more practical than theoretical, primarily due to the immediate application in a work environment.

Based on a search of the phrase “certificate program” using the ProQuest Dissertations and Theses search functionality, there are more than 2,000 returns. Upon closer review, I noted that most of those dissertations have been published since the year 2000. Of the 2,000 dissertations located, 504 appear under the subject of “higher education.” However, there were relatively few that studied certificate programs in the same way as graduate certificates in college

counseling. A refined search using “certificate program” in the title resulted in 29 dissertations, with topics such as leadership studies, mental health, technology, peace studies, business, ethics, and gerontology. Among those results was a museum studies certificate program studied by Vega in 2000. In Vega’s doctoral dissertation about Florida State University’s certificate program, she analyzed the inception, development, and implementation of this academic offering (Vega, 2000). Vega relied on nationally established guidelines for such programs and ultimately discovered best practices, roadblocks, and the strengths of this type of training. Using a qualitative case study approach, she evaluated this certificate program using interviews, observations, and document analysis. Vega’s research describes the four core courses comprising the program, along with the “physical, cultural and historical, administrative, and political contexts” (p. 79). In discussing the results of her research, Vega interprets her findings using the American Association of Museums’ (AAM) guidelines for such programs.

Theoretical Framework: College Choice Theory

As the introduction stated, preparing students for college includes a culture, a search, applications, and a decision. The conclusion to engage in that search, to apply to college, to apply for financial aid, and where to enroll involves a series of choices. College choice theory is based on the explanation of the reasons students make certain decisions about why and where they attend college (Hossler & Palmer, 2008). College choice and college access have been studied extensively. Henrickson (2002) states, “over the past 40 years, there have been roughly 1,900 publications on the topic of college choice and access” (p. 400). For example, Bergerson’s 2009 monograph chronicles 20 years of research on college choice. According to Lee and Kim (2010), “college choice theory emphasizes students’ background characteristics in explaining academic readiness for college as a stage of college access” (p. 15). While this context

established by Lee and Kim relates to academic readiness and college access, the basic fundamental component of college choice theory involves the options that students have and the choices they make. According to Bergerson (2009), “the process of choosing whether and where to attend college is frequently viewed as a comprehensive process in which students realize their college-going aspirations through the use of several steps leading to enrollment” (p. 21). This comprehensive process is ideally managed by those individuals who received training on that process through graduate coursework in college counseling. Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith defined student college choice in 1989 as “a complex, multistage process during which an individual develops aspirations to continue formal education beyond high school, followed later by a decision to attend a specific college, university or institution of advanced vocational training” (p. 234). Cochran and Coles (2012) remind us that “the college choice process provides a framework for understanding the journey students take to arrive at their enrollment decisions” (p. 2). They indicate that availability, transparency, and quality of information about college are some of the primary factors that impact the college choice process (Cochran & Coles, 2012). Much of that information is provided by high school counselors, college admissions professionals, college access professionals, and independent counselors.

College choice theory emerged in the 1970s through the development of models of college choice (Hossler & Palmer, 2008). One of the earliest cited studies was completed in 1975 by Lewis and Morrison and came out of Carnegie Mellon University (Hossler & Gallagher, 1987). The first published model of college choice was by Chapman in 1981 (NACAC, 2008a). Hossler and Gallagher’s 1987 sociologically-based, three-stage model of college choice is the most well-known version and is appropriate for this study because the four aforementioned groups of educational professionals assist students in the three stages: predisposition, search,

and choice (Bergerson, 2009; Hossler, Schmit, & Vesper, 1999). Predisposition refers to the elements that impact students' postsecondary educational plans (Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999). These elements typically include a student's academic achievement, peers, family history, and other events in high school (Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999). The search stage comprises the discovery and evaluation of colleges for future enrollment (Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999). During the choice stage, students select a college or university from among their options and enroll in that particular school (Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999). Hossler, Schmit and Vesper's 1999 research reported that "the best time to influence their [students'] postsecondary plans is during or even before their first year of high school" (p. 128). This emphasizes the importance of developing a college-going culture in the first year of high school.

Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith cited in 1989 the federal government's increasing role in financial aid, the decline in the number of high school graduates, and the lack of enrollment of African American students contributed to a major interest in student college choice. According to them, this effort emerged because policymakers and researchers were "interested in understanding the factors that shape the decision to attend a postsecondary educational institution" (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989, p. 231). Specifically, they noted that "individuals incur costs and benefits not only by deciding to pursue a postsecondary education, but also by deciding what type of postsecondary educational institution they will attend" (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989, p. 232). They concluded their chapter by indicating that understanding student college choice could impact high school guidance activities (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989). Furthermore, according to Hossler, Schmit, and Vesper (1999), "as students move closer to high school graduation, they (and their parents) learn more about postsecondary educational options" (p. 132-133). The recommendations from their

research call for educational professionals to provide “structured experiences for students to learn about...college options [and to] help form students’ consideration sets” (Hossler, Schmit & Vesper, 1999, p. 134-135). These structured experiences are often created and maintained by professionals trained in college counseling. Even within the realm of research on college choice, the need for graduate coursework in college counseling is noted. For example, Hossler, Schmit and Vesper (1999) stated, “...many high school counselors have had little training in college counseling and need professional development opportunities to learn more about college counseling” (p. 135).

A variety of elements within college choice exists that facilitate college enrollment. For example, according to Hossler and Gallagher (1987), “at each phase of the student college choice process, individual and organizational factors interact to produce outcomes” (p. 208). Such factors can be positively influenced by a high school counselor or others who have received training in college counseling, such as a series of courses and/or an earned certificate in college counseling. Multiple researchers such as Bergerson, Hossler, and others discuss the intersection of college choice theory and trained counselors. Bergerson (2009) notes that providing “students with the skills, knowledge, and information needed to engage in the college choice process...” is a part of preparing students for college (p. 17). Here is where college counseling (providing information, increasing knowledge and building skill sets) intersects with college choice. She also notes, “the increased focus on college preparation in the last twenty years recognizes the complex environment in which students make postsecondary decisions” (Bergerson, 2009, p. 18). For example, the author states that the stages of preparing for college are not linear nor uniform for all students, citing that such processes lead to “anxiety, confusion and extensive planning” (Bergerson, 2009, p. 114). Such confusion and complexity necessitates assistance by

trained providers of college counseling. This is emphasized when Bergerson (2009) states, “understanding college choice processes is essential for higher education researchers and professionals interested in increasing access and persistence in college,” (p. 85). As has been demonstrated, student college choice is a complex phenomenon, and, as a multifaceted element within college readiness, it requires sufficient training for professionals to help students enter and exit the college choice process and stage (Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith, 1989).

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

Based on the nature of this inquiry, the literature reviewed thus far, and college-choice theory, an exploratory and descriptive qualitative approach was best suited for this research (Marshall & Rossman, 2010). This dissertation studied certificate programs at various colleges throughout the United States using a case study approach. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), a “qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources” (p. 544). Since certificate programs are multifaceted, a case study approach was ideal. Zainal (2007) states that “case studies...explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships” (p. 1-2). College counseling deriving from increased college access and enhanced college readiness are some of those modern-day, current issues facing our society in the United States (Savitz-Romer, 2012b). In this case study, the limited number of events is the paucity of certificate programs in this emerging academic discipline. This study is what Stake (1995) would characterize as both an instrumental and collective case study because multiple cases were examined and they were designed to gain understanding about the field of graduate certificates in college counseling.

This study of graduate certificate programs in college counseling sought to learn about the inception, curriculum, and composition of these programs. The primary research question was: What are the design and composition of graduate certificate programs in college counseling

in the context of national college access and college readiness goals in the United States? This qualitative study researched these areas:

- (1) identification of the existing certificate programs in college counseling in institutions of higher education in the United States,
- (2) the steps and reasons that led to the creation of these programs,
- (3) the educational content in the certificate coursework,
- (4) the targeted and actual audiences of the programs, and
- (5) the instructional faculty teaching in the programs.

Research Design

This case study was conducted using three primary sources of evidence: archival data, online questionnaires, and interviews (Yin, 2009). Archival data included certificate program proposals, program websites, printed materials, college catalogs, and course syllabi. Two questionnaires (one for program directors and one for students and graduates) were employed. Telephone and in-person interviews were conducted with three program directors, three instructors, a graduate, and a former advisory board member. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval (exemption status) was received on January 4, 2013.

According to Yin (2009), data can be analyzed in one of five ways: pattern matching, explanation building, time-series analysis, logic models, and cross-case synthesis. For this case study, the primary practices of data analysis were pattern matching, explanation building, and cross-case synthesis. Using Yin's (2009) definition and descriptions of the types of case studies, the one selected for this research is Multiple-Case Studies in which each college/university represented a research site. This approach facilitated the identification of similarities and differences among the certificate programs (Baxter & Jack, 2008). According to Zainal (2007),

the degree of confidence is increased when a multiple-case design approach is used, primarily because of its robustness.

The research sites, all universities, are fully identified in this study for two primary reasons. First, these sites were previously identified in the existing literature, on web pages, and in online searches. Second, given that the size of the sample is only eight, it would be difficult to protect the identity of them, especially given some of their unique, descriptive, and differentiating characteristics. Where required, due to a lack of response for member checking or lack of consent, pseudonyms are used to protect the identity of the interviewee and to ensure anonymity. For the remaining sites, research consent was granted and names are listed as attributions.

Program Identification

The first program was identified prior to the start of the study when a postcard was received about the College Counseling Certificate program at the University of California-San Diego (UCSD)-Extension (Summer 2010). At the time, the NACAC (2011) professional development website had a list of graduate and certificate programs in college admission counseling and student affairs. The University of California-Riverside (UCR) program was first identified on this NACAC website (NACAC, 2011). The next primary source for identification derived from the 2012 NACAC Discussion Paper by Savitz-Romer, who identified four certificate programs in existence nationally at the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA), UCSD, Eastern Michigan University, and Suffolk University in Boston, Massachusetts (Savitz-Romer, 2012a). A search of the phrase, “college admission counseling’ certificate” using Google listed Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota as the first non-sponsored link, followed by UCLA, UCR, University of California-Berkeley (UCB), and Suffolk University.

Using an online questionnaire, I asked administrators at universities with existing programs to identify college counseling certificate programs they knew of at other schools, which did not reveal any new schools. After continuing to search online using variations of phrases associated with college admission counseling certificates, I concluded that there were seven such certificate programs in existence, and coded them as currently active programs. It was not until later that an eighth site, now discontinued, was discovered (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). All data collected was stored in multiple spreadsheets using Microsoft Excel.

Questionnaire

A 25-item questionnaire that I created was sent to program directors of the original seven identified sites in January 2013 (see Appendix B). Seven program directors, based on the known certificate programs in existence, were sent an e-mail invitation to participate in the study with a link to the questionnaire on the Qualtrics website. Non-responding program directors were sent an e-mail message reminder one week following the initial request. Three telephone calls were made to follow-up with non-responding program directors 15 days after the first request. Five responses were received, for a response rate of 71%. Of the five responses, four agreed to participate in the survey; one declined. The other two non-responding schools were also coded by the researcher as declines, for a total of three declines.

Categorizing the Programs

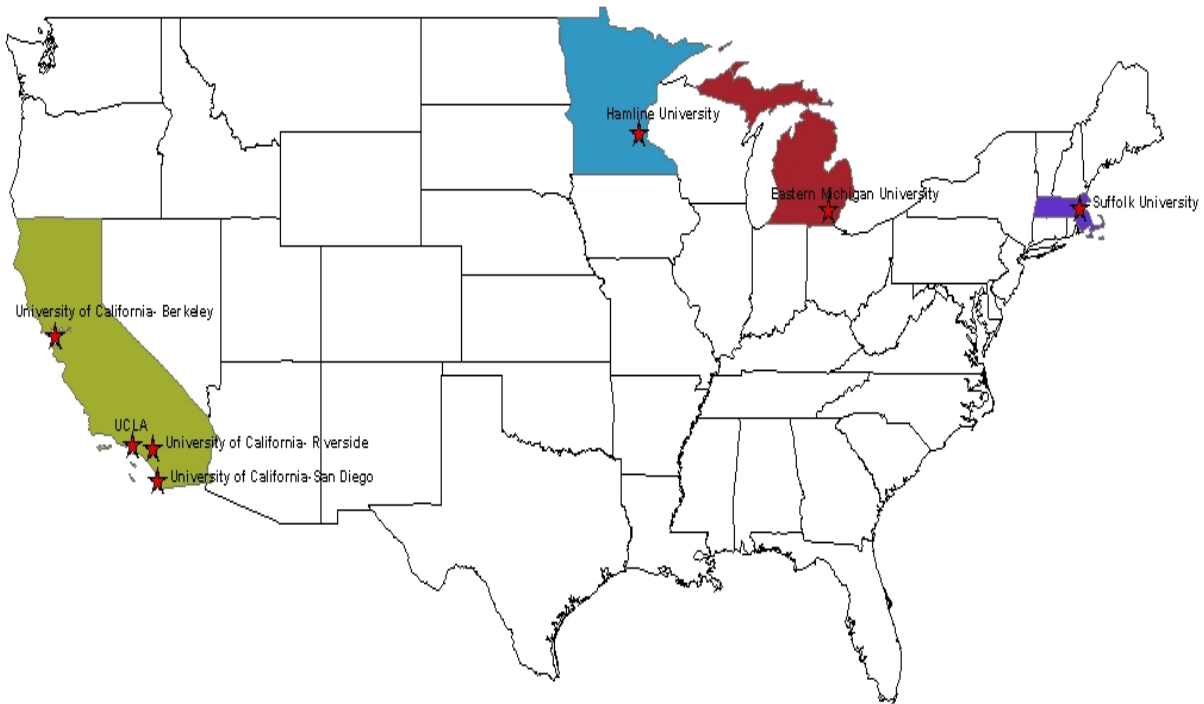
The eight identified certificate programs were categorized into three types based on their status at the time of this research: currently active, in moratorium, or discontinued. Figure 2 below places each site into one of these categories while Figure 3 shows the locations of the seven continuing (currently active or in moratorium) in four states in the United States.

Figure 2 Status of Certificate Programs

Currently Active	In Moratorium	Discontinued
Hamline University Suffolk University UC-Berkeley UC-Los Angeles UC-Riverside UC-San Diego	Eastern Michigan University	UC-Davis

UC = University of California

Figure 3 U.S. Locations of Continuing Certificate Programs as of 2013



Steps and Reasons for Creation

To obtain information about the rationale and protocol followed by colleges and universities to propose and implement these certificate programs, I requested course proposals from each site. I received and studied proposals from Suffolk and UCR. Suffolk’s two proposals included an abbreviated first draft and the final proposal. UCR’s two proposals included the original proposal from 1990 and a proposal that revised the program in 2008. I

obtained information about the origin of Hamline University's program through a telephone interview with the program director on April 1, 2013.

Educational Content

The educational content obtained for this study derived from three primary sources: course titles, course descriptions, and course syllabi. Course titles were organized in a spreadsheet and coded based on topic type, resulting in 13 different topic types. I compiled and analyzed 43 course descriptions from university websites and catalogs in a spreadsheet. I collected 11 course syllabi from four research sites. For every syllabus obtained, I provided the Syllabus Disclosure/Release Form (see Appendix D) to the certificate program representative. Content described in the syllabi was coded and categorized by readings and subjects/topics addressed.

Audiences

Given that at least four different types of professionals could be enrolling in these certificate programs (i.e., school counselors, college admission professionals, college access professionals, and independent consultants), it was critical to identify the types of learners benefiting from this educational experience and gaining such a certificate credential. A career connections specialist in Virginia shared the online questionnaire with 23 colleagues. Because not all of the research sites forwarded my online questionnaire to their current students or certificate graduates, only 11 completed questionnaires were collected. See Appendix D for a sample of the online questionnaire. Two instructors from UCR shared the questionnaire link with their students. One instructor from UCLA shared the link with colleagues. The data from the 11 questionnaires was downloaded, analyzed, and coded in a spreadsheet.

Instructional Faculty

The names of the instructors were obtained from each of the certificate program websites. Instructor names, highest degree earned, titles, and location were recorded and coded for each instructor. I researched the websites of biographies for all available instructors. These biographies were printed, stored, and used in the coding process. A total of 37 instructors were located and confirmed using this process.

Interviews

From January to June 2013, 11 interviews representing five research sites took place, resulting in 540 minutes of transcription. I conducted four interviews via telephone; while the other seven I conducted in person. See Appendix F for the interviews log. I coded the transcriptions of these interviews based on emerging themes and topics, noting unique attributes for specific research sites and making connections among the sites.

Electronic Communications

Some of the data could only be collected through electronic means. I relied on electronic mail exchanges with certificate program representatives to obtain much background information and clarifications on questions I had. In addition, I signed up on the mailing lists for UCLA, UCR, and UCB as part of collecting data. More than 200 e-mail messages were received and saved during the study. Another set of electronic sources used were nearly 100 webpages among the eight certificate programs. These websites provided course descriptions, faculty biographies, and other relevant background information.

Coding and Verification

Coding was completed using multiple spreadsheets where data was stored. Nine different spreadsheets stored data related to course titles, course topics, course descriptions, textbooks,

faculty, geography of certificate graduates, practicums, and target audiences. Among the 11 transcriptions, marginal remarks, the use of emergent codes, and memoing contributed to the development of the themes.

To ensure internal validity, several approaches were employed: triangulation of data member checking, and clarifying researcher bias (Creswell, 2009). Triangulation is the combination of several sources of evidence (Yin, 2009) and was integrated since numerous pieces of data were collected within each case. According to Yin (2009), “the use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies allows an investigator to address a broader range of historical and behavioral issues” (p. 115). The specific type of triangulation used in this case study was methodological triangulation because documents were analyzed, questionnaires administered, and telephone interviews conducted (Guion, Diehl, & McDonald, n.d.). According to Olsen (2004), “the mixing of methodologies...is a more profound form of triangulation” (p. 3). Member checking with the multiple program directors of the certificate programs ensured the “truth value” by enabling the directors to review the presentation of information (Creswell, 2009). Findings were sent to seven different individuals for member checking. As previously mentioned, verification of data was often confirmed through e-mail exchanges with program representatives. All e-mail messages have been saved and are organized by program site. Being conscientious about researcher bias was critical to achieve optimal validity. To reduce bias, I audio-recorded all telephone and in-person interviews. This made sure I was drawing direct quotations, not paraphrasing what an individual stated. I strove to remain neutral as much as possible during data collection and reporting of the findings. During the data collection process, I made sure to record both positive and negative statements, to provide a balanced view of the programs. In other words, despite my support of these certificate programs and having served as

a previous instructor in a college counseling graduate course, I worked to present an accurate description, regardless if it supported or criticized the programs.

In total, I reviewed, coded, and analyzed more than 400 items during this study: 11 transcribed interviews, four program director questionnaires, 11 student questionnaires, four proposals, 99 webpages, 220 e-mail messages, 11 syllabi, five student sample assignments, and 44 other documents. This study relied on all nine types of data sources to inform the themes, present the eight cases, and answer the research questions. Appendix I includes the chart on how each data source was utilized to answer the five sub questions

Disclosures and Confidentiality

For transparency purposes, two disclosures are necessary as they intersect with this research study. I am a member of NACAC, which has been the primary advocate of this coursework. I also co-taught a graduate course in college counseling entitled, “The Counselor’s Role in the College Admission Process” at the University of Michigan-Dearborn’s School of Education Teacher Academy in the Winter 2012 semester. The course and its enrolled students were not a part of the research study. The confidentiality of the course syllabi were protected during the entire study as they were not shared with anyone and were filed in folders for each respective research site.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter presents the information that emerged from the data collection and analysis from studying all of the known graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the United States. This chapter of findings includes three sections. The first section presents eight case summaries of the graduate certificate programs. This section uses a variety of sources to compile a concise synopsis of each program. The second section presents the seven major themes that emerged from answering the primary research question: What are the design and composition of graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the context of national college access and college readiness goals in the United States? Answers to the five sub-research questions are revealed throughout the themes presented. The third section presents additional findings that are related to college access, college readiness, and college choice.

Case Studies

This section features a description of all eight identified certificate programs in the United States. It includes programs that are current, in moratorium, and closed. A chronological structure is used to present each of the certificate programs, beginning with the first programs that were established in 1990 (Yin, 2009). The date appearing in the section title is the year the certificate was established. The purpose of these cases is to provide the history, background information, and context about the programs. The length of the cases vary, primarily since available information from some of the sites was limited to what was publicly. Information

about each case includes program format, cost, number of units/credits for the certificate, names of the required courses, individuals affiliated with the programs, and other unique attributes relevant to particular cases. For the cases that included interviews (Hamline, EMU, UCR, and Suffolk), these summaries were reviewed and confirmed by telephoned and in-person interviewees, as discussed as a part of member checking within the methodology section. A snapshot directory of all eight programs appears in Appendix A. This profile summarizes 24 pieces of data about each certificate program.

University of California-Berkeley (1990). The analysis of research site named University of California-Berkeley (UCB) was based on studying four printed documents, 18 UCB e-mail messages, and 12 UCB websites. UCB offers a certificate in College Admissions and Career Planning which is offered completely as a classroom-based program in four locations: Berkeley (Golden Bear Center), San Francisco, Belmont, and Berkeley (Main) campus (UCB Extension, n.d.a; UCB Extension, n.d.f). The \$4,000 certificate is designed for completion in one year and is offered through UCB's Extension (UCB Extension, n.d.a; M. Davidson, personal communication, July, 22 2013). Students applying for admission to the certificate program must possess at least a bachelor's degree or equivalent at an accredited institution (UCB Extension, n.d.b). The certificate is a 15-semester unit program with 216 hours of instruction (UCB Extension, n.d.a). The five required courses to complete the certificate at UCB include: Career Planning for College Admissions, College Admissions Advising A, College Admissions Advising B, Counseling Techniques for Educators, and Practicum in College Admission Advising (UCB Extension, n.d.a). At least eight different instructors have been identified as teaching in the UCB certificate program (i.e. UCB Extension, n.d.c). These instructors include a guidance counselor at a preparatory school, a career advisor for workforce

services, directors of college counseling, a middle school marriage-and-family therapy intern, and two college faculty members (UCB Extension, Fall 2013). One instructor is a graduate of UCB's certificate program in college admissions and career planning (UCB Extension, n.d.d). The UCB Extension website states that the curriculum is overseen by an advisory board approved by the UCB Graduate School of Education (UCB Extension, n.d.a). To earn the certificate, students must have a minimum, cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and a grade of C or better in each course (UCB Extension, 2010). In addition to the certificate program, UCB offers a two-course program which results in an "Award of Completion" (UCB Extension, n.d.g). This College Admission Counseling "specialized program of study" costs \$2,000 (UCB Extension, November 2012). Also referred to as a "professional program in college admission counseling," it is promoted in the course catalog (UCB Extension, Spring 2013). It is advertised as a way for individuals to "increase marketability as a school counselor" (UCB Extension, Spring 2013, p. 126). This program includes eight semester units and 120 hours of instruction (UCB Extension, Spring 2013). The two courses students take are College Admissions Advising A and College Admissions Advising B (UCB Extension, n.d.g).

University of California-Los Angeles (1990). This research on the University of California-Los Angeles (UCLA) certificate program derives from information available publicly on UCLA's 24 webpages, one syllabus, two documents, two student questionnaire responses, and 35 e-mail messages. UCLA offers a College Counseling Certificate, which has been offered online since 1998 (UCLA Extension, 2011; M. VanDyke, personal communication, June 2, 2013). The original proposal for the UCR's certificate credits UCLA's Education Extension for originating this program—indicating that it began through field testing in Summer 1990 (Hartley, 1991). The \$4,000 College Counseling Certificate, like all of the University of

California schools, is offered through the UCLA Extension. Course discounts are available for UCLA Alumni Association members, senior citizens, and UCLA staff (UCLA, 2014a). Limited information about enrollment was provided by the UCLA Extension program representative. Between Summer 2010 and 2011, 1,971 students were enrolled (M. VanDyke, personal communication, September 8, 2012). “Just as an estimate, I would say that generally 200-300 people are enrolled in the program at one time on an ongoing basis,” stated VanDyke (personal communication, June 2, 2013). To apply for admission to the certificate, there are two requirements: submission of an Application for Candidacy form and submission of a sealed official undergraduate transcript indicating proof of bachelor's degree (UCLA Extension, 2013l; UCLA Extension, n.d.a.). Earning the certificate at UCLA requires completion of 33 units: 27 units for the six primary courses which are letter graded and six units for the 65-hour practicum which is graded pass/fail (UCLA Extension, 2013l). Seven courses comprise UCLA's college counseling certificate: Counseling the College Bound Student, Using the Internet for College/Career Counseling, The College Admissions Process, Financial Aid Fundamentals, Testing/Career Assessment, Special Issues in College Counseling, and Practicum in College Counseling (UCLA Extension, 2013k). Based on 2013 courses offered at UCLA Extension, there were seven different faculty teaching the courses (UCLA Extension, 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2013e; 2013f; 2013g; 2013h; 2013i). These individuals included a high school guidance and college counselor, a college consulting business owner, an academic counselor from UC, a director of distance learning, and a program administrator (UCLA Extension, 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2013e; 2013f; 2013g; 2013h; 2013i). The UCLA Extension (2013o) website was the only university to provide a sort of disclaimer and set of descriptors about the certificate:

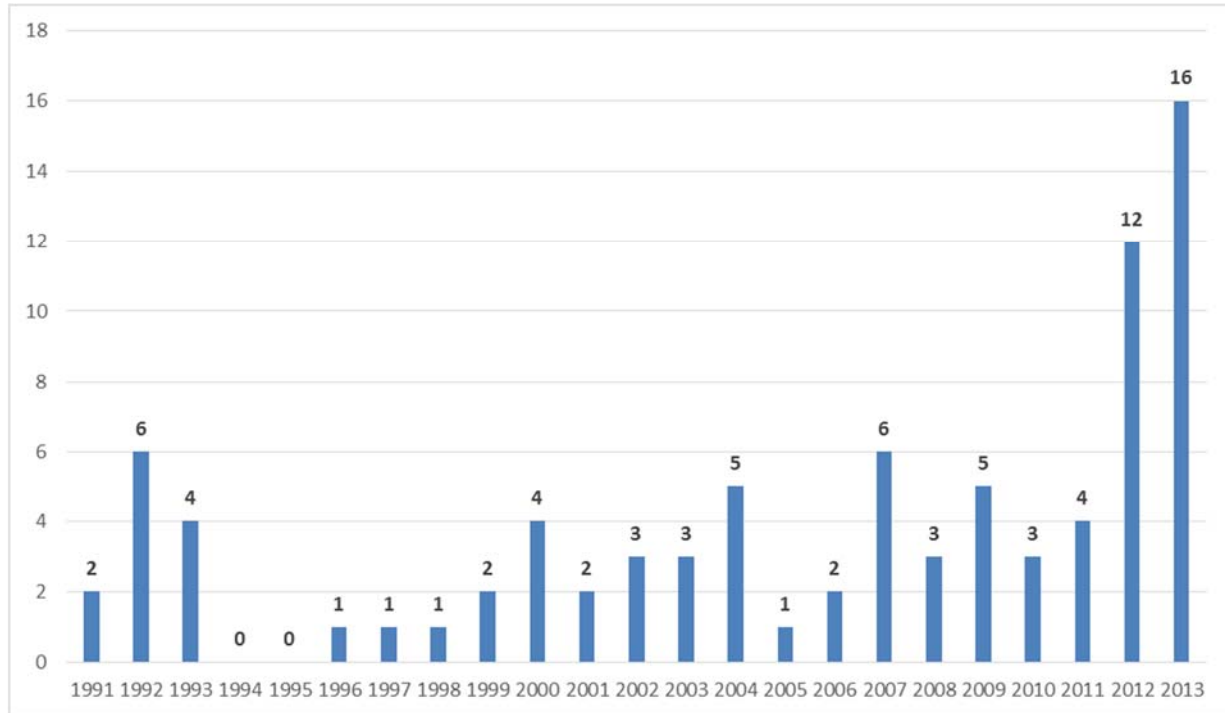
The Certificate in College Counseling signifies completion of a specialized program of courses and training in college counseling. It designates professional development in this unique field. Many schools look upon our certificate programs as a strong positive factor in hiring and offering promotions. Check with specific institutions for any degree or credential requirements they may have in addition to the College Counseling Certificate.

Note: This is not a "certification" in that it neither licenses nor certifies you to be a college counselor (n.p.).

University of California-Riverside (1991). The analysis of research site University of California-Riverside (UCR) derived from studying two proposals, five student assignments, three course syllabi, 104 e-mail messages, 18 UCR websites, eight other documents, one online questionnaire completed by the program representative, nine student online questionnaires, and five transcriptions from oral interviews with two faculty, and three program administrators (two phone, three in-person). The certificate offered at UCR is the Certificate in College Admissions Counseling and it is completely online (UCR, 2011b; UCR, n.d.a). The \$3,000 certificate was approved and launched in 1991 with the first classes offered in July of that year (M. Johnson, personal communication, April 30, 2012). The certificate is housed in the Extension division at UCR, which is a self-supporting, auxiliary enterprise and the community outreach arm of the University (UCR, 2011b; M. Decker, personal interview, April 18, 2013). UCR-Extension is the only unit within UCR that offers and awards certificates (M. Decker, personal interview, April 18, 2013). According to UCR Extension, there are 85 students who have applied to the certificate program from 1991 to 2013 (UCR, August 19, 2013). Figure 4 below shows the year in which those students applied, but have not yet completed the certificate. The date corresponds to the date they applied, which may be different than the year they started taking classes

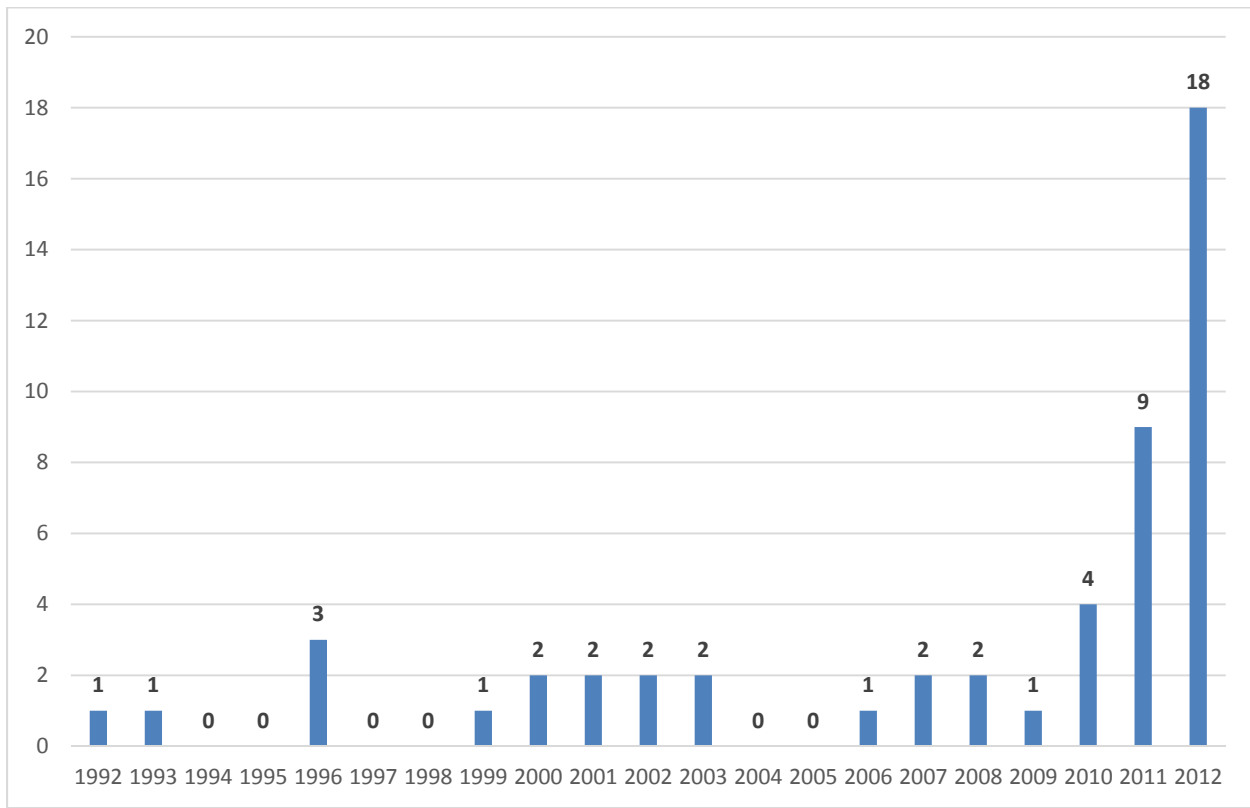
(M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). Of the students who applied in 2012 or 2013, 12 (43%) are from California, but they are also living in nine other states and South Korea (UCR, August 19, 2013).

Figure 4 UCR Student Applicants to the Certificate Program by Year



UCR also has 105 other students coded as “prospects,” of which 90% are from California (UCR, August 19, 2013). At UCR, prospects are defined as individuals who have indicated an interest in the program through the website (M. Johnson, personal communication, August 26, 2013). The first graduate to earn the certificate at UCR was in 1992 (UCR, August 19, 2013). Since then, 55 certificates have been awarded through August 2013 (UCR, August 19, 2013). Figure 5 below shows the number of certificates awarded by year.

Figure 5 UCR College Counseling Certificates Awarded



There has been growth in certificates awarded by UCR since 2010 (UCR, August 19, 2013). The largest number of certificates awarded in a given year was in 2012 with 18 certificates. Thirty five or 64% of the certificates awarded were given out from 2010 through 2013 (UCR, August 19, 2013). The 55 certificate earners were students from 12 different states and three different countries (UCR, August 19, 2013). Figure 6 below shows the distribution among those 15 locations. Sixty-four percent of the certificates were awarded to students from California (UCR, August 19, 2013).

Figure 6 UCR College Counseling Certificates Awarded by Geographic Location of the Learner

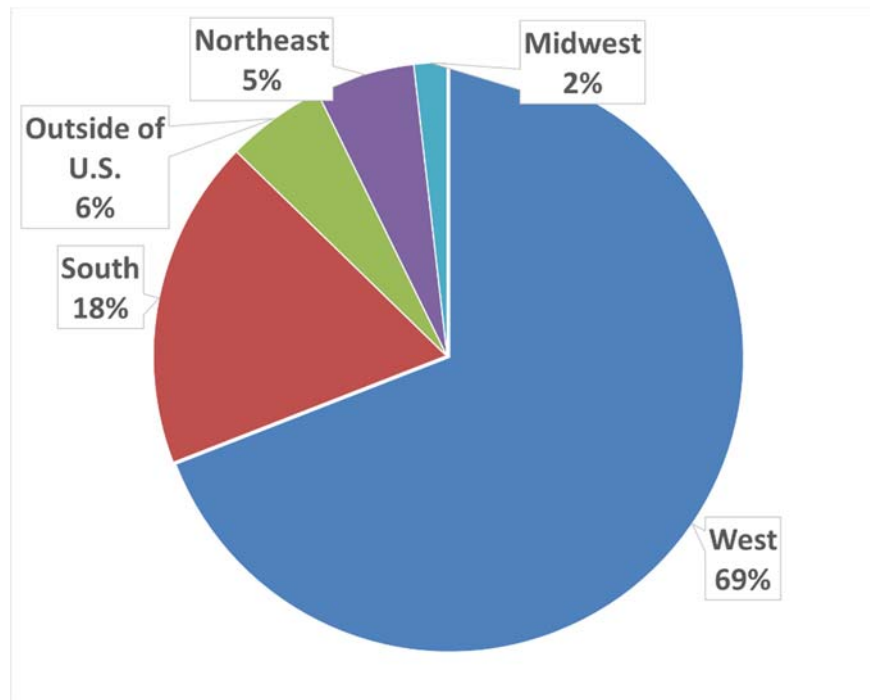


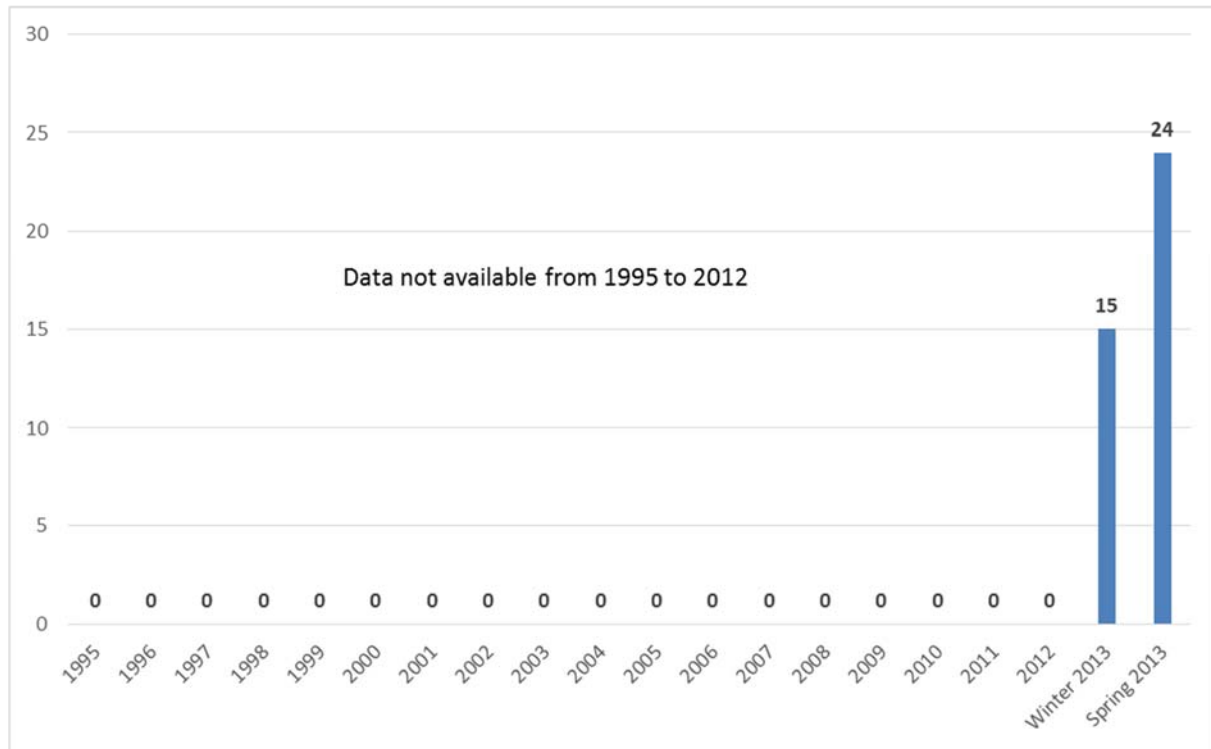
Figure 6. Included in the West are 35 certificate holders from California. States in the West region include WA, OR, CA, AK, HI, NV, AZ, NM, UT, CO, WY, ID and MT. States in the Midwest region include ND, SD, NE, KS, MN, IA, MO, WI, IL, IN, MI, OH. States in the South region include TX, OK, AR, LA, MS, AL, TN, KY, FL, GA, SC, NC, VA, WV, DC, MD and DE. States in the Northeast region include PA, NY, NJ, CT, RI, MA, VT, NH, and ME. Outside of U.S. includes Hong Kong, Malaysia, and South Korea.

The original proposal of the certificate program did not list admission requirements (Hartley, 1991). However, the 2008 revision to the certificate listed a prerequisite as “a bachelor’s degree or equivalent prior to completing the program” (Teele, 2008, n.p.). According to a UCR representative, proof of a bachelor’s degree is not required, nor is a transcript (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). The UCR representative stated that the “equivalent” is completion of 60 to 120 college credits (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). The rationale is some college with some previous work experience in a counseling environment “could be counted as equivalency towards a bachelor’s degree,” stated the UCR

representative (M. Decker, personal interview, April 18, 2013). Earning the certificate requires completion of six courses in 18 units: The College Counseling Process, College Admissions Procedures, Analysis and Application of Effective Career Counseling Strategies, Financial Aid Planning for Higher Education, Professional and Ethical Issues in the College Application Process, and Practicum in Counseling College-Bound Students (UCR, n.d.a). There are several individuals working with the UCR certificate program and they include the program manager, faculty teaching the courses, and members of an advisory board. As of 2013, five faculty were teaching in the certificate program at UCR Extension (2011b). These instructors included a director of college counseling, a college professor/business owner, a financial aid counselor, and a high school counselor (UCR Extension, 2011a; UCR Extension, 2011b; M. Frank, personal interview, April 18, 2013). The original proposal for the UCR certificate named a 20-member advisory group (Hartley, 1991). According to that proposal, “a separate advisory group was assembled at UC Riverside to help launch this program in the Riverside-San Bernardino areas, and to make this program responsive to needs of students in the Inland Empire” (Hartley, 1991). A UCR representative confirmed the advisory board still exists, but it is not current (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). Members of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) (2013a) receive a discount when enrolling in courses in the UCR certificate. This discount was launched in October, 2012 (J. Berger, personal communication, June 4, 2013). According to IECA’s website, members receive a 10% discount per class, which amounts to an approximate \$50 discount when combined with UCR’s early registration discount (IECA, 2013a; UCR Extension, 2011b). Furthermore, IECA offers a 15% discount on the practicum, which amounts to an approximate \$75 in savings. With all discounts applied, the cost for IECA members to earn the certificate is approximately \$2,600.

University of California-San Diego (1995). This case description uses seven University of California-San Diego (UCSD) websites, two printed postcards, an application packet, an information sheet, three other documents, and a transcription of an interview with a graduate of the program to describe the certificate program. The name of the \$1,640 certificate offered at UCSD-Extension is College Counseling Certificate (UCSD, 2013a). According to UCSD-Extension, “The College Counseling Certificate is designed to bring to participants the latest in college counseling techniques and to emphasize the personal dimension of working with families during one of their most crucial transitional experiences” (n.d, p. 3). The certificate is offered completely online (UCSD, Spring 2011). While the number of students enrolled in the certificate program could not be obtained from UCSD, in Winter 2013, 15 individuals earned the college counseling certificate; while in Spring 2013, 24 individuals earned the certificate (UCSD, Fall 2013; UCSD, Winter 2014). Figure 7 visually shows UCSD’s graduates, based on data available online.

Figure 7 UCSD Certificate Graduates



Unlike some of the other certificate program admissions processes, there is some level of selectivity at UCSD based on this statement: “Submission of a completed application does not imply automatic acceptance into the program” (UCSD, n.d.a, p. 3). At least a bachelor’s degree is required for admission to this certificate program (UCSD, n.d.a). To apply for admission to the certificate program, students must submit four items: \$60 non-refundable application fee, signed application form, statement of intent, and verification of bachelor’s degree or higher (UCSD, n.d.a). The Statement of Intent is a one-page essay that explains the applicant’s reasons for pursuing the certificate and “how it may be relevant and applicable to your goals as an educator” (UCSD, n.d.a, p. 3). Students pursuing this certificate complete three courses: Principles of College Counseling, College Counseling Strategies, and College Counseling Practicum (UCSD, n.d.a.). Faculty information was obtained based on courses being offered in

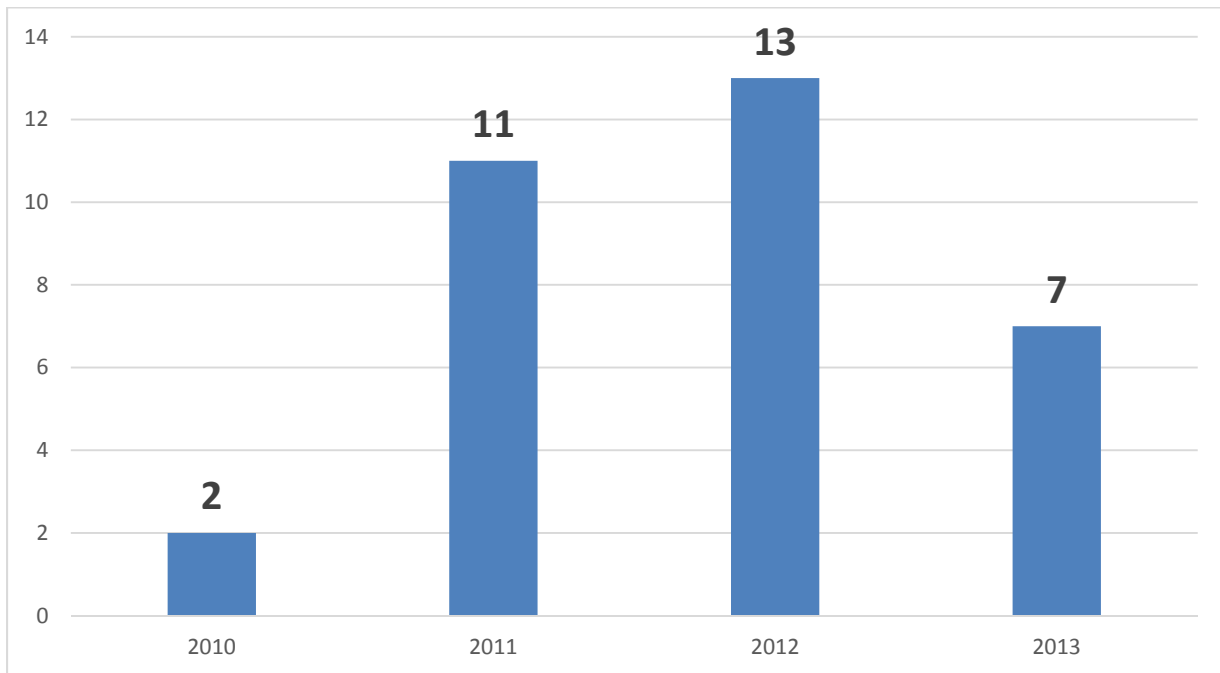
the Fall 2013 semester. It appears that there are only two faculty members who teach the three courses in the certificate program. One instructor is a school counselor; the other instructor runs a private college counseling practice (UCSD, 2013d; UCSD, 2013e). UCSD's program has a six-member advisory board (UCSD, 2013b). Four of the advisory board members work as directors of college counseling, one is a college vice president, and one works at UCSD in early academic outreach (UCSD, 2013b).

University of California-Davis (2007). An interview with a representative from UCR revealed that at one point the University of California-Davis (UCD) Extension offered a similar college admission counseling certificate as an in-person certificate (M. Watson, personal communication, October 28, 2013). The information for this case derived from two documents, four websites, and four e-mail messages. It was confirmed that this program at UCD was first offered in 2007 and was discontinued in 2011 (M. Watson, personal communication, May 28, 2013; M. Dixon, personal communication, May 15, 2013). In 2013, a program representative at UCD Extension stated that UCD Extension is "currently exploring the opportunity to schedule this [college admissions course] as a course for international counselors and advisors who work with students from outside the U.S. and are interested in applying for U.S. universities" (M. Watson, personal communication, May 16, 2013). The UCD certificate was a five-course, 15-quarter unit credential inclusive of these courses: College Admissions Advising A, Understanding Financial Aid, College Admissions Advising B, Tools for the College Counselor, and College Counseling/Career Planning Practicum (UCD, n.d.a). The certificate program was offered in a cohort format, with a new cohort beginning every winter quarter (UCD, n.d.a).

Suffolk University (2009). The analysis of research site Suffolk University (Suffolk) derived from studying seven syllabi, one online questionnaire from the program director, 32

e-mail messages, two proposals, four other documents, 18 Suffolk University websites, and three transcriptions from oral interviews with faculty (one phone, two in-person). Suffolk is a private university located in Boston, Massachusetts. The nearly \$18,000 certificate offered at Suffolk University is the Certificate in College Admission Counseling (Suffolk, 2012a). The certificate is primarily earned in-person in Boston, with one course being offered online (T. Poynton, personal communication, March 29, 2013). Suffolk's (2013b) program is a post-master's degree program, with an option of completing it simultaneously with the master's degree in school counseling at Suffolk. Suffolk began this program in Summer 2009 (T. Poynton, personal communication, March 29, 2013). Program founder and director Timothy Poynton was the only program representative to describe the philosophy of the certificate program: "I view the college counseling process as developmental counseling," Poynton stated (personal interview, March 29, 2013). Because of this philosophical orientation, Suffolk requires the completion of a master's degree in counseling prior to (or during) enrollment in the program to ensure exposure to this type of approach. Poynton mentioned that this requirement sometimes draws criticism from private college counselors who do not possess that master's degree, and therefore, cannot enroll in the certificate program (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). Suffolk has enrolled on average eight students annually in the certificate program (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). Suffolk graduated its first two students with the certificate in 2010. Figure 8 below shows how many students have graduated in each year. Of the 33 certificates conferred, only one has been issued as a standalone certificate (T. Poynton, personal interview, June 11, 2013).

Figure 8 Suffolk University Graduates



(T. Poynton, Personal Interview, June 11, 2013)

Students at Suffolk University have the opportunity to earn the certificate as a stand-alone certificate or in conjunction with a master's degree in school counseling (Suffolk, 2008a). According to Poynton, "we have almost everybody completing the combined option with the master's degree because our tuition is just too expensive for practitioners" (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). To apply for admission to the stand-alone certificate, candidates must have a master's degree in counseling, social work, or a closely-related field from an accredited academic institution (Suffolk University, 2013c). Other closely-related fields include human services, counseling psychology, student affairs, and social work, according to Poynton (personal interview, March 29, 2013). Essentially, Poynton is seeking the acquisition of knowledge and skill in counseling (personal interview, March 29, 2013). A master's degree in higher education with counseling courses and a practicum requiring counseling work in an appropriate setting would also qualify a student for admission (T. Poynton, personal interview,

March 29, 2013). To earn the certificate at Suffolk, students must earn 18 credit hours among the set of proscribed courses (Suffolk, 2008a). For students pursuing the certificate with the master's degree, it is only an additional 12 credit hours, as six credit hours can double count for both programs, which is standard among other combined programs at Suffolk (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013; T. Poynton, personal communication, December 31, 2013). To earn the certificate, students enrolled at Suffolk are required to complete six courses, four of which are required and two are electives (Suffolk University, 2012, November 9). The titles of the required courses are: Psychology of Career Development, College Admission Counseling Fundamentals, Fieldwork: College Visits, as well as Access and Equity in Higher Education (Suffolk University, 2012, November 9). The listed electives are: Junior/Community College, The American College/University Student, College and University Cultures, and Counseling Diverse Populations (Suffolk University, 2012, November 9). The courses at Suffolk are offered in hybrid format, but primarily are in-person (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). The Fieldwork: College Visits course is 100% online. The Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling course was offered online for the first three years, but made the transition to face-to-face in 2013 (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). The Access and Equity course is a face-to-face course (McDowell, 2012). Only one full-time faculty member teaches the core classes in the certificate program at Suffolk and that is Poynton. Otherwise, Poynton relies on adjunct faculty members to teach. Poynton selected NACAC leader Bardwell to initially teach the College Admission Counseling Fundamentals course because he knew Bardwell had developed this course elsewhere (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). Bardwell first taught this course at Springfield College in 2003 as a summer weeklong institute (R. Bardwell, personal communication, June 9, 2013). The Suffolk course was actually a third

generation course Bardwell developed as he also taught that same course prior to Suffolk at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 2006 (R. Bardwell, personal communication, June 9, 2013). The Access and Equity course is taught by the Director of the Access and Opportunity Office at Suffolk, Dr. Keren Zuniga McDowell (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013).

Eastern Michigan University (2010). This case is written based on the transcription of one in-person interview and information located in print and online about Eastern Michigan University's (EMU) program, along with the online questionnaire. This included 10 documents, six websites, and six e-mail messages. According to the EMU representative, the program, as of February 2013 was temporarily shelved, not dissolved due to low enrollment (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). The certificate offered at EMU is titled Postsecondary Planning Specialist Certificate and is offered completely online (EMU, 2013a). This title of "postsecondary planning specialist" was chosen over "college counseling" because there was a belief that "college counseling" is limited and only refers to four-year colleges or universities and excludes all other postsecondary options like trade schools, community colleges, and the military (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). In addition, there was an indication that "postsecondary education" follows the common references to "elementary education" and "secondary education" and becomes the phase following secondary education (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). The purpose of the certificate at EMU is to assist professionals "present high school students with a lot of choice and understanding of their choices, assistance in making those choices, and then achieving their goals" (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). The certificate program at EMU was launched in 2010. The

EMU certificate is 13 credit hours (EMU, n.d.). The six required courses are: The School Counselor, Postsecondary Planning for School Counselors, Educational Development Plans and Career Development in Schools, College Exploration Resources and Application Management for School Counselors, Financial Aid Foundations for School Counselors, and Postsecondary Planning with Families and Special Populations (EMU EPEO, Winter 2011a). Using EMU's online tuition calculator based on Fall 2013 tuition rates to calculate the cost of the certificate, the approximate total is \$7,250 for Michigan in-state tuition and fees (EMU, Fall 2013b). For out-of-state students, the cost for tuition and fees for the 13 credit hours is approximately \$13,000 (EMU, Fall 2013b). Because only three of the courses have been offered of the required six, there are no students who have completed all of the courses. Therefore, there have yet to be any graduates who have earned the certificate at EMU. For admission to the program, students must have: a master's degree in school counseling from a regionally-accredited college or university, a credential as a school counselor (an NT endorsement in Michigan or a School Counseling License), at least a 3.3 graduate grade point average, as well as write a one-page statement of intent and a one-page resume (EMU, 2012, March 13; EMU College of Education, September 2011). Faculty who teach in the certificate program were identified through multiple means: faculty at EMU, professional contacts, and recommendations provided to the program representative (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). EMU is also relying on adjunct faculty members to teach some courses (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). When asked if there was a preference to use EMU's faculty to teach versus professionals in the field, an EMU representative responded with, "We really wanted to go out into people doing this on an everyday basis...our hope was to have this done by practitioners in the field" (M. Wood, February 7, 2013). According to EMU, the program is intended for "individuals who already

have, or are working toward, a master's in school counseling and who want to gain additional expertise in helping students plan for postsecondary education and career opportunities" (EMU, n.d., n.p.).

Hamline University (2011). The data documenting Hamline University's (Hamline) program derives from an online questionnaire completed by the program director, 10 Hamline University websites, graduate catalog, 15 e-mail messages, and the transcription from one telephone interview. The \$4,400 certificate offered at Hamline University in Saint Paul, Minnesota is a Certificate in College Admission Counseling and is offered entirely online (Hamline, 2011; Hamline, 2013). The certificate program began in Spring 2011 (M. Jackson, personal communication, August 6, 2012). Jackson stated that 22 students were enrolled in Summer 2012 (personal communication, August 6, 2012). In the Spring 2013 semester, Jackson indicated that all courses that semester had 15 students enrolled in them. As of February 8, 2013, Jackson disclosed that 10 students had graduated with this certificate from Hamline. According to Hamline's information about the certificate program, there are no admission requirements to enroll in the certificate program. Registration in a course requires completion of a "Professional Development for Educators Registration Form" (Hamline University School of Education, 2013). This form requests disclosure of educational background, inclusive of college/university attended, years of attendance, and degree earned (Hamline, 2010). According to the Hamline University School of Education Summer 2013 catalog of "Professional Development for Educators," registration in the college admission counseling certificate courses are available for "school staff members (teachers, counselors, etc.) and other professionals" and a bachelor's degree is required (Hamline University School of Education, 2013, p. 20). No specific minimum grade point average earned with the bachelor's degree is listed. However, a program coordinator

from the Hamline School of Education confirmed in an e-mail message that there are no admission requirements. Therefore, there is a conflict of admission information presented by Hamline. According to Hamline University's Graduate Catalog, the certificate is comprised of 16 credits within five required courses: Counseling College Bound Students, College Admission Process, Career Development and Assessment, Special Populations in College Counseling, and the Practicum in College Counseling (Hamline, 2011). "This online program is designed to prepare any professional for counseling high school students with post-secondary planning and the admission process," according to Hamline's semester catalog (Hamline University School of Education, Summer 2013, p. 4). Since the program was started, one single faculty member teaches all of the courses (M. Jackson, personal communication, April 1, 2013).

Summary of the cases. While these certificate programs were all created to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge about searching for, applying to, and enrolling in college, they differ in many aspects and yet are similar in their structure. The cost to complete the certificates ranges significantly, from a few thousand dollars to nearly \$20,000. UCB's two-course award of completion is a unique variation of the certificate; while UCR and UCLA are the only programs that offer the IECA-member discount. The number of courses required to complete the certificate range from three to seven courses. Only one program (Hamline) appears to be truly open admission while the remaining programs required specific admission requirements for entrance. Faculty teaching the certificate courses ranged from two to eight and advisory boards exist at three of the eight programs. Advisory board membership is comprised of practitioners in the field. These certificates have been offered since 1990 and have a bifurcated history as three of the current programs began in 1990 and 1991; while the other four current programs originated from 2007 through 2011. All of the certificate programs offer an online component of

some sort, except for UCB, which is exclusively an in-person program. When UCD was open, they offered an in-person only program. Overall, there are more differences than similarities among these eight graduate certificate programs in college counseling.

Themes

In this research study, seven major themes emerged that explain the design and composition of these graduate certificate programs. This section presents those seven themes using cross-case synthesis and addresses some of the concepts within the sub-research questions.

Theme 1. Conceptually and operationally, two different types of college counseling certificate programs have emerged in the United States. In collecting data about all eight college counseling graduate certificate programs that were discovered, two different categories of programs have developed: post bachelor's and post master's. A post bachelor's program offers a certificate earned after having received a bachelor's degree; whereas a post master's program certificate is obtained after having received (or in process of simultaneously earning) a master's degree. Of the eight programs, six can be classified as post bachelor's programs and those exist at UCB, UCLA, UCD, UCR, UCSD, and Hamline. The two post master's programs are at EMU and Suffolk. These two categories impact multiple aspects of how the programs are offered and organized. These aspects include the academic location with the college or university, the admission requirements for entry, the intentions of the program, and the philosophy of college counseling.

Academic location. As has already been disclosed, the five University of California programs, home of the post bachelor's programs, are or have been located in the University's Extension operation. The Extensions serve a continuing education function. While Extensions grant the credential certificate (the only part of the University of California system where

certificates can/are granted), they are not part of a traditional academic college or academic department. The other post bachelor's program is at Hamline University, whose program was influenced by the UCLA program since the program founder is a UCLA certificate holder (M. Jackson, personal communication, April 1, 2012). While it publicly appears (via the University's website) within the School of Education at Hamline University, the certificate is a part of the School's continuing education offerings and is referenced as professional development (Hamline, 2010). Meanwhile, the two post master's programs are housed in academic departments and academic colleges. The certificate at Suffolk, officially entitled Post-Master's Certificate in College Admission Counseling, is the only certificate program of the eight studied that uses "post-master's" in its title. Suffolk's program is housed in the Department of Psychology within its College of Arts and Sciences. Eastern Michigan University's certificate is housed in the Department of Leadership and Counseling within its College of Education. However, the EMU certificate, while housed in an academic college, is marketed through the Office of Extended Programs and Educational Outreach, which is the professional development arm of EMU. As has been demonstrated, programs can operate in either model: academic college or extension operation.

Admission requirements. The categorization of programs into these two types (post bachelor's and post master's) correlates to the admission requirements for the certificate programs. First, the post-bachelor programs will be discussed. For example, UCB and UCR require a minimum of a bachelor's degree or equivalent at an accredited institution. According to a UCR representative, proof of a bachelor's degree is not required, nor is a transcript (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). The UCR representative stated that the "equivalent" is completion of 60 to 120 college credits (M. Johnson, personal interview, April

18, 2013). The rationale is that some college coursework with some previous work experience in a counseling environment “could be counted as equivalency towards a bachelor’s degree,” stated the UCR representative (M. Johnson, personal interview, April 18, 2013). UCR is the only school with a stated minimum 3.0 grade point average in all upper-division undergraduate coursework for admission. UCSD has the most extensive requirements for admission. These requirements include a \$60 application fee, application form, statement of intent, and verification of a bachelor’s degree. The UCSD eight-page “application and guidelines” packet explicitly states that “a completed application must be on file before enrolling in the core courses” (UCSD Extension, n.d.). Some of the other UC programs permit enrollment in courses before submission of an admission application and admission review. The information about the UCD program did not list admission requirements. The UCLA program does not list admission requirements. However, submission of an official transcript indicating proof of bachelor's degree is required preferably during the first course at UCLA (UCLA, 2011). Enrollment at UCLA (2011) begins with the submission of the Application for Candidacy Form. According to the Hamline University School of Education Summer 2013 catalog of “Professional Development for Educators,” registration in the college admission counseling certificate courses requires a bachelor’s degree, with no stated, specific minimum grade point average required (Hamline University School of Education, 2013, p. 20). The admission requirements of the post bachelor’s programs vary greatly from program to program—from no stated requirements to extensive steps to apply.

Both the EMU and Suffolk programs, which are post master’s programs, require a master’s degree. Suffolk requires a master’s degree in counseling, social work, or a closely-related field from an accredited academic institution (Suffolk, 2013c). Other closely-related

fields include human services, counseling psychology, student affairs, and social work, according to Poynton (personal interview, March 29, 2013). Poynton is seeking the acquisition of knowledge and skill in counseling (personal interview, March 29, 2013). A master's degree in higher education with counseling courses and a practicum completing counseling work in an appropriate setting would also qualify a student for admission, per Poynton (personal interview, March 29, 2013). There is no stated grade point average requirement for admission into Suffolk's certificate program (Suffolk, 2013c). EMU's certificate program has four stated admission requirements: master's degree in school counseling from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, minimum graduate grade point average of at least a 3.3, school counselor credential, and a one-page statement of intent (EMU, 2010). The post master's programs state very specific admission requirements, ranging from the type of degree to credentials and academic performance.

Intentions of the programs. Intentions of the programs are associated with their categorization. The two primary intentions are to supplement counseling skills or to start a business. Supplementing counseling skills are the goals of the two post-master's degree programs. For example, this concept is embedded in the title of the certificate at EMU: Postsecondary Planning Specialist Certificate. The notion of becoming a "specialist" connotes augmenting the master's degree with focused knowledge in college counseling and postsecondary planning. In the description of its certificate, EMU states the program is "designed specifically for school counselors who want to specialize in helping students identify and achieve postsecondary educational options of interest to them" (EMU EPEO, 2011, Winter a). The EMU materials about the program do not reference anything about using the certificate to launch or maintain a private college counseling practice. Similarly, the other post master's

degree program, at Suffolk, is designed to provide “advanced preparation in facets of college admission counseling” (Suffolk, 2013c). Like EMU’s program, Suffolk’s program is not intended for business start-ups. Poynton emphasized that the program at Suffolk is not designed to help individuals start their own college counseling practice (personal interview, June 11, 2013). Poynton stated, “I didn’t want to get into the business of credentialing private college counselors” (personal interview, June 11, 2013). Five of the six post bachelor’s programs are targeted for individuals interested in starting their own business, based on data collected from each school’s website. UCSD (2013b) is the only program that did not publicly state that the program was targeted for individuals interested in starting their own business.

Philosophy of college counseling. The intentions of the program, the admission requirements, and the academic location all originated from one of two types of philosophies of college counseling. One philosophy is that college counseling is transactional counseling, also commonly referred to as the “nuts and bolts” of college counseling. Counselors trained in college counseling are helping students with a variety of transactions: conducting a college search, visiting a college campus, applying for college, applying for admission, applying for financial aid, and paying an enrollment deposit, for example. All of the post bachelor’s programs are primarily focused on transactional counseling. Another philosophy is that college counseling is developmental counseling. Developmental counseling, as Poynton describes it, is “helping people through ‘normal’ life transitions, and with that comes opportunities to develop skills for future transitions” (personal communication, December 22, 2013). Poynton cited the book, *Ready, Willing, and Able: A Developmental Approach to College Access and Success*, by Savitz-Romer and Bouffard, in discussing this developmental approach (personal communication, December 22, 2013). According to the book’s amazon.com entry, those

developmental topics are “identity development, articulating aspirations and expectations, forming and maintaining strong peer and adult relationships, motivation and goal-setting, and self-regulatory skills, such as planning” (Amazon.com, 2013c). Developmental counseling is the primary philosophy at Suffolk. “I view the college counseling process as developmental counseling,” Poynton stated (personal interview, March 29, 2013). “You’re helping people cross a developmental milestone and that requires counseling and counseling skills,” stated Poynton (personal interview, March 29, 2013). That developmental milestone is the rite of passage of graduating from high school to a student’s postsecondary plans. As a result of this philosophy, Poynton requires the master’s degree in counseling prior to enrolling in the program to ensure exposure to this type of approach. Poynton mentioned that this approach sometimes draws criticism from private college counselors who do not possess that master’s degree, and therefore, cannot enroll in the certificate program (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). Poynton is aware that this philosophy and this requirement differentiates the certificate program at Suffolk (personal interview, March 29, 2013). Transactional and developmental counseling influence the approach taken with regard to college access, college readiness, and college choice. Transactional college counseling is more likely to focus on steps to expand access for specific college-bound populations, help students become ready to enroll in college, and guide students on college choice using specific criteria relevant to the student. Developmental counseling is more likely to work with college-bound students to discuss their intentions for the pursuit of college, facilitate the creation of a college-going culture for that student, and teach that student to self-manage the steps for enrollment.

While EMU’s certificate is a post master’s program that fits the developmental counseling model, it lives in its own category by its nature. The certificate program at EMU

emphasizes planning, which is congruent with transactional counseling because planning typically includes a series of transactions. However, while not specifically stated, developmental counseling is embedded within EMU's program. The purpose of the certificate at EMU, according to the EMU program representative, is to "present high school students with a lot of choice and understanding of their choices, assistance in making those choices, and then achieving their goals" (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). According to EMU (n.d.), postsecondary planning is defined as planning for enrollment in traditional colleges/universities, community colleges, career colleges, trade schools, apprenticeships, and the military. Because choices can be influenced by developmental counseling, the EMU certificate program could be considered a hybrid of transactional and developmental counseling. Facilitating the college choice process appears to be an emphasis of the EMU program, based on the EMU representative's explanation.

Summary. Two distinct types of graduate certificate programs in college counseling exist in the United States: post-bachelor's (six programs) and post master's (two programs). Comprising this differentiation affects and emerges from the academic locations, admission requirements, intentions, and philosophies of the programs. Academic locations vary between an academic college (post master's) and extension operations (post bachelor's). Admission requirements, typically degree requirements, for entrance into the programs differ based on the type of certificate program. Supplementing counseling skills or starting a business are the two primary intentions of these certificate programs. The difference between transactional college counseling and developmental college counseling were discussed in the context of program type. All of these elements play a role in how college access, college readiness, and college choice are approached.

Theme 2. All certificate programs are operating independently with neither national affiliation, nor connection to a specifically-correlating accrediting body, and are only loosely tied to professional associations. Among the eight certificate programs that have existed in the four U.S. states, 100% of them have existed solely within the structure of their hosting universities. In the 25 years that these programs have been offered, they are operating independently with no outside organization monitoring the curriculum, offering specific accreditation, nor assessing whether these programs are meeting the college access and college readiness needs in the United States.

The UC certificate programs lack consistency in many aspects. For example, there are four different names for the certificates: College Admissions and Career Planning certificate at UCB, College Admission Counseling and Career Planning at UCD, College Counseling at UCLA and UCSD, and College Admissions Counseling at UCR. The number of credits/units required to complete the certificate also ranges from a low of 12 at UCSD to a high of 33 at UCLA. Similarly, the number of courses required to earn the certificate ranges from a low of three at UCSD to a high of seven as UCLA. The three programs offered at UCLA, UCR and UCSD are all online only programs whereas UCB is and UCD was an in-person only program. UCR and UCLA are the only programs that offer a discount for IECA members. UCLA is the only UC program to offer a special designation for high academic achievers. At UCLA, a certificate designation is available based on earning a minimum grade point average. According to the certificate website, “students who complete their curriculum with an earned GPA of 3.5 or higher will have the notation ‘earned with distinction’ posted to their transcript and printed on their certificates” (UCLA Extension, 2013k). At this time, the value of that designation is not known. Among the four active UC programs, there are three different course prefixes used:

EDP at UCB, EDUC X at UCLA and UCR, and EDUC at UCSD. These variations demonstrate a lack of coordination within the UC system.

Lack of a national affiliation. At this time, there is no national affiliation among all current certificate programs. For example, there is not a single organization that unites the programs for the purposes of sharing best practices, comparing content in curriculum, and discussing professional standards. It was made clear during this research study that the existence of all other programs was not known among the current certificate programs. A master directory or registry of all current programs does not exist—neither nationally nor even within the state of California. All programs operate autonomously and independently with no interconnectedness, other than the referrals that were revealed when UCD encouraged students to enroll at UCR when UCD was closing its certificate program.

Loosely tied to professional associations. Despite the lack of a single, national affiliation among the certificate programs, some of the certificate programs are strategically linked to a national professional association, one program makes reference to various admissions-related organizations, and one program references an accreditation. Two of the programs are affiliated with the national professional association, IECA. Since October 2012, members of IECA have received a tuition discount when pursuing the certificate offered at UCLA or UCR (J. Berger, personal communication, June 4, 2013). According to IECA's website, members receive a 10% discount per class and a 15% discount on the practicum (15% discount only offered at UCR) (IECA, 2013a; UCR, 2011b). The IECA discount is not only offered to certificate pursuers at UCLA and UCR, but also for the University of California-Irvine certificate program in Independent Educational Consulting, which was not included in this study (IECA, 2013a). The IECA discount is offered as a financial incentive to enroll.

UCB's program is the only one to formally list connections to regional and national professional associations. The primary website for the UCB certificate references five professional organizations in which it "meets the advising standards" and "utilizes information from these organizations" (UCB, n.d.a, n.p.). The organizations listed include NACAC, the California Association of School Counselors (CASC), Higher Education Consultants Association (HECA), IECA, and the Western Association for College Admissions Counseling (WACAC) (UCB Extension, n.d.a). Because UCB did not respond to requests to participate in this study, how the standards and information from these organizations have been incorporated into the UCB program are unknown. The UCB website provides links to the five aforementioned association websites, but not to specific information about the standards.

The two post master's programs vary in their presentation of affiliations. EMU's certificate program fact sheet promotes that the EMU College of Education is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (EMU, 2012, March 13). It also states that the College is approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). What is not specifically stated is that if that accreditation and MDE approval applies to the Postsecondary Planning Specialist Certificate Program. Suffolk's materials, both print and online, do not make any references to accrediting agencies nor affiliations with other organizations.

Summary. Altogether, these autonomous programs have not been evaluated nor validated by a third party. All of them operate independent of each other. As a result, there is no external assessment of the curriculum, no specific accreditation monitoring for common standards, nor an evaluation that these programs are meeting the college access and college readiness needs in the United States. Some programs are loosely-affiliated to some relevant professional and accrediting organizations, but that value and intersection is currently unknown.

Theme 3. Practicums in the certificate programs are prevalent, but differ greatly in format and expectations. Of the eight certificate programs studied, six or 75% include a practicum as a course and certificate completion requirement. Appendix G lists the practicum titles at the six universities. The practicum is typically the capstone course in the sequence. These practicums are designed to facilitate the application of knowledge with college-bound students. Among the six practicums, I observed differences in how the practicums were formatted and offered, along with differences in expectations to complete them.

Differences in format. The differences in format focused on outputs, online components, and program specific elements. Outputs are the elements that result from the work within the practicum. Online components describe the parts of the coursework that are done through the use of technology and websites. Program specific elements refer to attributes unique to certain certificate programs.

Outputs. The most common output in the practicum was fieldwork with direct practice or service to a college-bound student. This “adopt-a-student” approach provides one-on-one college counseling. The Hamline University practicum course description emphasizes that it assists in the acquisition of knowledge and resources in order to “advise students, families, and re-entry adults seeking financial support for a range of postsecondary pursuits” (Hamline, n.d.a, n.p.). Embedded in this description are the concepts of college readiness (advise) and college choice (range of postsecondary pursuits). However, this description is also narrowly focused on the financial aspect of the process. Meanwhile, UCR refers to this fieldwork as a case study. An instructor of UCR’s practicum course stated:

The practicum class—this is where a student is required to find a candidate and actually practice the entire counseling process on that single student....they write a full report of

what that family should and the student should consider for future college training

(M. Frank, personal interview, April 18, 2013).

What results from the UCR practicum is a case study, which is a “college planning guide” that could be delivered to a college-bound student to help him/her enroll in college. I reviewed three “College Planning Guides” which were 20-page personalized reports for particular students (UCR, 2012 August a; UCR, 2012 August b; UCR Extension Student, n.d.). All three of these reports contained aspects of college access, college readiness, and college choice. For example, one of these 20-page reports offered a student a set of “colleges of choice” that incorporated a dream list, a stretch list, and a safety list (UCR Extension Student, n.d.). Another example included a multi-page student profile that encapsulated a student’s readiness for college by presenting information about the student’s test scores, career aspirations, and academic preparation, to name a few (UCR, 2012 August b). The third sample of these guides included a four-page overview of colleges to consider, with data provided about the “admission possibility,” which connects to the accessibility of those schools (UCR, 2012 August a). UCR’s model of this case study approach with the output of a college planning guide is one way the practicum is fulfilling its intention.

The remaining UC schools vary in how the practicum is administered. UCLA requires counseling one-on-one or in a group setting (UCLA, 2013l; UCLA, 2013m). According to UCLA (2013l), “The practicum provides an opportunity for the certificate candidate to apply theory and methodology in a genuine counseling situation under professional supervision” (n.p.). UCLA permits its students to use a current job counseling students as a practicum site, according to the UCLA certificate program frequently asked questions (FAQ). UCB also has a requirement of working with high school students planning to pursue a postsecondary education – either in a

high school setting or non-profit organization (UCB, n.d.u). UCB (2010) students use a list of approved fieldwork locations provided by the Extension. UCB was the only school to offer the fieldwork beyond the high school setting. When UCD was open, the requirement was five hours each with a traditional student, a non-traditional student, and an underrepresented student (UCD, n.d.a). UCD was the only university to specify categories of students. UCD's model is in support of college access, especially with its inclusion and focus on underrepresented and non-traditional students. At UCSD, the practicum requires a final project instead of fieldwork as an output. According to an instructor of the UCSD practicum:

Projects are meant to be highly individualized to your interests, goals, and practical circumstances. The project should tackle a college counseling issue that is meaningful to you and your work and does require substantive amount of time and critical thinking throughout the class, and should result in something that serves as evidence of your work (M. Schafer, personal communication, October 29, 2013).

While such projects could involve direct counseling to students, no examples were provided by UCSD.

Online components. Three of the practicums require an online component. Hamline students participate in a 12-week online session to share practicum experiences. UCSD (n.d.) students “engage in online discussions...” (n.p.). UCLA students also “participate in the online portion of the course in which practicum experiences are shared with colleagues and reviewed by the instructor” (UCLA, 2013j, n.p.). Online components provide engagement experiences during the practicums, enabling the instructional faculty to monitor the practicum activities and provide feedback when needed.

Program specific elements. Several of the universities had unique elements in the format of their practicums. For example, when the UCD program was offered, a requirement of the practicum was to complete a one-year professional development plan that “identifies goals, objectives, activities and timelines for continuing your growth as an effective college counselor” (UCD, n.d.a, n.p.). This plan focuses on the needs of the college counselor, not the college-bound student. UCD was the only program to include career planning in its title of the practicum, primarily because career planning was included in the title of the certificate (UCD, n.d.a). These themes of college access, college readiness, and college choice were not referenced in UCD’s limited materials. The UCB practicum is the only one requiring three in-person classroom meetings throughout the semester, because the entire certificate program is offered as an in-person program with no online components. UCLA offers its practicum students a second variation of the fieldwork: complete 35 hours of fieldwork and 30 hours toward a research project within the field of college counseling (UCLA, 2013).

Differences in expectations. Differences in the expectations of the practicums ranged from the amount of logged time to the requirement of a formal proposal.

Logged time. Four of the six programs with a practicum stated a specific, minimum number of hours required for direct counseling with students. Of these four programs, the hours ranged from a low of 23 hours at UCD to a high of 65 hours at UCLA and Hamline. The UCD (n.d.a) arrangement included eight hours of observation (reflection and synthesis) and 15 hours of counseling practice. The length of the practicums vary from five to 14 weeks among five of the certificate programs, with the average being nearly 10 weeks. Typically, these hours and time period are used to give learners an opportunity, under supervision, to counsel a college-bound student – applying the knowledge gained in all courses in the certificate. Appendix G

contains a summary of the required practicum hours. During these service hours both transactional and developmental counseling can be practiced to help students in their college readiness and college choice process.

Proposal. UCLA (n.d.b) is the only known school that communicated the requirement of a formal, written proposal for the practicum. The practicum proposal requires documentation of four components: description of the counseling activities the learner expects to become involved with, the location of the practicum, the name of the supervisor, and the length of fieldwork (UCLA, n.d.b). Once the proposal is submitted electronically and then subsequently approved, then the student is able to register for the UCLA practicum course.

Summary. While the practicum is a common component in six of the eight certificate programs, the practicums vary in the manner they are offered. Outputs fluctuate among the programs and include direct counseling with students, a case study or a final project, along with online components. Variations among the practicums also include a professional development plan, in-person sessions, and a split assignment. Logged hours vary from a minimum of 23 hours to a maximum of 65 required hours.

Theme 4. A majority of the certificate programs are preparing individuals to start their own college counseling practice as a business. An earlier theme referenced that one of the two primary intentions of these certificates is to start a private business. Of the seven active or “on moratorium” programs, five or 71% of them are preparing individuals to start their own business in college counseling. Those programs are the four UC schools and the program at Hamline. The two programs that are not intended to prepare individuals for this type of work are at Suffolk and EMU (the two post master’s programs), even though graduates of the certificate from these two schools could start their own businesses after earning the certificate. These latter two

programs focus on training current and future school counselors to help them achieve optimal college counseling for students in middle and high school by offering “college counseling” training as specialized preparation. Suffolk and EMU are the only two programs that do not list in their target audiences for the program individuals who would like to start their own business.

Target audiences. In terms of target audiences, the five business-oriented programs indicated they were being offered to “those interested in developing an independent college counseling practice” (Hamline, 2011; UCR, 2011c; UCLA, 2013m; UCD, n.d.b) or “start their own businesses,” (UCB, 2010). Supporting college counseling business start-ups are part of the goals of these five certificate programs. This data was validated during several interviews I conducted. One UCR representative stated, “Some people are really successful and they are and they set up a private business because they know what they are doing” (M. Johnson, personal communication, April 18, 2013). This UCR representative cited a former UCR advisory board member who retired to run her own business (M. Johnson, personal communication, April 18, 2013). One learner in Michigan I interviewed holds the certificate credential from UCSD and runs her own college counseling consulting business in the metro Detroit area. According to this individual, “I see this certificate making someone a project manager to facilitate this complex college process” (M. Carey, personal interview, February, 1, 2013). Similarly, four learners stated that starting a private practice in college admissions counseling was the plan on how to use the certificate, based on data collected from the online questionnaire. One individual stated, “I hope to use this certificate to become a private admissions counselor in the future.” Some of this thinking can also be influenced by the instructors who also have their own private businesses and do college consulting. For example, an instructor at UCLA also serves as president of her own consulting business and the program founder at Hamline is an educational consultant for College

Connections Plus (UCLA Extension, 2013d; Hamline University School of Education, 2013).

An UCB graduate is cited in marketing materials as stating, “The program and fieldwork gave me the vision and enthusiasm to start my own business as a college admissions adviser...”

(UCB, 2010, p.2). Even the course descriptions allude to the notion of the certificate as

facilitating a private business. For example, at Hamline, the descriptions refer to

“students/clients,” an indication of its intention to help graduates of the certificate start their own business because of the inclusion of the word “clients.” These certificate programs are targeted at and are producing graduates who can start their own college counseling business.

Affiliation supports private counseling. The affiliation that UCR and UCLA have with IECA also supports this notion of private college counseling businesses. IECA (2013c) is “the professional organization for independent educational consultants working in private practice” (n.p.). IECA offers enrollees in the UCR and UCLA programs a tuition discount. And the college counseling certificate qualifies an individual to become an associate member of IECA (UCB, n.d.a). According to the IECA (2013b) website, associate membership is designed for individuals who are “new to the field of independent educational consulting, who expect to meet membership requirements within two years, or those who are transitioning into the field of independent consulting from a school or institutional position” (n.p.). One of the associate membership requirements includes at least one year experience in “educational placement counseling or admissions” or completion of IECA’s (2013b) summer institute, a University of California college counseling certificate, or the University of California-Irvine Independent Educational Consultant Certificate Program (n.p.).

Summary. Five of the certificate programs are specifically designed to help graduates start their own college counseling business. The affiliation with IECA affirms this notion as

IECA's focus is on individuals who work in private practice. The post-master's programs are the two active programs that specifically state they are not intended for individuals who want to start their own business.

Theme 5. The readings used among the courses in the certificate programs are varied except for a reliance on one single textbook. Among the 17 certificate courses in which textbook information was available, 20 different texts are being used. I categorized them into four types: "how to" guides, narratives, homegrown texts, and hybrid texts. These categories emerged from terms and phrases used in the book titles and descriptions. Mutually-exclusive descriptive codes that became those categories were created using the course titles, descriptions from websites, and interviews that discussed the textbooks. The "how to" guides were the most frequent type of text to appear and refer to material that offer tips and advice on how to get into college. These "how to guides" align with the transactional or "nuts and bolts" nature of college counseling. These guides emphasize the college readiness aspect by describing the steps to enroll in college. Narratives refer to commentaries on specific topics, which ranged from access to college to the college admissions process. Homegrown texts were materials developed in-house at a particular school and used exclusively at that location. Hybrid texts were those readings that referenced both the "how to" practical content as well as some theory.

"How to" guides. I recorded 11 different "how to" guides being used in five courses among three different certificate programs. Some of these readings were focused on finding the right college fit, such as the *College Finder* book used at UCSD and UCR or the *College Match* text used at UCLA. At both of those schools, the *Fiske Guide to Colleges* was also used. *Colleges That Change Lives* text is used in UCLA's College Admissions Process course (UCLA, 2013d). This book profiles 40 colleges and provides commentary on the unique attributes of

these schools in a category created by the book's author. This publication is serving as a college guide to students and their families (P. O'Connor, personal communication, December 16, 2013). Other "how to" materials honed in on specific populations. For example, UCLA's College Admissions Process course relies on *Cool Colleges: For the Hyper-Intelligent, Self-Directed, Late Blooming, and Just Plain Different* book, while UCR's College Counseling Process course incorporates *Peterson's Guide to Colleges with Programs in Learning Disabled Students*. "How to" materials published by NACAC and The College Board are also used. UCR's practicum uses The College Board's *College Counseling Sourcebook* while UCR's College Counseling Process course relies on the NACAC's *Directory of Early Decision and Early Action Plans*. UCLA also uses *Admission Matters: What Students and Parents Need to Know about Getting into College* in its College Admissions Process course. Most of these readings were from the last five years, but one, Peterson's *Counseling for College*, was published in 1995. This text is used in UCR's practicum course. These "how to" textbooks primarily support college readiness and college access. From a college readiness perspective, these aspects include finding colleges, understanding the various admission decisions (early decision/early action), and gaining admission. Readiness means having the knowledge and understanding how these elements work. In regard to college access, the readings on learning disabled students, self-directed, and late blooming students provide insight about options of which colleges are welcoming and available to students with varying degrees of talents.

Narratives. I recorded five narrative readings and all of them were used in the certificate program at Suffolk. While not related to the direct content of the course, the Fieldwork: College Visits course requires *College Unranked* as a reading. This book is a commentary on the college admissions process. The fieldwork instructor is Poynton, who described *College Unranked* as a

book “which is written mostly by people in admissions, speaking from how admissions can be improved, particularly from a higher ed perspective” (T. Poynton, personal interview, March 29, 2013). Poynton further described the text:

The book, while it is starting to get dated, it provides good ‘fodder’ for discussion, and provides students with insight from the higher ed side of admissions as most chapters are written by folks in admissions. It is a great book to facilitate online discussion, particularly for those on the high school side of admissions (personal communication, December 2, 2013).

Creating a Class: College Admissions and the Education of Elites was used as a book for UCLA’s College Admissions Process course. That book is a commentary based on one professor’s experience being a part of an admissions office for a year-and-a-half. The other three narrative texts are used in Suffolk’s Access and Equity in Higher Education course. The titles include *Equity and Excellence in American Higher Education*, *College Access: Opportunity or Privilege*, and *Increasing Access to College: Extending Possibilities for All Students*. These materials provide insights about access, equity, opportunity and the challenges facing all of those elements. They offer perspectives on the landscape of these areas to provide context for college access and college readiness.

Homegrown texts. The UCB and UCLA certificate programs use materials that are not publicly available. For example, the Financial Aid Fundamentals course at UCLA uses a “course reader solutions” text that was developed by the UCLA faculty teaching the course. Similarly, UCB uses an in-house item for its Counseling Techniques for Educators course. Because both materials require a secure log-in, I could not obtain additional information about them.

Hybrid texts. There are only two known hybrid texts used among the certificate programs. UCB's (n.d.e) Career Planning for College Admissions course uses the optional text, *Career Counseling: A Holistic Approach*, which "equips readers with a solid understanding of the theoretical models of career counseling as well as practical techniques on how to effectively counsel clients," according to the book's description on the amazon website (amazon.com, 2013b). The other hybrid text is the NACAC *Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling* textbook, which is used in at least six of the certificate programs. NACAC describes this book as "it blends theory and research with practice, ensuring that professionals assisting students and families in postsecondary planning are equipped with core knowledge as well as core skills needed to be effective practitioners" (amazon, 2013c, n.p.). These hybrid texts primarily address career readiness and college choice. UCB's (n.d.e) course and accompanying reading strives to make the connection between college readiness and career readiness. NACAC's (2012e) text devotes a chapter to college choice, presenting five models of the stages in college choice, along with framing college choice through the lenses of economics, psychology, and sociology.

Reliance on a single textbook. Of the 17 courses among the seven active and "on moratorium" certificate programs, nine, or 53%, of them use the NACAC textbook for instructional purposes. Textbooks from the UCD site could not be included since that program was discontinued and textbook information could not be obtained. NACAC refers to the book as a textbook for graduate students and practicing counselors" (NACAC, 2008a). Based on the data available in this study, there is no other textbook used as much as this single source. According to Suffolk's Poynton, "It is the best book for a course covering the 'fundamentals,' the only one I know of!" (T. Poynton, personal communication, January 14, 2014). The third edition of this textbook contains 18 topics such as: postsecondary options, standardized testing, academic

planning, the college-going culture, and financial aid, to cite a few. This textbook is used in at least one course at Suffolk, two courses at UCR, two courses at UCSD, one course at UCLA, one course at EMU, and two courses at UCB. “It's an overall highly accurate textbook for the classes and they have used it in almost all of the classes,” stated a UCR representative about the textbook’s incorporation into the courses at UCR. “*Fundamentals* is essential for those looking to understand the most salient issues in college admission practices as well as for those who are committed to improving the college going and completion rates of all students” (amazon, 2013a, n.p.). UCR instructor Chris White praised the *Fundamentals* text:

What I've appreciated about using the NACAC *Fundamentals* text is that I feel the chapters provide a comprehensive overview of the many topics that are important to college advising...Feedback from former students is that they are glad that they have this as a resource in their office - they often refer back to chapters that were assigned and read other chapters that were not” (C. White, personal communication, January 15, 2014).

Bardwell, who was involved with the recommendations to create this textbook, stated, “I find it the only text for graduate students written by practitioners that provides the nuts and bolts of college admission counseling” (R. Bardwell, personal communication, January 14, 2014).

Bardwell also stated that he has aspirations that more certificate programs and college counseling courses use the NACAC text (R. Bardwell, personal communication, January 14, 2014).

The *Fundamentals* text does not always receive support as an instructional tool. When I asked about the use of the NACAC *Fundamentals of College Admission Counseling* textbook, the representative at EMU responded by stating, “I found some of the content objectionable and inaccurate. It really should learn how school counselors are trained before it claims to tell”

(M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013). That individual further elaborated on his/her concerns by stating:

I believe that the book contains inaccurate comments about what does and does not fall within a school counselor's scope of practice. It seems that the authors attempt to explain what a school counselor's job is but that the authors don't actually know" (M. Wood, personal communication, December 16, 2013).

However, despite that perspective, that individual selectively uses chapters of the NACAC text in his/her class, including the chapter on community colleges (M. Wood, personal interview, February 7, 2013).

Overall, the NACAC text covers the aspects of college access, college readiness, and college choice. College access and college readiness are intricately addressed through its chapter on "empowering multiple identities in college readiness and admission" (NACAC, 2012e). That particular chapter focuses on advocacy and equity of all types of underrepresented populations in higher education, while simultaneously showcasing organizations that are striving to improve college readiness (NACAC, 2012e). The chapter dedicated to college choice outlines the timing of college choice, specifically outlining how to facilitate the college choice process in grades nine, 10, 11, and 12 (NACAC, 2012e). The theme of college readiness is embedded in chapters about creating college-going culture and the chapter that discusses the importance and role of partnerships in promoting readiness and access.

Summary. A variety of books are used in the instruction of the college counseling material. While limited among a pool of 20 sources, these texts vary greatly among the course types and certificate programs. The four primary categories of readings include "how to" guides, narratives, homegrown, and hybrid texts. The textbook authored and published by NACAC is

the most common reading among all certificate programs and has received mixed reviews. Currently, it is the only designated textbook developed for these certificate programs. As has been demonstrated, these readings incorporate content that address college access, college readiness, college choice, and career readiness.

Theme 6. The number of courses required to earn the certificate vary by program as do the subjects of the courses. The requirements to complete the certificate range from the three courses at UCSD to seven courses at UCLA. Among the certificate programs, the most common number of courses is five to six, with six of the programs requiring that many courses. The three courses at UCSD are themed around principles, strategies, and the practicum. UCLA's seven-course program enables coverage of a wide range of topics that include college admissions, financial aid, testing/careers, technology, counseling, a practicum, and a course focused on special issues. The UCLA (2013i) website refers to the special issues in college counseling course as a "capstone" course, despite its inclusion of a practicum course, which is typically considered the capstone. According to UCLA, the special issues course "focuses on individual groups of students who present unique challenges, such as students with learning disabilities, undocumented students, first-generation students, students who are members of the LGBT community, transfer students, etc." (UCLA, 2013i, n.p.). The focus on these underrepresented groups is a demonstration of how UCLA has incorporated college access into its training and education. Furthermore, UCLA states that "the specificity and changeability of the course content allows the program to keep information current and provide students with recent views or changing critical elements in the counseling profession" (UCLA, 2013i, n.p.).

The four subjects discussed in this theme are the most frequent subjects covered as separate courses in the certificate programs: college applications/admissions, counseling, career

planning, and financial aid. This is based on at least 50% of the programs having such a course.

Each subject/course is described as a subtheme. Figure 9 below provides an overview and frequency of the four most common courses among the certificate programs.

Figure 9 Four Most Common Courses

	College admissions course	Career planning course	Counseling course	Financial aid course
# of programs with this type of course	8 out of 8	7 out of 8	5 out of 8	4 out of 8
% of programs with this type of course	100%	88%	63%	50%

College application and admissions processes. The college application and admissions processes are the only common topics covered in every certificate program. All of the programs focus on the entry process of getting into college. All of them have a course with “college admissions,” or “college application” in the course title, except UCSD, which uses the phrase “college counseling” in all of three of its required courses. UCD (n.d.a) and UCB (2010) are the only two programs that require two college admissions advising courses, which are identical in title at both schools: College Admissions Advising A and College Admissions Advising B. The EMU (2011, May) course on college admissions is focused on the management of college applications and is linked with the topic of college exploration resources. Based on the course description, the course prepares the learner to facilitate the college choice process for the student and set up a system for managing the college applications (EMU, 2011 May). Unlike the programs at other schools, it does not cover specific topics like essays, recommendation letters, or transcripts. The Hamline course on the college admission process is designed to educate the learners about postsecondary options, college admission criteria, and the college choice process.

Admissions-related topics covered in the first of two college admissions advising courses in UCD program included the college admissions process, timelines, the range of college options, transcript analysis, and components of an exemplary application. The second course focuses on admissions considerations for special populations as well as topics like college majors and college application essays. The UCLA course on the college admissions process features training on college choice, early action/early decision, letters of recommendation, and admissions criteria. The college admission course at Suffolk covers a wide range of topics, including admission testing, financial aid practices, admission policies, and procedures, diverse students, technology tools used in the college search/application process, early college awareness, and perspectives of undergraduate admissions counselors. The first of the two UCB courses on college admissions features needs assessment, financial planning, and researching higher education options. The second course covers the college selection process, admissions testing, college application, the essay, financial aid, and admissions considerations for special populations. The UCR course is the only one with “procedures” in its title as it is called “College Admissions Procedures.” The course focuses on the application documents, college admissions testing, transcripts, school profiles, and teacher recommendations – more of the “nuts and bolts” of college admissions. UCSD embeds the college admissions topic in the only two courses that precede the practicum course. The strategies course focuses on the early decision debate, testing options, letters of recommendation, building relationships with college admissions professionals, and strategies in working with students, parents, and staff. Meanwhile, the principles course references the college selection process without additional details that highlight the college admissions processes. Among the eight certificate programs, and based solely on the course descriptions, the most common topics about the college admissions process

covered in these courses include: process/procedures, admissions testing, college choice, diverse/special populations, college options, financial aid/planning, and letters of recommendation. All of these admission courses support the concept of college readiness because they provide the knowledge and outline steps for students to apply for admission to college.

Career planning course. As a specific course, career planning and career counseling is the second most common topic covered and is included in seven of the eight programs. The only program that does not include a career course or reference career content in its course descriptions is the UCSD certificate program. Since the EMU career course has not yet been offered, no course description was available. The career-type courses within the seven certificate programs vary greatly in terms of title and approach. However, the common themes focus on career assessments, tools, and theory. Most of the career courses reference the role of career assessments in helping high school students plan for their future. Specifically, the courses introduce the various instruments, inventories, and tools that are available to help students evaluate their abilities and interests. Theories of career development are covered in the courses at UCR, Hamline, and Suffolk. The UCLA and Hamline courses, while different in title, are similar in content and are unique from the other career courses. Both courses cover career assessment and the standardized college examinations. For example, the UCLA course reviews the role of each test (such as SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement) and then discusses validity, bias, and the effect of coaching (UCLA, 2013g). Hamline's career course discusses the college entrance exams during the college admissions process. UCD's course that focused on careers was actually entitled, Tools for the College Counselor. The entire course is about career planning tools, resources, advising, and career options. Career courses support college readiness

and college choice. Students' tendencies toward particular careers impact how they prepare for college both academically and where they will apply. Therefore, career planning also affects college choice because where a student seeks to pursue a college education may be based on his/her career aspirations and the availability of that program of study at that particular school.

Counseling course. Five of the eight programs feature a class focused on the subject of counseling. The three programs that do not include a counseling course are Suffolk and EMU—both of the post master's programs—as well as the closed program at UCD. One of the primary commonalities among the five programs was the focus on helping parents and families in the college process, which was specifically referenced in three programs: UCLA, UCSD, and UCR. UCLA discusses how to organize informational sessions for parents, UCSD references working with families and parents, and UCR lists parent factors as an important topic. The other common thread, but only directly stated in the course descriptions of two of the programs, was related to college options and college choice, topics covered at Hamline and UCR. Otherwise, the counseling course topics could be described as a cornucopia of subjects inclusive of responsibilities, timelines, resources, tools, management, planning, relationships, awareness, ethics, special populations, culture, extracurricular activities, and even human resource development (UCB). For example, the UCLA (2013p) counseling course entitled, Counseling the College Bound Student, covers “the differences between guidance and college counseling; the college counselor's unique responsibilities; college counselor's timeline; and resources available, including computer tools,” according to the course description on the UCLA website (n.p). The course also covers the management of a college counseling office as well as the organization of student/parent informational sessions (UCLA, 2013p). Academic planning for college along with environmental factors are described (UCLA, 2013p). In the UCSD (2013c) certificate

model, counseling is embedded and integrated in the two required courses that precede the practicum. In the principles course, learners explore “the personal dimensions of working with families during one of their most crucial transitional experiences” (USCD, 2013c, n.p.). The UCSD (2013f) college counseling strategies course, besides focusing on specific college admissions practices, is focused on relationships with and among college admissions professionals, students, parents, and staff members. Hamline’s (n.d.b) course, Fundamentals of Counseling the College Bound Student, covers a wide-range of topics that include: college awareness, types of postsecondary options, special populations, key players, ethics, best practices, college-going culture and the organization of a place for college preparation. UCR’s (2011c) course, the College Counseling Process, provides the most comprehensive coverage of counseling topics: counseling process, factors that affect college choice, intellectual/emotional readiness, peer pressure, performance, parent factors, the role of faculty, and extracurricular activities. UCB’s course, Counseling Techniques for Educators, has a limited course description. The most detailed portion of the description states that students will, “learn and practice the basic tenets of Robert Carkhuff’s Human Resource Development (HRD) Model in order to gain competence in the application of basic counseling skills” (UCB, n.d.n, n.p.). There is no reference to college counseling in the description. From the perspective of college access, college readiness, and college choice, these counseling courses are the foundation for how access, readiness, and choice are conveyed and practiced. As was demonstrated, there are a wealth of topics covered to address the key stakeholders, best practices, and processes of effective counseling.

Financial aid course. The topic of financial aid is covered as a separate course in half of the certificate programs. The four certificate programs featuring a financial aid course include

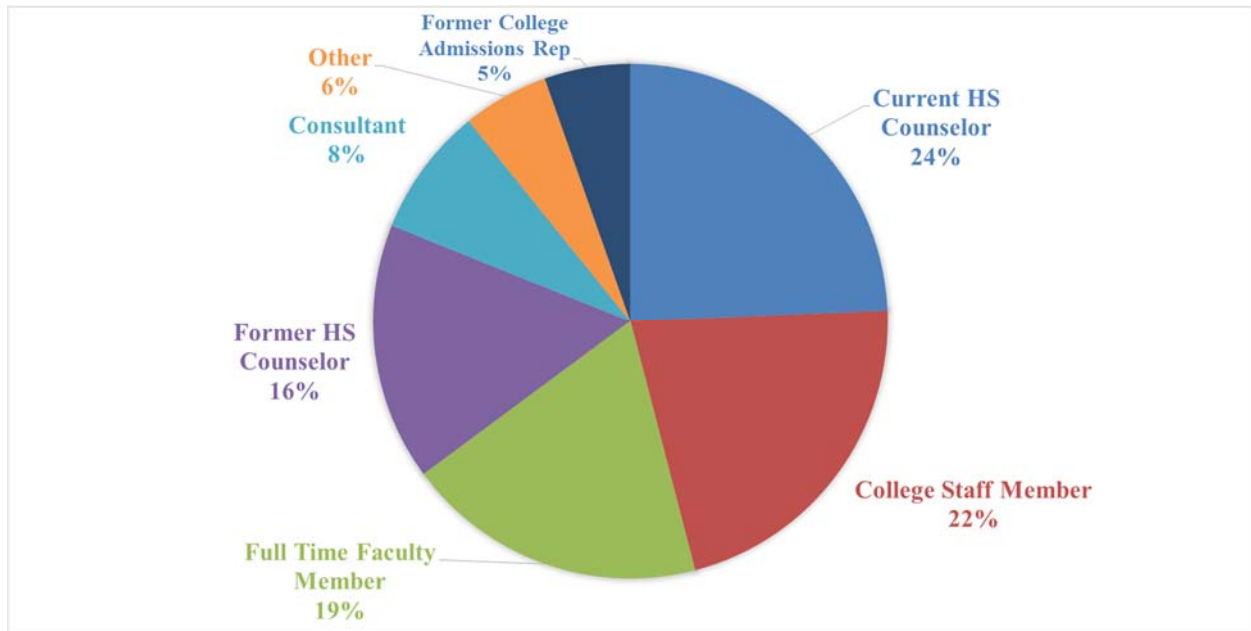
EMU, UCR, UCLA, and UCD. However, given that EMU has not offered its course yet due to being on moratorium and since UCD is closed, that leaves only the two UC schools as having a current financial aid topic offering. Among the three course descriptions available from UCR, UCLA, and UCD, there was an extensive range of the kinds of financial aid information covered in the courses. However, the process of applying for financial aid was included in all three courses, based on the course descriptions. The phrase, “financial aid package” was referenced in the UCR and UCD descriptions (UCR, 2011d; UCD, n.d.a). A review of funding sources was included in the UCLA and UCD descriptions (UCLA 2013p; UCD, n.d.a). Language inclusive of families was contained in the UCR and UCD descriptions (UCR, 2011d; UCD, n.d.a). UCLA and UCD referenced federal and state aid processes in their courses (UCLA, 2013p; UCD, n.d.a). Financial aid intersects with all three of the concepts of college access, college readiness, and college choice. Frequently, the cost of going to college is identified as a barrier for accessing a college education. Therefore, it is critical for all college counseling professionals to have a working knowledge about the cost of college and all financial assistance that is available. Being ready for college also means saving for college, as well as the detailed steps of completing financial aid and scholarship applications. The cost of college and availability of funding can impact a student’s choice on where they attend college. Altogether, financial aid is an important component of access, readiness, and choice.

Summary. The certificate program courses vary in number and subjects. The number of courses required to earn the certificate ranges from three to seven. The topic of college admissions is instructed in 100% of the programs. This is followed by a career planning course in all but one of the programs, a counseling course in five of the eight programs, and a financial aid course in half of the programs. Among the 43 courses offered within the eight programs, 24

of them are part of this group of four courses. The remaining 19 courses cover a variety of other topics related to college counseling. The four most frequently appearing topics are contributing to the expansion of knowledge to ensure students have access to, are ready for, and carefully choose their school.

Theme 7. Individuals who are or have been practitioners in the areas related to college counseling, rather than full-time college faculty, are primarily serving as the instructors of the courses in the certificate program. As part of this study, I collected data which included the names, title(s), and academic credentials of the instructors for 34 of the 38 courses among the current and “in moratorium” certificate programs (the closed program at UCD was not included since instructor data was not available). The data missing from the four courses are all located at EMU, where most of the courses have not been offered due to low enrollment. The purpose in analyzing this data set is to answer the research question of who is teaching the educational content in the programs. Figure 10 below shows the composition of the 37 instructional faculty based on their current position title, as collected from their instructor biographies available on web sites.

Figure 10 Titles of Instructional Faculty

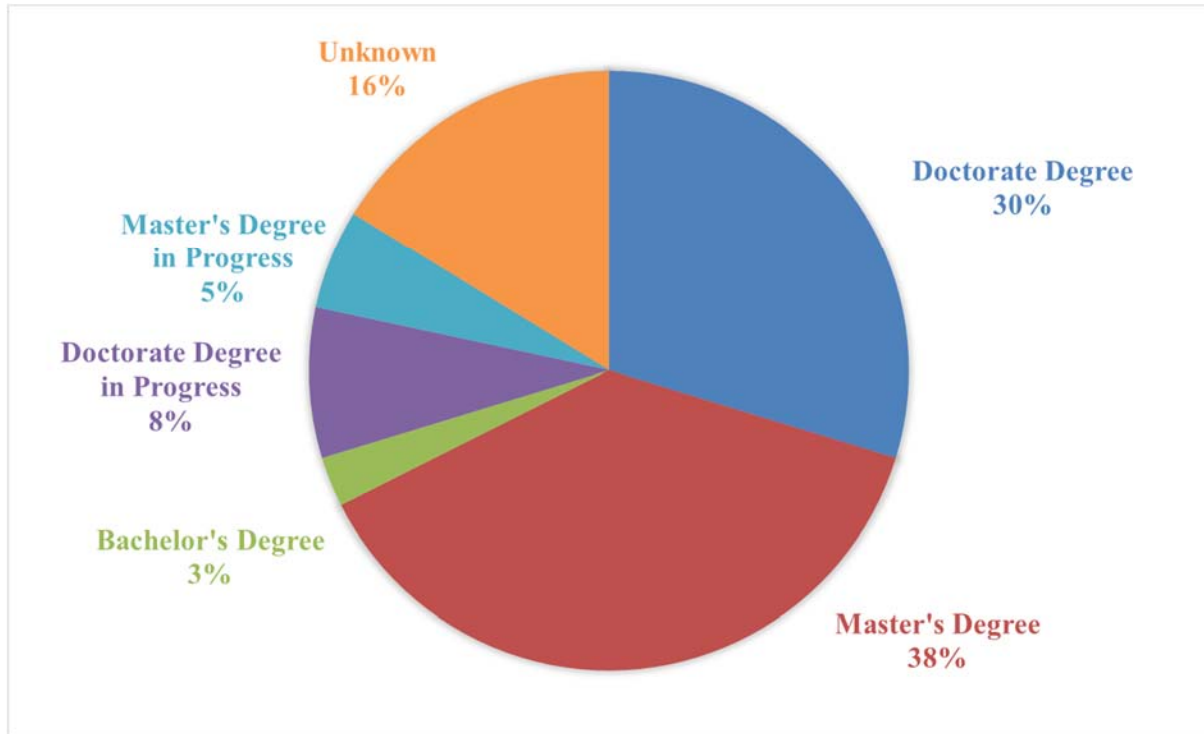


The largest group of individuals teaching the courses in these graduate certificate programs are current and former high school counselors. Together, they comprise 40% of the instructors. The single largest set of instructors based on their titles is composed of current high school counselors, who account for 24% of the instructors in these programs. Only the Suffolk and UCLA programs use college staff members to teach their courses. In this case, a college staff member is designated as a non-faculty member who is only teaching as an adjunct instructor. Titles of the adjunct instructors who work as college staff members include director, academic counselor, associate vice president, and senior academic counselor. Former high school counselors are employed as instructors at Suffolk, UCR, and UCLA. Current high school counselors teach as instructors at Hamline, UCR, UCSD, UCLA, and UCB. Five of the seven (71%) programs rely on high school counselors as instructors. Eighty-one percent (31 of 37 instructors) are not full-time faculty. Five of the instructors have themselves earned a graduate certificate in college counseling—four of them earned from UCLA and one from UCB. In terms

of the academic qualification of the instructors, data was available from 31 or 84% of them.

Figure 11 shows the distribution of the instructors based on the degrees earned.

Figure 11 Degrees Earned of the Instructional Faculty



Eleven instructors have earned a doctorate degree, 14 have earned a master's degree (not inclusive of those with a doctorate degree), three doctorate degrees are in progress, two master's degrees are in progress, and one has earned a bachelor's degree. It is not known the degree level of the other six instructors, as that information was not publicly available. Doctoral-educated instructors (indicated in parentheses) are teaching in six of the seven currently-active/moratorium programs: Suffolk (4), UCB (3), UCLA (1), UCSD (1), UCR (1), and EMU (1). The only program without an instructor with a doctoral degree is Hamline. The data collected also revealed a number of faculty who are teaching more than one subject within the certificate

programs. Figure 12 summarizes the faculty based on teaching patterns. These teaching patterns highlight instructional faculty who teach more than one course or every course.

Figure 12 Faculty Teaching Patterns

# of individuals who teach more than one course within the same certificate program	8
# of individuals who teach two different courses within the same certificate program	6
# of individuals who teach three different courses within the same certificate program	1
# of individuals who teach every course in the certificate program	1

Among the 35 courses with faculty data available, and based on who was instructing in the 2013 and 2014 years, there are 37 different individuals serving as instructors among these seven existing certificate programs (UCD excluded). Among the 35 courses, eight different individuals teach more than one course within the same certificate program. Six individuals teach two different courses; one individual teaches three different courses; and one individual teaches all six courses of the certificate program. Of the courses offered, seven are taught by full-time, college faculty members and can be found teaching at three of the programs: UCB, EMU, and Suffolk. Of the seven full-time faculty members, four are teaching in the program at their home institution; the other faculty members are full-time, but serve as an adjunct instructor in the certificate programs at UCB and Suffolk. Four of the seven (57%) full-time, college faculty members are teaching in the certificate program at Suffolk.

Summary. Among 35 courses within the eight certificate programs, 37 unique instructors were discovered, including seven who are full-time faculty teaching in the programs. The majority of the instructors are former high school counselors and 81% of instructors are practitioners versus full-time faculty. Degrees held by the instructional faculty range from bachelor's degree to doctoral degrees, with nearly all of them possessing at least a master's degree.

College Access, Readiness, and Choice

The data collected about the certificate programs revealed some direct connections to college access, college readiness, and college choice. This section presents those findings, citing examples from the certificate programs.

College Access. Among the 43 courses offered within the eight certificate programs studied, only one course contains “access” in its title. The remaining programs and courses incorporated the concept of college access, typically under the umbrella term of “counseling special populations.” Suffolk is the only program that offers an entire course dedicated to the theme of college access with its “Access and Equity in Higher Education” course (McDowell, 2012). Two of the required readings for the course, within the category called narratives, address the topic of college access (McDowell, 2012). McDowell, instructor of the Suffolk course, states, “I define college access as providing individuals with opportunities to enter the college pipeline at any point” (K. McDowell, personal interview, June 11, 2013). McDowell also stated:

I really feel strongly about the need for someone who is practicing in the field to fully understand the context...and to understand...as much as possible, the diversity and variety of the lived experiences of the students that they’re working with” (K. McDowell, personal interview, June 11, 2013).

McDowell’s perspective on access, equity, and diversity sets the tone in her class that these elements are a societal issue. Furthermore, McDowell (2012) integrates college access with college readiness in her theme of “getting in.” An example of that connection is when McDowell (2012) discusses the role of affirmative action in relation to college admissions policies.

That course is not the only course at Suffolk that addresses college access. Based on Suffolk's (2014) description for its "Psychology of Career Development" course, it addresses the concerns of minorities, which are considered members of underrepresented groups. That particular course requires a group project that addresses one of four issues: gender issues, lesbian/gay/bisexual/ transgendered (LGBT) issues, multicultural issues, and disability issues (Poynton, 2012, Summer b). Similarly, the inclusion of diversity services and disability services is embedded in the "Fieldwork: College Visits" course at Suffolk (Poynton, 2012, Summer a). Altogether, Suffolk has embedded college access throughout its graduate certificate in college counseling curriculum by incorporating it into several courses.

Most of the other certificate programs have included aspects of college access into their courses through targeting special populations who may be underrepresented in higher education. For example, UCLA's "Special Issues in College Counseling" course focuses on "students with learning disabilities, undocumented students, first-generation students, students who are members of the LGBT community, and transfer students" (UCLA, 2014b, n.p.). UCLA's attention to these specific populations demonstrates a commitment to addressing the needs of these individuals in order to increase access to college. Hamline (2011) also devotes an entire course to special populations. Hamline's EDUC 7204 course discusses a variety of underrepresented students: "students of color, first generation, low socio-economical (sic) status, undocumented students, students with disabilities, home school students, and adult learners" (Hamline, n.d.c, n.p.). The second of UCB's College Admissions Advising course addresses "special needs populations," inclusive of athletes, disabled, reentry foreign, and underrepresented students (UCB, n.d.o, n.p.). When it was active, the UCD certificate mimicked UCB's College Admissions Advising course (UCD, n.d.a). The UCSD certificate, with only three courses, does

not dedicate a course to special populations. However, its College Counseling Strategies course does address “immigrant children and the road to attaining higher education” (UCSD, n.d.b, p. 1). UCR’s “Professional and Ethical Issues in the College Application Process” had a stated learning outcome at enhancing college access for two specifically stated groups of students: “increase their range of resources for counseling underrepresented and special education students” (M. Johnson, personal communication, August 16, 2013). EMU’s course, Postsecondary Planning with Families and Special Populations, has yet to be offered and does not have an official course description since it is currently coded as a special topics course. However, EMU has incorporated a focus on “special populations” into its certificate curriculum.

In the context of college access, these graduate certificate programs in college counseling are offering content that position certificate graduates to be better informed about the needs of specific populations. The aforementioned populations highlighted in this section represent college-bound audiences who may have challenges preparing for and entering college because of their various circumstances. The graduate certificate programs introduce these populations to the certificate learners and strive to offer resources and techniques on how to best serve them. As this discussion demonstrates, college access is a topic that is incorporated into the coursework of these graduate certificate programs.

College Readiness. Aspects of college readiness can be seen in all of the certificate programs. College readiness is the notion that students are prepared for all of the pre-college transactions and are academically ready. For the purposes of this study, college readiness has focused on preparation in terms of steps and transactions to enter college along with establishing and maintaining a college-going culture. One of those first steps involves researching potential schools and knowing the higher education options. UCB’s (n.d.p) College Admissions Advising

A course identifies this research process as a critical component of college readiness. Suffolk's course that requires students to conduct seven visits to colleges facilitates that research process and immerses the certificate students into the experience that would be similar to what their college-bound students encounter during a college visit (Poynton, 2012, Summer a). Poynton states:

They [the students] need to do some research on the school before they go in and come up with questions—basically be an informed consumer—and then after they visit, they have three hypothetical students they have to assess specifically from multiple perspectives in those schools. That makes up that class (personal interview, March 29, 2013).

The various “how to guides” used as readings in the certificate programs specifically help students become ready for college because they offer tips, techniques, and insights about types of colleges. Eleven such books are used as textbooks in six different courses among three of the certificate programs. The certificate programs also demonstrate college readiness through the financial aid courses and topics covered since planning to pay for college precedes college enrollment. This readiness is enhanced when a student understands the components of a financial aid package, which is included in the UCR (2011d) certificate program, for example. Students who have knowledge of the aid processes at the state and federal levels will be better prepared to recognize the support provided by those two sources. State and federal processes are covered in the UCLA (2013p) financial aid course. College readiness for student athletes means knowing the athletic eligibility requirements and rules. Based on the course descriptions and syllabi reviewed, only two known courses specifically reference student athletes: UCB's “College Admissions Advising B” and Suffolk's “College Admission Counseling Fundamentals”

(UCB, n.d.o; Bardwell, 2012, Summer). Chapter nine of NACAC's (2008a) second edition of its *Fundamentals* text is dedicated to counseling the student-athlete. This 14-page chapter addresses the role of athletics in the admission process, the NCAA eligibility index, letters of intent, and the college recruiting process (NACAC, 2008a). A college-going culture is an aspect of college readiness that is a part of some of the certificate programs. This is relevant because the literature review associated with this study cited the creation and sustainability of a college-going culture as contributing to college readiness (Holcomb, 2012; The College Board, 2006; The College Board, 2008; The College Board, 2011, April). For example, Hamline's (n.d.b) Fundamentals of Counseling the College Bound Student course covers the topic of a college-going culture, based on the online course description. NACAC's (2012e) third edition of its textbook dedicates 26 pages to establishing and supporting a college-going culture. That chapter incorporates content from Patricia McDonough, NOSCA, and ASCA (NACAC, 2012e). College readiness is a part of these certificate programs in a variety of ways: conducting research, visiting college campuses, use of "how to" guides, embedding of financial aid courses, incorporation of information for student athletes, and the establishment of a college-going culture.

College Choice. Several of the courses within the certificate programs address college choice: Hamline's Understanding the College Admission Process course, UCLA's The College Admissions Process course, and UCR's The College Counseling Process course (Hamline, n.d.d; UCLA, 2013d; UCR, 2011c). UCLA's course spends one week under the theme of "The Good Fit" (Varriale, n.d.). The course at UCR discusses factors affecting college choice, explores how colleges choose students, and reviews the selection criteria that students use in the college choice process (UCR, n.d.b). Hamline's course description specifically states that learners will "gain knowledge on how to choose a college" (Hamline, n.d.d). In addition, the course description

references the narrowing of college options and its connection to career readiness (Hamline, n.d.d). UCR's practicum has as one of its four learning outcomes focused on college choice: "assist students in determining appropriate choice of institution" (M. Johnson, personal communication, August 16, 2013). NACAC's (2008a) second edition of the *Fundamentals* textbook offers a comprehensive "Making the Right Choice" section targeted at student-athletes to help them through the college choice process and considering all of the athletic-related factors. However, the third edition of that textbook offers less content and information (NACAC, 2012e). These examples demonstrate that college choice is incorporated in various dimensions in the graduate coursework in college counseling curriculum.

Conclusion

This chapter began with an overview of each of the eight research sites, presenting information about program format, cost, number of units/credits for the certificate, titles of the required courses, individuals affiliated with the programs, and other unique attributes relevant to particular cases. This was followed by the presentation of seven unique themes that emerged from the data collected. These themes revealed the design and composition of these graduate certificate programs in the United States. Those seven themes focused on the emergence of two types of programs, operational independence, business start-ups, dependence on a singular textbook, practicums, course and subject variances, and the instructional faculty. The integration of college access, college readiness, and college choice were discussed throughout the themes and in the final section to demonstrate how the design and composition of these programs were playing a role in meeting the national goals in the United States.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter provides an overview of the study, discusses the major findings in relation to the research questions, offers recommendations for the advancement of this academic field, and provides suggestions for additional research. The purpose of this study was to fill a gap in the literature on graduate coursework in college counseling. In the 25 years that graduate coursework in college counseling has existed, little was known about it. Training in college counseling has primarily existed informally, but is slowly being recognized in a formal, academic context. This study documented current practices in graduate coursework in college counseling at eight different sites in the United States. While there has been much reference to graduate coursework in the field of college admissions, in previous surveys and in opinion-print pieces, this research was the first known, major, comprehensive, national study on the training pathway of graduate certificate programs in college counseling. This research responded to Savitz-Romer's 2012 call for a review of these offerings.

Data was collected from more than 400 sources, analyzed for similarities and differences, and presented through seven themes that emerged. Those seven themes focused on the emergence of two types of programs, operational independence, business start-ups, dependence on a singular textbook, practicums, course and subject variances, and the instructional faculty. A qualitative case study approach effectively depicted the current state of graduate coursework in college counseling and provided insights about all identified programs. Collectively, this study

reveals the design and composition of graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the United States.

Triangulation of the Data

Document analysis, online questionnaires, and interview methodologies were utilized to record the design and composition of these certificate programs in the United States. The telephone and in-person interviews provided contextual information and clarification, the online questionnaires offered some historical perspective, and the documents acquired provided the much-needed depth. Where possible, interviews were conducted with multiple individuals to ensure numerous perspectives were gained about the certificate programs. Credibility of findings was supported by triangulation of the data from 59 documents, 315 electronic sources (websites and e-mail messages), 15 online questionnaires, and 11 interviews conducted.

Research Questions

The primary research question of this study was: What are the design and composition of graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the context of national college access and college readiness goals in the United States? Increasing college access is a current, national movement in the United States and is designed to ensure that the largest percentage of high school graduates pursue a postsecondary degree option. College readiness efforts are the collective practices that confirm that high school students have the skills and knowledge prepared to enter and succeed in college. The national college access and readiness goals in the United States are focused on increasing the number of college graduates. The discussion of the context of college access, college readiness, and college choice follows the interpretation of the findings section.

Sub questions. The five research sub questions that were studied will be discussed and answered here as part of revealing the design and composition of these certificate programs. The first sub question sought to identify all programs at educational institutions in the United States. Seven existing and one former certificate program in college counseling at institutions of higher education in the United States were identified and confirmed. Programs were identified in four different states. California offers the largest number of certificate programs at four—all located at a University of California campus. All eight certificate programs were organized into three categories—currently active, in moratorium, and discontinued—to portray their status at the time this study was conducted. Various titles of the certificate programs demonstrate the diversities of their approaches and philosophies, which made it challenging to ensure that a definitive list of programs had been compiled. The compilation of all known programs will assist practitioners, learners, and college administrators in having a definitive list. The identification of all known programs provided the foundation for the remaining sub questions.

The second sub question related to the steps and reasons that led to their creation. The explanation about these steps derived from certificate program proposals from Suffolk and UCR, along with in-person interviews conducted at both locations. In reviewing official program proposals from two different schools and studying the various intended audiences, I learned that faculty followed a formal process to create them, vet them, and approve them. UCR's certificate was approved by the Academic Senate within the Extension operation after being reviewed by a director within the Extension's education department. Suffolk's certificate was approved by its graduate curriculum committee. The reasons for creating these certificate programs were different between Suffolk and UCR. UCR was responding to a need that had been verbalized from schools who were seeking better prepared students in the college preparatory process. This

was affirmed in the 2008 revision of the original proposal. Suffolk was addressing the need for relevant graduate coursework for practitioners and graduate students. Suffolk also noted the need for a focus on access and equity and also specifically stated it was avoiding the contribution of helping students and their parents “win the game” of gaining admission into the most prestigious college. As was discovered, Suffolk is the only program with a course themed on college access and equity.

The third sub question asked what educational content related to college access and college readiness is included. While 13 different college-preparation topics were covered among the eight programs, this study identified the four primary, consistent, educational content areas among the programs to be focused on: college admissions, career planning, counseling, and financial aid. The college admissions courses covered the widest range of topics, but predominantly honed in on the various steps a student must take in order to formally complete an admissions application for potential enrollment. The career planning courses provide an overview on career assessments, tools, and theory. The counseling courses cover training on how to best provide direct college counseling to students and their parents. The focus of the financial aid courses is an overview of the steps on how to apply financial assistance and the role of the financial aid package once it is received by the family. Within the courses, the readings provide the content that support college access, college readiness, and college choice. Nearly 20 different textbooks are relied on as readings, which offer narratives on applying to college as well as tips and suggestions for preparing for college. Four categories of textbooks emerged from studying the textbooks used: narratives, “how to” guides, homegrown, and hybrid texts. NACAC’s *Fundamentals of College Admissions Counseling* emerged as the single most frequently-used book among the certificate programs. The practicums are also a critical

component of the educational content and they are offered in six of the eight certificate programs. As a capstone course, the practicum has varying expectations among the six programs, but many of them require direct counseling practice with students. Direct service hours to students in the practicum range from 23 to 65 hours. Examples from UCR's practicum demonstrated the types of topics that were included to help students prepare for college. Altogether, the topics, readings, and practicums reveal how the educational content is addressing college access, college readiness, and college choice.

The fourth sub question focused on the targeted and actual audiences for these certificate programs. While sufficient data about the actual audiences was not collected in this study, information about the targeted audiences was available from seven of the eight programs. The most frequently cited target audience were school counselors, a population cited in all seven programs. The two post-masters programs only target school counselors; the five post bachelor's programs target school counselors in addition to others that include individuals seeking to start their own businesses, college admissions advisers, teachers, parents, and workforce development staff. Four UC programs (including the now closed UCD program but excluding UCSD) target prospective college counseling business owners in their promotion of the program. Hamline's listing of target audiences has the most comprehensive descriptions of its audiences and is the only program to target workforce development staff who are working with adults. While graduation data was only available from three of the universities, this study confirmed that at least 137 individuals have earned a college counseling certificate, with hundreds more enrolled, especially in the UCLA certificate program.

The fifth sub question, which became a theme of the study, sought to reveal information about the individuals serving as the instructional faculty. Thirty-seven different individuals are

teaching among the seven currently active and “on moratorium” programs. Individuals who are or have been practitioners in the areas related to college counseling, rather than full-time college faculty, are primarily serving as the instructors of the courses. The practitioners teaching in the program comprise 81% of the instructors and 71% of the certificate programs utilize current or former high school counselors to teach. The single largest group teaching the courses in these graduate certificate programs are current and former high school counselors. Together, they comprise 40% of the instructors. The single largest set of instructors based on their titles is composed of current high school counselors, who account for 24% of the instructors in these programs. More than 80% of the instructional faculty have earned at least a master’s degree or are pursuing a master’s degree.

Together, the answers to these five sub questions demonstrate that these graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the United States are striving to meet the college access and college readiness goals in the United States. This has been demonstrated through the data describing their origins, the educational content, target audiences, and the individuals serving as the instructors.

Interpretations of the Findings

This section will discuss the themes and other findings within this study. This research determined that these certificate programs are: 1) offering practicums for professionals to put to use their college counseling skills after learning content in the prerequisite courses; 2) primarily using practitioners in the field as the instructional faculty; 3) promoting the creation of private college counseling businesses and practices; 4) offered as one of two types of programs; 5) being taught as independent curricula despite similar titles and course offerings; 6) using four different

categories of textbooks with a dependence on one single book; and 7) incorporating a range of subjects and courses to earn the certificate.

Since the majority of the programs are post bachelor's certificates offered under the guise of "continuing education," they are primarily serving as a professional development opportunity. They are financially attainable as most of them are priced at a few thousand dollars. Post bachelor's programs do not require master's degree concurrent enrollment or completion of a master's degree. This for-credit training is providing specialized knowledge not covered in other credit-based academic programs. However, all graduate certificate programs in college counseling should be accessible to bachelor degree holders. Since trained school counselors are not the only individuals providing college counseling, limiting a graduate certificate in college counseling to master's degree candidates only restricts the reach of this training. College access professionals and college admission counselors may not have continued their education with a master's degree, yet they could benefit from the educational content and exposure offered by a post bachelor's certificate because of the work they do in the field with students. Completion of this certificate program could motivate an individual to continue his/her education with an accompanying master's degree.

As this research has revealed, many of the programs are designed to facilitate individuals starting their own business as a college counseling practice. While many educational professionals cringe at this notion, the emergence, support of, and promotion of the private college counseling practice is in direct response to solving multiple problems in the United States. First, providing college counseling outside of the high school setting is a reaction to the high student-to-counselor ratios and the lack of time counselors indicate they have to devote specifically to college counseling. Second, this concept of starting a private business aligns with

the entrepreneurial spirit of the U.S. employment and economic culture. Whether one agrees or disagrees if a family should be charged for what is typically “free” counseling, the reality is that it is meeting a need and addressing concerns related to increasing college access and college readiness. The first four certificate programs established in the United States were created in part to produce individuals with the skills and knowledge to start their own business.

The state of California can be seen as a leader in the field of college counseling since it originated the first four graduate certificate programs in the country. However, UC has not positioned itself otherwise by providing collective leadership and coordination among its four existing programs. All of the California programs except UCB are currently operating in competition with each other since the certificate can be earned online. For the individual seeking the most economical and the shortest method of earning the certificate, the choice would be the certificate offered at UCSD. At three courses and a cost of \$1,600, it is reasonable and efficient. That state of California has an opportunity to reclaim its leadership role in this area, especially since new online competitors have arisen in Michigan and Minnesota.

The loosely tied affiliations to professional organizations should be questioned. As presented, UCB lists five organizations as a sort of endorsement on its website. However, I am not convinced those organizations are aware of this listing and if they would support it. To claim that the certificate program meets with the advising standards of NACAC without demonstrating that on the website leaves this questionable, especially since “advising standards” is a vague term. Because UCB was not a full participant in this study, it was difficult to evaluate how the courses were using the information from CASC, HECA, NACAC, and WACAC as the website and print pieces stipulated. This study revealed the partnership between IECA and some of the

UC certificate programs, which further supports the rationale that these certificates are designed to create and support private college counseling practices.

The practicums can be viewed as one of the most critical portions of the certificate program because in the practicum is where direct college counseling is practiced. Among the five programs that require the practicum, there should be consistency in terms of expectations. There should be a stated, standard, minimum number of hours required for all practicums. Borrowing from the CACREP (2009) standards of 40-hours of direct contact for a practicum, these certificate programs could require a percentage of those hours since a certificate program is fewer credits than a master's degree. As was shared, not all of the practicums require direct college counseling with students. The hours logged in the practicum are designed to enhance the training of the professionals who are preparing to administer the same type of services to their students as they did to students during the practicum. Since the primary purpose of a practicum is to mimic the work of a practicing college counselor, under supervision, a practicum enables the learner to obtain relevant experience in the field. UCLA's model of requiring a student to complete a practicum proposal can be seen as a best practice. While the other programs may require such a process, this information was not accessible during this research study.

The UCLA certificate is the most comprehensive of the certificate programs because it requires the greatest number of courses at seven and 65 onsite practicum hours. Based on the limited data that was provided in this study, UCLA also has the largest known enrollment among all of the programs. UCLA is the only program offering a specific course that addresses the role of the digital landscape in the college counseling process. Its course called "Using the Internet for College and Career Counseling" is a differentiator for the UCLA program.

The faculty teaching in these certificate programs are individuals who offer knowledge and insight from the field as practicing professionals. The wide range of the types of individuals teaching in the program demonstrates the diversity of expertise, but many of these individuals who are teaching are doing this instruction in addition, in many cases, to a full time job, as evidenced by their official position titles listed in their biographies on the program websites. One outlier among the instructional faculty models observed among the seven active and moratorium programs was Hamline with one faculty member teaching all six required courses. These certificate programs rely heavily on school counselors to provide instruction. The instructional faculty are well-educated, with most of them having earned at least a master's degree. I was surprised that so few of the instructors had earned, or at least noted so in their online biographies, a graduate certificate in college counseling from one of the programs. This, however, could be related to the relatively small number of graduates who have earned the certificate, based on data collected in this study.

Representing a component of the educational content, the textbooks contain knowledge that instructional faculty use to pass onto their learners, for the ultimate intention of passing it along to the students who are seeking and need this content. The textbooks used tend to be more practical (nuts and bolts) than theoretical, offering advice as students embark on the various steps to preparing for college. Other than the NACAC textbook, no other author or organization has published a textbook specifically for use in these graduate certificate programs. There is room for these additional scholarly works. The lack of scholarly books in these certificate programs may be the result of the age of these certificate programs because they are only three to 25 years old so they are still developing. The absence of full-time faculty may also be impacting the types of readings in the courses. During the 25-year-period in which these programs have existed,

there also has been much change and evolution of the college enrollment processes. In addition, research in this field has been growing and is now able to be incorporated into these credit-bearing certificate programs. For example, NACAC has been publishing its annual *State of College Admission* for only 11 years to date.

It was not surprising that the common course component among all certificate programs was content focused on the college admissions and application processes. Given the complexity, the various admission criteria, the documents, and the review process, all programs see the value of providing knowledge about this aspect of preparing for college. Getting into college is one of the first major steps of enrolling in college. The challenge of the college admissions topic is that nearly 25, different yet related, topics (among the eight certificate programs) are covered. This information is enough content for multiple courses in college admissions and its accompanying processes. With career planning incorporated into seven of the eight certificate programs, the certificates could be renamed “college and career readiness” certificates to accurately represent the content and coincide with the national movement that links these two elements of college readiness and career readiness. Many professionals in the field of education associate these two elements because college is seen as the precursor to a career and college readiness and career readiness are interconnected.

It was disappointing that only four of the certificate programs have an entire class devoted to the topic of financial aid. As was revealed in the literature review, the complexity of the financial aid system was noted by NACAC in 1990 and 21 years later in 2011, the national counselor surveys are still identifying it as a major concern for students planning for college. Hossler, Braxton, and Coopersmith (1989) as early as 1989 referenced the government’s increasing role in financial aid in their research. In 2003, NACAC referred to financial aid as a

maze (Hawkins, 2003). Meanwhile, in 2013, Hughes cites the need for college affordability planning, which can be incorporated into college counseling. Financial aid can be overwhelming to families to navigate and it is a major part of college counseling these days. A focus on increasing the enrollment of students from low-income families relies on financial aid, an element of college access. Affordability of college recently has been receiving much attention nationally and the cost of college will continue to be an important factor affecting students' pursuit of college. As universities review the courses in the certificate programs and when new such certificate programs are launched, a separate course in financial aid should be considered.

Overall, these seven themes describe the design and composition of these eight U.S. certificate programs. These descriptions revealed how college access, college readiness, and college choice are incorporated into the format and structure of the programs.

College Access, Readiness, and Choice

The discussion of graduate certificate programs in college counseling will be framed around three main interconnected constructs: college access, college readiness, and college choice. All three constructs were first referenced in the literature review. Based on this research study, college access, college readiness, and college choice are embedded into the delivery of the graduate certificate programs in college counseling. This will be demonstrated in the discussion that follows.

College access. College access is the concept that seeks to maximize opportunities for everyone to consider enrolling in postsecondary education. For decades in the United States, expanding access to college has been a priority. College access efforts have recently focused on supporting enrollment in college for low-income students, first generation students, and underrepresented students. Graduate certificate programs in college counseling are designed to

enhance college access because they equip professionals with practical knowledge that opens new doors for students. Professionals use the knowledge gained to inform students about college opportunities. As the only certificate program with a course on access and equity, Suffolk is pioneering the way for the other certificate programs. Suffolk's strategy aligns with the national college access movement, which strives to expand entrance into college.

College readiness. College readiness, in the framework of this study, is based on the contextual knowledge that students must possess in order to enter college. As this research revealed, the graduate certificate programs in college counseling are providing college preparation knowledge to current and future college counselors to help students apply to and enroll in college. These certificate programs provide specialized knowledge about the various college preparation aspects – from college admissions to paying for college to career planning. A part of college readiness involves knowing how to apply to college. All of the graduate certificate programs in college counseling have a college admissions course. Seven of the eight programs have a course dedicated to career readiness, which can be associated with college readiness since a career typically follows college graduation. However, where college readiness falls short in the graduate certificate programs is in the area of financial aid. Since only two programs have students currently enrolled in a financial aid course, this topic is not being sufficiently addressed.

Holcomb (2012) cites the “deployment of college counseling as a major college and career readiness initiative” in the United States (p.3). In order for college counseling to be provided effectively, it must have practicing counselors who have the type of training offered by the graduate certificate programs. From a comprehensive perspective, the collective coursework within these graduate certificate programs is designed to help professionals assist students in

being ready for college. That includes how to conduct a college search, how to apply for college, how to apply for financial aid, and how to make the final choice of where to enroll.

College choice. College choice is a student's ability to select a specific place to enroll to pursue an advanced degree at a college or university. That college choice is informed by and influenced by college counselors, some of whom have received training from graduate certificate programs in college counseling. The courses in these programs provide content that help students develop consideration sets so they can make the best possible college decisions. As the literature review referenced, the college choice process is comprehensive, complex, and involves multiple stages. Similarly, the knowledge and training offered in the certificate programs involve multiple courses covering a wide range of varying topics related to fostering college aspirations, managing the college search process, applying to college, and the final college choice. While there is much college preparation information available online and in other sources, the graduate certificate programs provide structure, knowledge, and examples that enable certificate holders to pass along to the students they are counseling to prepare for college. The practicums in the certificate programs provide real-life experiences to help students with their college choices. Cochran and Coles (2012) remind us that the availability, transparency, and quality of information about college are some of the primary factors that impact the college choice process. These graduate certificate programs in college counseling are increasing the availability of information about college by enrolling and graduate individuals who have enrolled in courses focused on the college preparation processes.

Through these lenses of college access, readiness and choice, these seven, currently active graduate certificate programs are offering educational content designed to help certificate completers gain the knowledge necessary to help advise and counsel all types of learners, as was

revealed by the special populations that are discussed throughout the courses and programs. As this research has demonstrated, however, not all college counseling certificate programs are equal. They vary in requirements, cost, format, and delivery. The certificate programs with at least six courses are covering more subjects, thus preparing professionals to gain additional knowledge about the complex, multi-stage process of preparing for college. Future studies could evaluate the extent to which these certificate programs are affecting college access, college readiness, and college choice.

Limitations

While the intention of this study was to document the state of these graduate certificate programs, this objective was completed, but with limitations. Only two programs (Suffolk and UC-Riverside) were fully studied, inclusive of in-person site visits and multiple interviews. Another two programs (EMU and Hamline) were studied but only included a single interview. One program was closed and the other three programs declined to fully participate. As a result, this study is not as comprehensive as it could be since it partially presents data about UCB, UCD, UCSD, and UCLA. Information from those four aforementioned programs came primarily from what was publicly available on their web pages. For example, data about textbooks and instructional faculty were incomplete because it was not all accessible online. In addition, since the EMU program was “in moratorium” status, limited information was available because many of the courses had not yet been offered. While member checking was completed, the EMU program representative did not provide a response so that data could not be verified. Information about the actual audiences who are enrolling in the programs and graduating with the certificates could not be obtained so this research question went unanswered. In its absence, data was reported on the targeted audiences of the programs. While not a methodological

limitation, the use of the phrase “college counseling” instead of the other similar phrases (i.e. college readiness counseling, college admission counseling) may cause some confusion since “college counseling” is the same terminology used to describe the counseling of college students on college campuses. For this study, “college counseling” was used to mirror previous reports and publications that also used that phrasing. Altogether, limited access, the absence of some data, and terminology are the constraints faced in this research study.

Recommendations for Professional Practice

Based on this study, there are several recommendations for professional practice. These suggestions are provided and organized under a central recommendation on the creation of an organization that could offer leadership, structure, and direction for the future. This primary recommendation is to establish a national professional organization and a common set of standards for measuring these programs. Such a professional organization could host an annual conference for program directors and instructional faculty to share best practices, latest developments, and emerging trends. In addition, this organization could form an alumni association of certificate holders to form a national learning community focused on this topic. Given that at least 2,000 individuals have pursued this graduate certificate, there is a large body of people to comprise an alumni group. A common set of standards, similar to those principles within an accreditation agency, should be created for graduate certificate programs in college counseling. The purpose of these standards would be to promote excellence in the preparation of graduates as they enter the college counseling practice, to inform the public about programs that meet these educational standards, and to encourage these certificate programs to monitor the effectiveness of their delivery. One accreditation council that could be used as a model is MPCAC: Master’s in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council. While this

organization accredits master's degree programs in counseling, there are similar evaluation criteria applicable to a graduate certificate program in college counseling. Evaluation criteria could include: focus of the program, standards of training, the college/university, curriculum, faculty and staff, organization and administration, evaluations, and outcomes/results. Based on these standards, graduate certificate programs could potentially apply for yet-to-be-created accreditation, which could standardize the programs and create assurance of program quality, which is currently unknown because it has not been measured. Accreditation also ensures that these programs are reviewed on an on-going basis. Suggested competencies for college counseling date back to 1986 when the College Board's *Keeping the Options Open* report issued a list of 13 proposed competencies. While those competencies were written nearly 30 years ago, many of them may still be applicable today and could be resurrected as a start. Accreditation standards could also be based on the six professional competencies proposed by Savitz-Romer in 2012 in her discussion paper on professional college knowledge. When such new certificate programs are being established in the future, such standards can be reviewed and taken into consideration. To validate the curriculum of these certificate programs, it is recommended that a certifying examination based on the newly-formed standards be created and administered to certificate completers. This examination, similar to those administered in other professions like certified financial planners and certified public accountants, could potentially add credibility to these certificates and would confirm the knowledge gained, irrespective of where the certificate was earned. If certificate programs interested in graduating individuals who can set up their own private college counseling practice continue to increase, then a certifying examination would add assurance of some level of quality of the training, based on passing exam scores and issuance of a "certification." Given the variation in required practicum hours, this organization and these

standards could review the current expectations and propose a standard, consistent requirement of those hours. As we approach the thirtieth anniversary of the 1986 call for a certification in college counseling, the time is ideal for certification to validate this instruction (The College Board, 1986). This same professional organization could collect the data of enrollments and graduates from all existing certificate programs. A standard, unified reporting protocol would assist with capturing consistent information among all programs. The new professional organization could also house the complete online directory of certificate programs. This would provide a “one-stop shop” for individuals interested in learning about all of the offerings in the United States before selecting and enrolling in a program. For example, in addition to links to all existing programs, the NACAC website could house links to all of the documents/forms associated with applying to and enrolling in these programs. It is recommended that the three primary drivers of the college counseling movement—The College Board, NACAC, and Lumina Foundation—should unite to accomplish these goals. This recommendation is based on the involvement of these three organizations in the work related to college access, college readiness, and college choice. These recommendations will help advance the growing academic discipline of college counseling by establishing standards, raising visibility, and bringing consistency among the current and potential future programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

This research study has established a foundation of knowledge about graduate certificate programs in college counseling and there are a variety of additional studies that should be conducted to further understand this emerging academic discipline. Described below are six recommended studies.

Effectiveness study. A subsequent study should include documenting the effectiveness of these certificate programs. How do we know these programs are meeting the college access and college readiness needs? This would require a rubric and a tool to conduct this evaluation. This same research recommendation was raised by Savitz-Romer in 2012 when she stated, “Unfortunately, there is little research that assesses the impact of these types of professional development on students’ postsecondary outcomes” (p. 7).

Practicums study. As a continuing exploration of the practicums component of these certificate programs, I recommend a study focused on the practicums. Such a study would involve the faculty facilitating the practicums, the students participating in the practicums and should include feedback from the recipients of the direct college counseling within the practicums. This study would enable more data to be gathered in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the practicum within the curriculum. In addition, an assessment about the quality of each practicum could be completed.

Study of the unique elements. There is an opportunity to study the various unique elements within the certificate programs. For example, UCB offers a two-course “award of completion,” but exactly what does that mean in the field? Other unique aspects are the elective courses offered at some of the campuses. These include the “College Counseling for International Students” course offered at UCLA and “College Admissions Essays: The Role of the Counselor as Mentor and Editor” course offered at UCB. A focus on these elements can raise greater awareness about variations not yet researched.

A study of the advisory boards. Given the limited data collected on the advisory boards, it is recommended that these boards be explored in future studies. Information should be collected on their responsibilities, composition of membership, and authority with the programs.

This research would uncover their necessity and would confirm or deny if they are effective. Since advisory boards guide the direction of the certificate programs, documenting their roles will provide insight about their roles and influence.

Study other college counseling instructional models. While this study was being conducted, other college counseling instructional models were discovered and emerging. These include the College Counseling Training Initiative (CCTI), an online certificate at Rice University, the college planning specialist designation being developed by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), the Certified College Planning Specialist Certification (CCPS) Program offered by the National Institute of Certified College Planners (NICCP), and UC-Davis' customized certificate. It is recommended that research be conducted on these academic models. A study on CCTI could document the effectiveness of a non-college-credit-bearing training tool. A study on the emergence of the non-credit bearing online certificate at Rice University's Center for College Readiness would reveal how this program, launched in Fall 2013, introduces a new category of graduate certificates in college counseling: the non-credit bearing certificate. A part of what is referred to as "ASCA U," the college planning specialist will be ASCA's fourth specialist designation. At the time that this study was being published, ASCA was developing the college planning specialist, according to Eric Sparks of ASCA (personal communication, March 7, 2013). Understanding what a "specialist" is and does would benefit the industry, especially in knowing where this fits with formal, academic training. CCPS was launched in 2002 and claims to be the only college financial planning certification (NICCP, 2013). CCPS has three modules and an examination. Content in this program could be compared to the financial aid content of the certificate programs. UC-Davis offers a customized college admissions counseling certificate just for international educators, but little-to-no knowledge exists on this offering,

especially since it has yet to be launched. This program could be studied to explore the differences in content between coursework for U.S. educators versus international educators.

Study other admissions-related certificate programs. These graduate certificate programs in college counseling are not the only admissions-related certificate programs and notations. UC-Irvine offers the Independent Educational Consultant Certificate Program, Capella University offers a post-master's certificate in enrollment management, the American Association for Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers (AACRAO) offers a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Endorsement, and the University of Southern California's Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice offers a Leadership in Enrollment Management certificate. All of these certificates and endorsements are contributing to the continuing education of educational professionals and have potential to be studied to further understand them.

Conclusion

This study examined eight different graduate certificate programs in the United States and demonstrated their design and composition in the context of national college access and college readiness goals. The origins of these programs were documented, the educational content was reviewed, and the instructional faculty were presented. The analyses and suggestions offered in this study provide direction for the continued evolution of the academic discipline of college counseling. Overall, this study is significant as it adds to the current scholarly literature on college readiness counseling and will aid practitioners in this field because it describes the historical context and the existing landscape.

The publication of this study coincides with the announcement of major "calls to action" from the U.S. President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama (The White House

Office of the Press Secretary, 2014, January 16). One of these actions is focused on “offering additional resources to school counselors” and identifies NACAC as providing free resources and training for “school counselors to help guide students and their families on the path to college” (The White House Office of the Press Secretary, 2014, January 16, n.p.). While it was encouraging to see this action included, it was disappointing that graduate coursework in college counseling was not specifically identified as it has the ability to positively impact college access, college readiness, and college choice. At a time when student-to-counselor ratios are being questioned, when time devoted to college counseling is limited, and when the number of certificate programs is limited to eight, this research provides a roadmap for planning for the future of the college-bound student population. The next time a high school student considering a postsecondary education encounters a culture, a search, applications, and a decision, a college counselor with a college counseling certificate should be prepared to assist that student.

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Appendix A: Snapshot Profile of All Programs

Snapshot Profile of Graduate Certificate in College Counseling Programs in the U.S.								
	Eastern Michigan University	Hamline University	Suffolk University	UC-Berkeley	UC-Davis	UC-Los Angeles	UC-Riverside	UC-San Diego
Name of Certificate	Postsecondary Planning Specialist	College Admission Counseling	College Admission Counseling	College Admissions and Career Planning	College Admission Counseling and Career Planning	College Counseling	College Admissions Counseling	College Counseling
Type	Post Master's/Concurrent Master's	Post Bachelor's	Post Master's/Concurrent Master's	Post Bachelor's	Post Bachelor's	Post Bachelor's	Post Bachelor's	Post Bachelor's
Institution Type	Public	Private	Private	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public
Status	In Moratorium	Currently Available	Currently Available	Currently Available	Discontinued	Currently Available	Currently Available	Currently Available
Year Started	2010	2011	2009	1990	2007	1990	1991	1995
Number of Credits/Units	13	16	18	15	15	33	18	12
Number of Classes	6	5	6	5	5	7	6	3
Electives	None	None	Integrated	1 (College Admission Essays)	NA	1 (International Students)	None Specified	1 (School Counseling Program)
Location	Department of Leadership and Counseling	School of Education	Department of Psychology	Extension	Extension	Extension	Extension	Extension
Mode of Delivery	Online	Online	In person*	In person	In person	Online	Online	Online
Estimated Cost	\$7,250-\$13,000	\$4,360	\$17,712	\$4,000	NA	\$4,000	\$3,000	\$1,600
Discounts	None	None	None	None	Unknown	None	IECA Discount	UC-San Diego affiliates only
Number of Graduates	0	10	33	Unknown	Unknown	1971	55	Unknown
Number of Enrollees	0	Unknown	12		NA	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Number of Faculty	Unknown	1	5	8	NA	15	5	2
Completion Timeframe	Not specified	Not specified	8 months to 5 years	Within 1 year, up to 5 years	NA	Within 5 Years	1 Year to 18 months	6-9 months
Practicum Required	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Practicum Hours Required	NA	65	NA	40	23	65	None Specified	Unknown
Certificate Designation Available	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	For GPAs of 3.5+	NA	NA
Fees (application/enrollment)	\$35	None	\$50	\$150	NA	\$100	\$50	\$60
Minimum GPA for admission	3.3	None	3.0	3.0	NA	None	3.0	None
Admission/Enrollment Form	Graduate Admissions Application and Statement of Intent	Professional Development Course Catalog Registration Form	Graduate Admissions Application	Online Registration Form	NA	Application for Candidacy	Application for Candidacy	Application for Admission
Advisory Board	No	No	No	Yes	NA	No	Yes	Yes
Website	http://catalog.emich.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=17&poatoid=8064	http://www.hamline.edu/education/certificates/college-admission-counseling.html	https://www.suffolk.edu/college/departments/15555.php	http://extension.berkeley.edu/public/category/courseCategoryCertificateProfile.do?method=load&from=courseprofile&certificateid=17128	NA	https://www.uclaextension.edu/collegecounseling/Pages/default.aspx	http://www.extension.ucr.edu/academics/certificates/college_admissions.html	http://extension.ucsd.edu/programs/index.cfm?action=certdetail&certificateid=35&studentyearid=8

**Appendix B:
Questions for Program Directors Regarding Steps/Rationale for Certificate Creation**

CONSENT

You are invited to participate in a research study on graduate certificate programs in college counseling in the United States, which is my doctoral dissertation research. Your participation is voluntary and will involve answering a series of questions and potentially participating in a telephone follow-up conversation. You must be at least 18 years old to participate in this research. You may choose not to answer specific questions or to stop participating at any time.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this research project is to learn more about the existence of these certificate programs, their educational content, and the learners associated with them. My research will contribute to increasing awareness of these educational offerings.

COSTS AND BENEFITS

There are no direct costs nor payment involved with participation. It is estimated that this questionnaire will take up to 15 minutes to complete. As a research participant, the results of this study may be shared with you to assist you in your certificate program. Final reports are planned to be presented at various conferences and published in journals.

DATA

All data will be kept confidential, until published or presented.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Michigan-Dearborn and has received an IRB Determination: Exemption #2 of 45 CFR 46.101.(b)

REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION

You may ask more questions about the study at any time. Please contact me (Christopher Tremblay, doctoral student and principal investigator) at cwtrem@umd.umich.edu. You can also contact my Doctoral Dissertation Committee chairperson, Dr. Bonnie Beyer at beyer@umd.umich.edu.

Click to appropriate button below to provide/not provide your consent to participate.

I agree to participate in this questionnaire.

I do NOT agree to participate in this questionnaire

Demographic Questions

1. First and last name
2. What is your current job title?
3. How long have you served in that capacity?
4. Name of college/university where employed.
5. Primary telephone number.
6. Describe your role(s)/responsibilities related to this graduate certificate program.

Primary Questions

7. What is the official title of the college counseling certificate offered at your school?
8. What department/division or academic school or college created this certificate? (you may record more than 1).
9. In what year was the certificate proposed?
10. In what year was the certificate approved?
11. In what year was/were the first course(s) offered?
12. What prompted the introduction of this certificate?
13. What needs are this certificate attempting to address?
14. Were all of the courses that are a part of this certificate NEW courses offered when the certificate was launched?
15. Which courses already existed?
16. Who is the primary audience this certificate serves?
17. What other audiences does this certificate serve?
18. What types of resistance was faced prior to the approval of this certificate?
19. Is the certificate proposal available to be shared with me?
20. Who (name/title) on your campus/which group (committee) on your campus approved this certificate?
21. How many students have graduated with this certificate?
22. How many students are currently enrolled in this certificate program? (Currently enrolled = enrolled this semester in 1 or more courses)
23. If the program has been modified since it was started, please briefly describe how (changes to courses, titles, content, etc.).
24. How is the certificate program evaluated?
25. Are you aware of other similar certificate programs in the United States? If so, please complete this information.

**Appendix C:
Sample E-mail Message to Certificate Program Directors**

Dear Colleague:

As a doctoral student at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, I am conducting research on graduate certificate programs in college counseling (aka college admission counseling, college readiness counseling, and college access counseling).

Your college/university has been identified as having such a program. Therefore, I am seeking your assistance by completing an online questionnaire (link embedded). There are a few short questions and I plan to follow-up with a telephone call for additional information.

I have received IRB Approval to conduct this research. A copy of this approval can be accessed here (link embedded to scanned PDF).

If you are not the best person to complete this short questionnaire, please forward this e-mail message to the appropriate person.

Thank you.

Christopher W. Tremblay
University of Michigan-Dearborn
Doctoral Candidate

**Appendix D:
Release of Syllabi for Research Purposes**

As a doctoral student at the University of Michigan-Dearborn with IRB Exemption, I am conducting a qualitative case study on graduate certificate programs in college counseling. As such, a part of my research focuses on the content of the courses included in these certificate programs. I request a copy of course syllabi for all courses included in the certificate program FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY. All syllabi provided for this study will NOT be used for any other purpose (including to start a certificate program) nor shared with others.

IRB Exemption: [HUM00071085]

Christopher W. Tremblay, Doctoral Student
cwtrem@umich.edu

**Appendix E:
Mock-Up of Online Questionnaire**

Target Audience: Current Certificate Program Enrollees and Graduates

Introductory Text:

This anonymous questionnaire is collecting data for a study of graduate certificate programs in college counseling. Institutional Review Board (IRB) exemption has been granted by the University of Michigan.

Demographic Questions

1. Did you enroll in a certificate program focused on college admission counseling or college counseling? If yes, continue. If no, no additional questions asked.
2. Which school did you enroll at to pursue a certificate in college counseling/college admission counseling? (drop down menu of schools)
3. What is the name of the certificate you received or are pursuing? (drop down menu)
4. What is your gender? Male, Female, Transgendered
5. What is your age? (drop down menu of ranges: 20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55+)

Research Questions

6. Are you currently enrolled in a graduate certificate program in college admission/college counseling?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. If no, did you complete a graduate certificate program in college counseling?
If yes, in what year?
8. What is your current professional title?
9. If you were employed prior to completing the graduate certificate program, what was your professional title then?
10. If you are enrolled, how many courses have you completed? (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
11. How do you plan to use this certificate?
12. Were most of your courses taken: in person, online, hybrid?
13. What did you learn while enrolled in these certificate program courses?
14. How are you applying what you learned in this certificate program?
15. What population(s) do you apply this knowledge with on a regular basis?
16. In evaluating the effectiveness of this certificate program, what grade would you give it?
17. Other Comments?

Appendix F: Log of Interviews

Research Site	Date	Type
UCSD	1/28/2013	in person
EMU	2/7/2013	in person
UCR	2/19/2013	phone
Suffolk	3/29/2013	phone
Hamline	4/1/2013	phone
UCR 1	4/18/2013	in person
UCR 2	4/18/2013	in person
UCR 3	4/18/2013	in person
UCR 4	4/22/2013	phone
Suffolk 1	6/11/2013	in person
Suffolk 2	6/11/2013	in person

**Appendix G: Practicum Course Information
(for programs with a required practicum)**

Required Hours to Complete Practicum	Practicum Course Title	University
65 hours	Practicum in College Counseling	Hamline University
40 hours	Practicum in College Admission Advising	UC-Berkeley
23 hours	College Counseling and Career Planning Practicum	UC-Davis
65 hours	Practicum in College Counseling	UC-Los Angeles
None specified	Practicum in Counseling College-Bound Students	UC-Riverside
Unknown	College Counseling Practicum	UC-San Diego

Appendix H: Interview Questions for Telephone and In-Person Interviews**Eastern Michigan University**

May I record this conversation?

Why are you unwilling to share the certificate proposal?

You mentioned this certificate could be dissolved?

Why?

What was the expected enrollment?

Will anyone graduate with the certificate?

What about current enrollees?

When would a decision be made? Effective what term?

How has the certificate been promoted? (samples available?)

Which course(s) have been offered?

Why is the certificate program only targeted to current/prospective school counselors?

Do you think enrollment would increase if it were a standalone certificate?

Why not offer it as a standalone certificate?

You indicated there was a great amount of resistance to create it? Why?

Please elaborate on the various committee approvals.

Approximately enrolled = 20? More specific?

How many courses have been evaluated by students?

What have the student evaluations been on the courses offered?

How do faculty evaluate the courses/program?

COUN 672 is being taught this semester. How many are enrolled?

What is the role of Extended Programs in offering this certificate?

Hamline University

May I record this conversation?

It appears you teach 4 of the 5 courses?

What is your background?

How many other faculty teach and which courses?

All of the courses were new – how did you go about creating them/getting them approved?

Why Hamline?

What type of person is enrolling?

You indicated 10 have earned the certificate. And 27 are enrolled. Is it possible to send all 37 a link to an online questionnaire?

You indicated that an advisory board reviews the program. Tell me more.

How much of the program is theoretical based vs. practical knowledge?

What resources/expertise did you rely on to develop the new courses?

When was your pilot period and what did that involve?

University of California-Riverside Interview 1

May I record this conversation?

What is your title?

What is your role/responsibilities related to this certificate program?

Is it possible to receive a copy of the course outline and/or learning outcomes for each of the 6 courses?

What is the role/responsibility of the Academic Senate (related to the certificate program)?

How does UCR judge/validate the effectiveness of this certificate?

What opportunities for improving the certificate exist?

What would help increase the enrollment of this certificate?

University of California-Riverside Interview 2

May I record this conversation?

What is your current title in your primary position?

How long have you been teaching in a graduate certificate program?
(history of where/when)?

How did you become a member of the advisory board?

As an advisory board member, what were your responsibilities?

What courses do you teach?

Would you be willing to share a syllabus?

How are your courses evaluated?

How many students typically enroll in your courses?

What is the make-up of the students in your courses?

How much theory do you cover in the course?

How practical are these courses?

What is your perception of the value of this certificate?

Why do you think there are so few such certificates in the country?

Faculty are all adjunct.....thoughts on that?

What would make these certificates more valuable?

What is the cost to earn a certificate?

University of California-Riverside Interview 3

May I record this conversation?

How long have you been working with this certificate program?

In the online questionnaire you completed, you indicated that you recommend new instructors to the Director.

-When was the last time a new instructor was hired?

-How do you recruit instructors?

The questionnaire also references “private entities” as other audiences this certificate serves. Could you elaborate on what you mean by “private entities”?

What is the maximum enrollment for any course?

How many courses are taught each quarter? (is there a max)?

How many new students are enrolling each year?

What is the typical length of time to complete the certificate?

You provided me with a 9/18/2008 proposal to revise the certificate.

-Was this the only revision since 1990/1991?

-Do system-wide guidelines require a regular review? If so, how often?

Is the original proposal that started this certificate program available?

Could you elaborate on the Academic Senate that had to approve this certificate?

How many students have earned the certificate at UC-Riverside?

How many total students are in progress of completing the certificate?

Are you able to anonymously share any student evaluations from the courses?

Have other colleges/universities contacted you as they were exploring starting their own certificate program? If so, which ones and what type of inquiries did they make?

The 2008 memo references 7 audiences the certificate is intended for. Which audience comprises the primary audience enrolling in this certificate program?

The 2008 memo references a bachelor’s degree or equivalent is required prior to completing the program. What is “equivalent” and has that equivalent been used as the prerequisite? The degree is required prior to completing the program. Have you ever had someone start the program without having a bachelor’s degree?

Is the list of advisory committee members from 2008 still current?

How are these advisory committee members selected/appointed?

Would I be able to contact any of the advisory committee members to do interviews?

What does the certificate actually look like and who signs it/issues it?

Who determines the required text for each course?

Would UCR-E mandate use of the 3rd edition of the NACAC Fundamentals text?

Why/why not?

Does your office keep on file a copy of every syllabus?

Do syllabi have to be approved by a person or committee?

What kind of recruitment/marketing/promotion is done for this program?

How much of the program is theoretical based vs. practical knowledge?

What resources/expertise did you rely on to develop the new courses?

As the certificate was going through the review/approval process with your graduate curriculum committee and faculty assembly, did any questions/concerns arise? If yes, what were they?

Is it possible for me to send a survey to your graduates and of the certificate program?

University of California-Riverside Interview 4

May I record this conversation?

Please describe your role/responsibilities at UC-Riverside.

What is your role with the certificate program in college admission counseling?

How long have you been working with this certificate program?

How are the teaching faculty selected?

How do you evaluate the effectiveness of the faculty?

Is the original proposal that started this certificate program available?

Could you elaborate on the Academic Senate that had to approve this certificate?

Have other colleges/universities contacted you as they were exploring starting their own certificate program? If so, which ones and what type of inquiries did they make?

The 2008 memo references a bachelor's degree or equivalent is required prior to completing the program. What is "equivalent" and has that equivalent been used as the prerequisite? The degree is required prior to completing the program. Have you ever had someone start the program without having a bachelor's degree?

Who determines the required text for each course?

Does your office keep on file a copy of every syllabus?

Do syllabi have to be approved by a person or committee?

What kind of recruitment/marketing/promotion is done for this program?

How much of the program is theoretical based vs. practical knowledge?

What resources/expertise did you rely on to develop the new courses?

As the certificate was going through the review/approval process with your graduate curriculum committee and faculty assembly, did any questions/concerns arise? If yes, what were they?

University of California-Riverside Interview 5

May I record this conversation?

How long have you been working with this certificate program?

In what capacity?

What courses do you teach?

What makes you qualified to teach those courses?

Why do you teach in this program?

Describe the students in your most recent class. What were they like?

What is challenging about teaching these courses?

What do you like about teaching in this program?

Do you see the student evaluations? If yes, how would you characterize the feedback?

Are you willing to share your syllabi?

What kind of recruitment/marketing/promotion is done for this program?

How much of the program is theoretical based vs. practical knowledge?

Interview of UCSD Certificate Graduate

- Do I have your permission to record this interview?
- Why did you take these courses?
- Did you complete the certificate?
- Why did you not complete the certificate?
- To what program/what school did you transfer credits to?
- What credential were they applied to?
- How were the courses taken? In person?
- In what year(s) were the courses taken?
- What were the names of the courses?
- Do you still have the course syllabi?
- What were some of the assignments like?
- Were the faculty qualified to teach?

Suffolk University Interview 1

May I record this conversation?

In the online questionnaire you completed, you indicated that your primary responsibilities include teaching, advising, recruiting and overall management. I'd like to ask a few questions about each of these areas:

What courses do you teach?

Could you describe the recruiting you do for the program?

In the questionnaire, you indicated a focus on access and equity. Could you elaborate on what that focus includes?

How much of the program is theoretical based vs. practical knowledge?

What resources/expertise did you rely on to develop the new courses?

As the certificate was going through the review/approval process with your graduate curriculum committee and faculty assembly, did any questions/concerns arise? If yes, what were they?

Why was the school counseling license removed as a requirement and replaced with a master's in counseling?

Where could I find course descriptions for these 2 courses?

Is it possible for me to send a survey to your graduates and students currently enrolled in the certificate program?

For the Post-Master's Certificate in College Admission Counseling, a master's degree is required. What other "closely-related fields" have you considered, would you consider?

How many different faculty teach in the program?

Proposal Questions

1. What kind of format/template did the University provide for the proposal?
2. What do you mean by "post-graduate certificate"?
3. Why is there a difference in GPA requirements for admission?
4. You reference survey results? What type of survey did you administer?
5. You expected enrollment of 8-12 students a year. Has that been met/exceeded?
6. Have more than half of the students in the M.Ed. enrolled in the certificate as expected?
7. Have individuals enrolled in single courses as expected? How many? Which course(s)
8. Have you completed the marketing outlined in the proposal? If so, how?
9. What duties related to this certificate has the School Counseling Program Graduate Have the success indicators been realized? If so, how are they measured?
10. Of the electives offered, which ones are being taken at a greater frequency?

Have you seen any school counseling graduates return for this certificate? If so, how many?

Besides aspiring and current high school guidance counselors, do you see any other types of individuals enrolling in the certificate only program?

Suffolk University Interview 2

May I record this conversation?

1. Are the results from the 2008 survey available to be shared?
2. What are your current enrollment numbers?
3. Why was the program originally referred to as the “undergraduate admission counseling certificate”? Then the program was referred to as “Certificate in college counseling and undergraduate admissions”?
4. Tell me more about the 150 hour internship for three credits. Which course?
5. You have graduate assistants called fellows? What are their roles/responsibilities?
6. Will your students continue to blog? Why or why not?
7. Is it possible to obtain the e-mail addresses of your graduates/current enrollees or could you forward a survey link to them? I’d like to send them an online questionnaire.
8. Has some of the previous content on the website disappeared due to the change in academic location for the certificate program?
9. Walk me through the proposal approval process? What was the time period and who had to review/approve it?

-Graduate curriculum committee

-CAS faculty assembly

How often does the certificate program need to be reviewed? When will it next be reviewed?

10. Why/when was the school counseling license requirement eliminated?
11. Are course syllabi or learning outcomes from each course available?
12. Promotional/print materials available?
13. You went from 10 college visits to 7 in the Fieldwork Campus Visits course. Why the decrease?
14. Are you able to anonymously share any student evaluations from the courses?
15. What does the certificate actually look like and who signs it/issues it?
16. Who determines the required text for each course?
17. Would Suffolk mandate use of the 3rd edition of the NACAC Fundamentals text? Why or why not?
18. May I interview the adjunct teaching the fundamentals course? Who is it?
19. Are there any textbooks used in the fieldwork campus visits course?
20. Do you have a student sample of the 7 college visits final product that can be shared?

Suffolk University Interview 3

May I record this conversation?

1. How long have you been teaching COUNS 749 (Access and Equity in Higher education)?
2. How many times have you taught the course?
3. How does this course fit into college admissions counseling?
4. What are the learning outcomes for this course?
5. Why is this course/topic important for certificate holders?
6. What type of student has enrolled in your course?
7. Can you share examples of course readings/course assignments?
8. What do you believe students are gaining from this course?
9. What are the challenges with teaching this course?
10. What are the opportunities to improve this course?
11. How many students are typically enrolled in your course? Are they exclusively certificate students?
12. How much is theory vs. practical content?
13. How do you define access? Equity?
14. Is a syllabus of your course available?
15. What traditionally underrepresented groups do you explore?
16. What kind of research do you include in this course?

Appendix I: Data Used to Answer 5 Sub Questions

	Websites	Proposals	Documents	E-Mails	Syllabi	Online Questionnaire	Interview Transcriptions	Student Questionnaires	Student Assignments
UCB	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5		Q3, Q5						
UCR	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5	Q2, Q3	Q3, Q5	Q1, Q3	Q3, Q5	Q1, Q2, Q4	Q2, Q3, Q4, Q5	Q3	Q3
UCD			Q1, Q3, Q4	Q1					
UCSD	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5		Q3, Q5	Q1			Q4		
UCLA	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5		Q3		Q3, Q5			Q3	
Suffolk	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5	Q2, Q3	Q3	Q1, Q5	Q3, Q5	Q1, Q2, Q4	Q2, Q4, Q5		
Hamline	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5		Q3, Q5	Q1		Q1, Q2, Q4	Q2, Q4, Q5		
EMU	Q1, Q3, Q4,Q5		Q3	Q1		Q1, Q2, Q4	Q2, Q4, Q5		