

The U.S. Community College and the Needs of Tunisian ISETs

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*Katherine Boswell, Ph.D.
Education Policy Associates*

Genius of Community College Model: Multiple Pathways

- There is no one right way to organize postsecondary education.
- The American Community College is a unique model that works for our society



Genius of Community College Model: Multiple Pathways

- The goal set out by Pres. Obama is that every American will have access to at least one year of postsecondary education or training. He also wants to dramatically increase number of university degrees
- The sector that will play the critical role in meeting that challenge will be the community college



All Community Colleges are NOT Alike

- American education is VERY decentralized compared with the rest of the world, and is the responsibility of local communities and each state.
- Some colleges got their start as liberal arts "junior colleges," others were career technical institutes, and others were created as comprehensive colleges.

All Community Colleges are NOT Alike

- Some are very small, others are very large with multiple campuses. Similarly they are governed and funded many different ways.
- Unlike Tunisia, the government only pays part of the cost of postsecondary education. For two year colleges, the original concept was $\frac{1}{3}$ state, $\frac{1}{3}$ from local, and $\frac{1}{3}$ from the student.

Avg. Community College Tuition and Fees by Region

- National - \$2,713
- New England - \$4,221
- Middle States - \$3,854
- South - \$2,812
- Midwest - \$3,289
- Southwest - \$1,964
- West - \$1,594

Five Missions of Community Colleges

1. Community Colleges offer the first two years of an academic degree for those who want to transfer to a University
2. Community Colleges also offer one year certificate or two year terminal Associate degrees in many career and technical fields including health, computer science, business, etc.


Five Missions of Community Colleges

3. Community colleges offer customized contract training for business and industry.
4. Community colleges offer basic skills courses (sometimes called remedial or developmental education) to help students who aren't college-ready.

Five Missions of Community Colleges

5. Colleges offer continuing education courses for members of the community who are interested in learning a skill or academic subject but not earning a degree.



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- CC Student populations vary a great deal.
 - Average age is 29 years, but students may range from secondary students taking college classes early, to recent secondary school graduates, to working adults attending part time to upgrade skills, to older displaced workers who need to be trained for new career field.
 - Some attend full time but most attend part time while they hold a job. A large percentage are parents.

Community Colleges are teaching institutions that recognize and reward good teaching and learning practices rather than primary research.





Community College Pathways

Community Colleges offer short term skills building courses for those who aren't interested in a degree but want to learn a new field of interest, upgrade their skills, or change careers.

Linking Secondary to College

Provide opportunities to high school students, to get a head start on college level work



Linking Secondary to College

In some U.S. states between 20-30% of all juniors and seniors in high school earn college credit while still attending secondary school through dual/concurrent enrollment where they take actual college courses offered either at their secondary school, online or at a local college campus.

Linking Secondary to College

Advantages of Dual Enrollment:

- Gives students an opportunity to test the college waters and learn that they can do university level work
- Because they earn both secondary and college credit, they get a head start on their college education, save tuition, and complete their degrees faster

Linking Colleges to the Workforce

More than half of all community college students are seeking career technical associate degrees or certificates to prepare to enter the workforce



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Linking Colleges to the Workforce

Community Colleges partner with Business and Industry to ensure that students who enter their programs are well prepared with the skills and knowledge needed in a competitive global economy.

Linking Colleges to the Workforce

In order to prepare a trained workforce community colleges:

- Establish program advisory committees with local business leaders for each Career Technical degree program to ensure curriculum and equipment in academic labs reflect current industry needs and standards
- Offer internships and/or cooperative education experiences so that students get hands on direct experience in the field



Linking Colleges to the Workforce

- Offer certifications and other industry credentials that demonstrate technical competency
- On a contract basis provide customized training to incumbent workers of business and industry to upgrade skills
- Work with local officials to analyze projected industry and labor market needs and work to meet skills gap.

Linking Colleges to the University

25-40% of American community college students anticipate attaining a 4 year college baccalaureate degree by transferring to a university





Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

Community colleges are the primary point of entry to higher education for minority and low-income students because they are less expensive, have student centered support systems in place , and smaller classes.



Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

Because it is in the best interest of the state to increase university baccalaureate attainment, policymakers in many states have adopted regulations that ease the movement of students from two-year colleges to universities.



Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

These policies include:

- Identifying a common core of general education courses that are guaranteed to transfer from any college or university to another in the state
- Mandating common course numbering systems in the two and four year colleges to ensure better coordination among similar courses at different institutions

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Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

- Requiring that transfer data be collected and reported on a regular basis by state departments of higher education
- Providing statewide articulation guides to provide concrete descriptions of which courses will transfer between different institutions.



Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

Create Incentives to Encourage Students to Complete an Associate's degree before transfer:

- Community colleges are less expensive institutions than universities, both for the government to operate, and for families because they charge lower tuition



Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation

Incentives include:

- Guarantee that entire associate degree will be accepted in fulfillment of lower division general education requirements at a university
- Scholarships specifically targeted for transfer students who graduate from community college

Policies That Support University Transfer and Articulation


Incentives include:

- Joint admissions programs where a student is admitted to the community college and university at the same time, has an academic advisor that helps him/her choose classes that will easily transfer, and who is then guaranteed priority admittance to the partner university upon completion of the Associate's degree if he/she meets certain grade point average at community college.

Are Community Colleges Part of the Solution For Tunisia?

Community colleges in the U.S. enroll almost half of all undergraduates and more than half of all minority undergraduates in Higher Education



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“Education is one of the most effective interventions for improving our social and economic future - for individuals, communities, states, and the country as a whole. Given the changing nature of the global marketplace, the high school diploma is no longer sufficient for individuals seeking good jobs, nor for communities building a vibrant economy.

Addressing inequalities in higher education will require persistent and meaningful efforts by states in order to put in place the policies and resources to advance the education of all their residents.”

(Source: National Policy Alert – Center for Public Policy and Higher Education)



For further information:

Katherine Boswell, Ph.D.

Education Policy Associates

6336 S. Seville Rd

Salt Lake City, UT 84121

USA

Email: kaboswell@gmail.com