History of American Indian Community Colleges

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In 1968, the Navajo Nation of southwestern United States founded the first American Indian community college, Navajo Community College (NCC). Four years later on Columbus Day, October, 1972, NCC joined with five other American Indian community Colleges—Hehaka Sapa College of D-Q University (Davis, CA), Oglala Lakota Community College (Kyle, SD), Sinte Gleska College (Rosebud, SD), Turtle Mountain Community College (Belcourt, ND), and Standing Rock Community College (Fort Yates, ND)—to form the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC). These colleges would be joined by others throughout the 1970s and 1980s to comprise the American Indian controlled community college movement, establishing a new genre of higher education institutions.

Early Indian Higher Education Efforts

Until the late twentieth century, colleges had exerted little effort to provide higher education services to American Indians. What efforts they made were sporadic and short-lived. In colonial America, Harvard College stated its intention "to educate English and Indian youth of this country in knowledge and Godliness" (Morison, 1935). But by 1665 the Indian college building at Harvard housed exclusively English scholars and was completely torn down in 1698. Similarly, William and Mary College reflected a total enrollment of 16 Indian youths through 1776 at which time, "The Indian school was abandoned in consequence of the loss of the manor of Brafferton by the Revolution" (Morrison, 1874). Dartmouth abandoned its Indian higher education efforts after enrolling a grand total of 25 Indian students, and only graduating three: Daniel Simons in 1777, Peter Pohquonnopeet in 1780, and Lewis Vincent in 1781 (Chase, 1891).

In post-Revolution America, the responsibility to educate Indians devolved to the federal government. The U.S. Constitution authorized the federal government "To regulate commerce with foreign nations, and among the several states, and with Indian tribes." This clause became broadly interpreted as relieving the states of the responsibility of providing colleges or, indeed, any education services to Indians. Instead, between 1778 and 1871, the United States dealt with Indian nations as quasi-sovereign entities making numerous treaties, most of which included federal educational services responsibilities. Thompson (1978) reported that 97 treaties contained education-related clauses. The underlying themes of federal education services were Christianization, forced acculturation, and assimilation of Indians. To implement these themes, the government supported efforts to remove Indians from their local settings and enroll them in boarding schools—some of which provided postsecondary vocational training as well as elementary and secondary schooling.

By 1842, 37 such schools were in place; increasing to 106 in 1881. Such schools as General Pratt's Indian Industrial Training School in Carlisle, Pennsylvania (the alma mater of famous Sac & Fox athlete Jim Thorpe); Haskell Institute in Lawrence, Kansas; and the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, operated as federal institutions for Indians.

Significantly, like the private colonial colleges, these institutions were managed and controlled by non-Indians who, on their own, decided what might be best for Indians. However, as an unanticipated side effect which would not be experienced fully until mid-twentieth century, the schools provided a setting within which Indians of various tribes could exchange ideas and form inter-tribal cooperative networks.

The first Indian controlled schools, including higher education institutions, were founded by the Cherokee Nation of southeastern United States. The Cherokees, one of the Five Civilized Tribes—along with the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Muscogee (Creeks), and Seminoles—were forcibly removed to Indian Territory, now Oklahoma, under the Indian Removal Act of 1830.

By 1851, the Cherokee Nation had established two seminaries—one for males, one for females. The female seminary was modeled on the Mt. Holyoke Female Seminary of South Hadley, Massachusetts. The seminaries flourished. "The progress of the Cherokees was due to the excessive pride in their schools, which were never allowed under the supervision in any way of the educational authorities of the United States and none of their schools were ever visited by officers and agents of the Department of Education at Washington, until after June 30, 1898 (p. 229) (Starr, 1921)." By 1906, the United States government took over the Cherokee school system—including the seminaries. By 1909 the seminaries became co-ed; and on March 10, 1910 the male seminary building burned. The entire educational system shortly thereafter, under government control, went into decline (Fuchs and Havighurst, 1972). Bureau of Indian Affairs rhetoric of the time affirmed the need for Indian self-sufficiency; issuing policy statements in 1901 and 1905 urging termination of government subsidizing of Indian services (Prucha, 1975).

From Termination to Self-Determination

The termination talk continued through mid-century. At the same time alternatives to unilateral termination began to emerge. In 1928, Lewis Meriam and his research group published one of the most influential reports on Indian affairs entitled, *The Problem of Indian Administration*. Among other federal services criticized, the report paid special attention to the poor education services provided through federal supervision. The report recommended that Indians be given a large role in the services being rendered to them. This gave rise to two pieces of legislation which sought to turn over Indian services to the tribes and to the states—the Wheeler-Howard Act (the Indian Reorganization Act or IRA); and the Johnson O'Malley Act (40 Stat. 1458, 25 U.S. C., 452-456). But neither Act significantly increased Indian enrollment in higher education nor Indian participation in the governance of colleges. Rather the Acts appeared to emphasize voluntary rather than forced assimilation of Indians into the larger society. And few Indians chose to voluntarily assimilate. Thus, in the post World War II era unilateral termination again became the philosophy of the federal government (U.S. Senate, 1969).

Flushed with U.S. successes in Europe and Asia during World War II, the subsequent withdrawal of U.S. forces and European rebuilding via the Marshall Plan, the federal government applied the same philosophy to domestic Indian affairs. The Congress apparently saw withdrawal of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and resettlement of the Indians as similar to the WW II situation. Thus, they advanced plans for gradually liquidating the BIA and promoting relocation/training of Indians to integrate them into the larger U.S. society (U.S. Senate, 1969). Any educational support granted Indian individuals would be deducted as offsets against later tribal land claims judgments. Again Indians of various tribes found themselves pursuing common vocational educational trajectories away from their home communities, in Oakland, CA; Cleveland, OH; Chicago, IL; and elsewhere—which fostered intertribal bonds.

The notion that Americanizing Indians was the only foreseeable solution to the "Indian problem" dominated policy thought in the 1950s and early 1960s (Horse, 1982). This federal policy called "termination" became embodied in U.S. House of Representatives Concurrent Resolution

108 which classified Indian tribes regarding their readiness to become free-standing communities terminated from federal assistance. Indian tribes—and various states when they discovered that destitute Indians after termination would need to be supported under state welfare funds—opposed in the implementation of the termination policy but not before the Klamath Tribe of Oregon and the Menominees of Wisconsin had been severed from federal responsibility.

As the 1960s progressed a new concept gained currency—local community action. Applied to Indian country, the Johnson administration's great society philosophy of "grass-roots" empowerment provided Indians (perceived simply as another group of the poor, victimized by society) an alternative to relocation/termination. The Economic Opportunity Act of 1965 funded such programs as Head Start, Upward Bound, Job Corps, VISTA, and Community Action in Indian communities.

Although nested in the demeaning notion of "cultural deprivation," the programs provided immediate leadership opportunities for young Indians as well as "career ladder" options for them to pursue further education to become equipped to take over professional and managerial positions. Most importantly, the success of tribal efforts to address problems long ignored by the top-down efforts of the BIA produced a cadre of energetic, newly educated Indians convinced that Indian self-determination was the appropriate approach to address long-standing social problems of Indian communities.

Many actively promoted self-determination and were instrumental in convincing successive administrations to adopt the approach as official policy. In fact, in 1970 President Nixon specifically declared "Self-determination" by name as the official U.S. policy toward American Indians.

As one of the primary expressions of self-determination, Indians sought to demonstrate that Indian controlled schools are more effective than federally directed services for educating Indian populations. In the mid-1960s Navajos established the first Indian controlled elementary, secondary and postsecondary schools at Rough Rock, Ramah and Many Farms respectively as demonstration projects.

Throughout the seventies, Indians lobbied to include Indian control features in such legislation as the Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318); the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975 (P.L. 93-638); the Education Amendments of 1978 (P.L. 95-561); and the Indian Community College Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-471). By 1973, 12 federal schools had been turned over to Indian school boards. Seven years later, in 1980, the number had grown to 38 schools; currently 65 Indian controlled elementary and secondary schools enrolling 10,553 students are in operation. In addition, today 24 Indian community colleges enroll more than 4,400 students and provide other services to 10,000 Indian individuals (Carnegie, 1989).

The American Indian Controlled Community College Movement

The American Indian controlled college movement arose within community contexts in which many Indian adults had failed to complete elementary school, much less high school. Not surprisingly, many would be skeptical that tribal community colleges were needed or likely to be successful if established. However, like the rest of the U.S. a wave of Indian "baby-boomers" were enrolling in the nation's colleges and universities. Most were finding mainstream colleges uncongenial, stopping out and returning to their Indian communities to regroup—convinced that higher education was useful, but questioning whether the alien culture of mainstream campuses was worth enduring. They found a ready audience in Indians managing student support and assistance programs—Talent Search, Upward Bound, and Special Services (the so-called "trio programs"). As well as assisting Indian students on the various college campuses, trio program managers often arranged for extension courses from state colleges and universities to be offered to elder Indian students in the communities.

In 1972, several Indians involved in trio programs were in Washington, D.C. to attend a national meeting to become informed of the new provisions for FY 1973. Most arrived on Sunday, ready to meet with individual federal officials on Monday prior to the Tuesday meeting. But

Columbus Day fell on Monday and federal offices were closed. Instead, the Indians attended a conference organized by four Indian educators: Patricia Locke of the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Gerald One Feather of Oglala Sioux Community College, David Risling of D-Q University, and Helen Schierbeck of the U.S. Office of Education. Trio program administrators became aware that the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA)—Title III provided support to "developing institutions," primarily traditionally black colleges and colleges serving impoverished whites. They also learned that USOE administrators were willing to consider including Indians as a group funded under HEA Title III.

The ensuing discussion concerned the formation of a consortium of Indian colleges to pursue funding for mutual development assistance under HEA Title III—tentatively entitled the "American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)." In addition, Locke et al. told participants that individual Indian colleges would need to effect bi-lateral Title III relationships with assisting institutions in order to participate in AIHEC. Those participants whose extension course efforts provided a form of community college services, scrambled to identify their efforts as "developing institution" activities. Thus, for example, Turtle Mountain Community College, previously a loose collection of interested people who provided oversight to classes extended to their reservation by several colleges and universities, sought and obtained a formal charter from the tribal council of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians on November 9, 1972. Under the Tribal Resolution No. 678-11-72, the council also approved of the college's membership in the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (Davis, 1987).

One organization influential in shaping the initial form which the AIHEC took was the Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards (CICSB). CICSB pre-dated the consortium and in the initial time of development shared office space with the AIHEC development office as well as a common political outlook. The coalition had sprung from the network of Indian social activities of the late 1960s whose rising expectations for escaping the barriers of prejudice and discrimination had been fueled by social action programs in Indian communities under the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other agencies of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. Of particular impact was the passage of the Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318) which amended the elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 to include services to Indians and which also called for representation in governance by Indian tribes and organizations. Several tribes moved quickly, incorporating Indian school boards to contract for education services formerly performed directly by federal agencies, especially the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Not surprisingly, the new Indian boards decided to band together as a political group to insure comprehensive implementation of the contracting process, which they perceived as an unprecedented opportunity to regain control of one of the most influential institutions affecting their lives—elementary and secondary schools. They decided to formally incorporate their political coalition as the Coalition of Indian Controlled School Boards—to assist their mutual development. In this sense, AIHEC represented virgin territory. Whereas CICSB represented governing boards whose primary difference from the status quo was legitimation of Indian membership—the schools, in many cases, had operated in the communities for several years and the only real change was the turnover to Indian governance, the consortium represented a new level of aspiration, establishment of an entirely new genre of institutions—built from scratch.

Environmental Factors

Several factors were present in the environment within which the new tribal colleges were established. One such factor was the core of college-experienced Indian people in the community where each new tribal college had its genesis. Although many of these individuals had returned to their reservations and did not complete college, in most cases their experiences with higher education had been predominantly positive. They had some familiarity with the processes common to colleges—registration, classes, academic inquiry, and so on—but were aware of the difficulties they and other Indian students had faced in such institutions. In addition, an Indian Administrator Development Program funded by OEO at the University of Minnesota, Pennsylva-

nia State University and other graduate schools was graduating Indians with masters and doctoral degrees.

Another community factor present in the establishment of Indian controlled community colleges was the tribal political environment. Indian reservation politics (the majority of Indian controlled colleges are located on Indian reservations) are extremely volatile, occasionally devolving to highly polarized groups. This divisiveness made survival extremely difficult for new educational organizations which sought to serve a broad constituency based upon need for services rather than political affiliation. All tribal colleges experienced spirited political debate, and successful ones were able to forge an enduring coalition of support to insulate them from partisan threats to their autonomy.

One new element was the pan-Indian movement which had established inter-tribal networks of Indians. These networks were often not only at odds with representatives of the larger society's institutions—which they perceived as oppressing Indians—but also at times out of step with many conservative Indians on reservations who deplored confrontational tactics (Steiner, 1968). To explain *Indian control* in this context, it is important not to limit its linkage solely to the particular Indian tribe served by each college. On the other hand, the founders of the colleges understood the *tribal* rather than the *Indian* nature of Native American identity, eschewing amorphous "professional Indians" with tenuous connection to particular constituencies and insisting instead upon tribal legitimation requirements of formal charter and all-Indian board.

The development of tribal colleges was a movement which simultaneously supported development of new Indian colleges in several western states. The formal structure initiated by tribal colleges was the American Indian Higher Education Consortium; established in 1972 to support the development of Indian controlled higher education institutions. The consortium (AIHEC) had five charter members who decided that the criteria for membership would include Indian control as exemplified by possession of (1) a formal charter from Indian tribe(s) being served, (2) an all-Indian governing board, (3) a majority Indian student body, and (4) evidence of actively providing educational services. Although the developmental assistance activities of AIHEC were predominantly funded by Title III of the Higher Education Act—Aid to Developing Institutions, none of the criteria were *essential* for receipt of federal funding from that source. Indeed, as time passed AIHEC was persuaded by a variety of groups, including federal officials, to dilute its membership by requiring a "majority Indian membership" rather than an "all-Indian membership" institutional governing board.

Stein (1985) in his history of the colleges describes many similarities among the problems each faced, but also differences dependent upon local tribal political contexts. The experiences of the first six Indian controlled colleges is illustrative. At the Navajo Nation, a group of individuals including a non-Indian, Dr. Robert Roessel, married to a Navajo, actively pursued the founding of Navajo Community College (NCC). But NCC also enjoyed initial widespread support by the Navajo Tribal Council, the leadership of which strongly supported local control of education and was willing to exert leverage with state and federal officials with whom they had dealings.

Also at Navajo, the Office of Economic Opportunity had supported the tribal high school and extended that support to the community college level to help found Navajo Community College (Hannaway, 1989). Significantly, as the largest tribe in the United States, the Navajo were able to persuade Congress to pass the Navajo Community College Assistance Act (P.L. 92-189) on December 15, 1971. By contrast, the ardent supporters of D-Q University, part of an off-reservation inter-tribal and minority movement centered on the University of California-Davis campus, first gained control of a facility, an abandoned U.S. Army Signal Corps base near Davis, California, then sought to legitimate their efforts by declaring the occupancy to be an Indian/Chicano college, D-Q University (Belgarde, 1989). The next four Indian colleges consciously modeled themselves on NCC, but like D-Q University drew support from Indians centered at existing institutions.

Oglala Lakota Community College (Pine Ridge, SD) and Sinte Gleska College (Rosebud, SD) were helped by Indian educators at Black Hills State College. Unlike NCC, local tribal factionalism threatened the Sioux colleges early on as individuals working with the college at Pine Ridge were associated with the American Indian Movement take over at Wounded Knee in 1973 which

was strongly opposed by then tribal chairman, Wilson. Similarly, Chairman Robert Burnette of the Rosebud Reservation opposed the Sinte Gleska College supporters which included several of his political opponents on the tribal council (Stein, 1985).

At Turtle Mountain, similar support existed among the tribal council membership but outright vocal opposition from the tribal chairman, James Henry, never materialized. Rather Chairman Henry, who believed that job creation and supporting the intertribal vocational college effort, the United Tribes Educational and Training Center (UTETC), were more important, engaged in a policy of benign neglect. By contrast, Standing Rock Community College enjoyed enthusiastic cooperation from Tribal Chairman Melvin White Eagle and BIA Superintendent Shirley Plume as well as local Indian educators who all shared a mutual vision of a well educated tribal membership for the Standing Rock Sioux.

The Tribally Controlled Colleges (TCCCs)

Stein (1985) designated the tribally controlled colleges as "TCCCs," a convention this article follows. He divided the TCCCs into three groups as follows:

First Wave of TCCCs

1969– Navajo Community College, Tsaile, AZ
1970– D-Q University (Hehaka Sapa College), Davis, CA
1971– Oglala Lakota Community College, Kyle, SD
1971– Sinte Gleska College, Rosebud, SD
1972– Turtle Mountain Community College, Belcourt, ND
1972– Standing Rock Community College, Fort Yates, ND

Second Wave of TCCCs

1973– American Indian Satellite Community College, Winnebago, NB
1973– Fort Berthold Community College, New Town, ND
1973– Sisseton-Wahpeton Community College, Sisseton, SD
1973– Lummi School of Aquaculture and Fisheries, Lummi, WA
1973– Cheyenne River Community College, Fort Totten, ND
1975– Blackfeet Community College, Browning, MT
1975– Inupiat University of the North, Barrow, AK
1975– Dull Knife Memorial College, Lame Deer, MT

Third Wave of TCCCs

1977– Little Big Horn College, Crow Agency, MT
1977– Salish-Kootenai Community College, Pablo, MT
1977– College of Ganado, Ganado, AZ
1978– Fort Peck Community College, Poplar, MT
1978– Keeweenaw Bay Ojibway Community College, Baraga, MI

Stein's historical account only covered the period up to 1978. Since that time some of the colleges he included have ceased to function and others have come into existence. Those now considered nonfunctional as Indian community colleges include Lummi School of Aquaculture, Inupiat University of the Arctic, College of Ganado, and Keeweenaw Bay Ojibway Community College.

New additions to the list include Bay Mills Community College (Brimley, MI): Crownpoint Institute of Technology (Crownpoint, NM); Fond du Lac Community College (Cloquet, MN); Fort Belknap Community College (Harlem, MT); Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College (Hayward, WI); Northwest Indian College (Bellingham, WA); Stone Child College (Box Elder,

MT), which addition brought Montana to the same status of North Dakota—that of having an Indian community college on each of its reservations; and United Tribes Technical College (Bismarck, ND) (Carnegie, 1989).

Common Attributes of TCCCs

All of the tribal colleges share common goals. They seek to promote the culture of the tribe they serve, work to strengthen the economies of their Indian communities and strengthen the social fabric of the tribal community both internally and in conjunction with outside communities through empowering individual Indian people. This contrasts sharply with the BIA colleges which recruit a multi-tribal clientele seeking to enable their students to fill lower social strata in mainstream society. The tribal colleges also differ from Indian programs instituted by many of the western state colleges. In state institutions responding to Indian needs is secondary, usually part of an old priority goal of "pluralism" originally applied to the then unassimilated European immigrants, now dusted off to encompass nonwhite minorities. Tribal college student bodies, governance structures, faculty, and physical facilities display commonalities unique to the genre (Carnegie, 1989).

Students

The colleges are located on Indian reservations. Not surprisingly, the majority of their students reside on or near the reservations of the tribes which chartered these colleges. In this respect, they are similar to majority society community colleges which tend to be nonresidential services. However, tribal college students reside in rural areas—not part of the urban or suburban clientele associated with mainstream community colleges. The tribal colleges tend to enroll students who are considerably older than those in nontribal institutions. In several colleges, the modal student is a woman who is the solo parent of one or more children. Also, the Indian students are frequently members of the first generation of their families to attend college. And they are far below the national average in income.

Tribal colleges act as a bridge between Indian students and the outside world. Often, they help the Indian student who is "stopping-out" from a majority, society college re-enroll by providing emotional, academic and financial support and assistance. Or, the college might provide specific training to equip students for all particular job opportunities becoming available off the reservation, but within commuting distance. For example, the college may train a small cadre of students in particular construction trades for which demands are growing due to economic development activities in the state. Nevertheless, the modal student at TCCCs is one who would generally not be served by existing state higher education institutions.

Governance Structures

Indian college governance structures follow a common model, perhaps due to the early successes of AIHEC colleges in maintaining adequate financial support. The pattern of soliciting a tribal charter to sanction college efforts, establishing and maintaining an all-Indian (or majority Indian) membership governing board and appointing an Indian professional as chief executive dominate Indian colleges. In fact, a number of the college founders visited the campuses of other Indian colleges to view and adopt the governance designs they found at the successful institutions. Certainly not all the colleges initially sought AIHEC membership; for example, the College of Ganado remained aloof until it appeared that substantial funding for Indian colleges was imminent through the Indian Community College Assistance Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-471).

Interestingly, although the Indian colleges sought charters from their tribal governments, the successful ones needed to maintain an arms-length relationship and avoid becoming part of the tribal government bureaucracy. Sinte Gleska survived a critical test when Chairman Burnette sought to dissolve the college's board (Stein, 1985). In addition, Turtle Mountain consciously insulated itself from direct tribal government control by the tribal council and a second board of

directors selected by the trustees to oversee the college's day-to-day affairs. Other colleges sought to be controlled by the Indian *society* they served, but eschewed dependence on the Indian *state* as exemplified by particular regimes of the tribal councils.

From the very outset, the Bureau of Indian Affairs colleges—Haskell Indian College, Southwestern Indian Polytechnical Institute, the Institute of American Indian Arts—were defined as different from the AIHEC colleges. In fact, when testifying before Congress, AIHEC used BIA colleges as examples of the top-down federal bureaucracy's waste and ineffectiveness. In addition, AIHEC colleges defined themselves as different from the Indian studies programs at state universities, as well. State colleges and universities relate to Indian individuals rather than their communities, per se. Indian studies programs occupy a peripheral role in state institutions, folded in with other minority programs. In tribal colleges, cultural revitalization is often the central mission of the institution. Indian controlled colleges occupy a narrow niche, characterized by local control and orientation toward development of *particular* American Indian communities. They are neither federal, nor state, nor even tribal governmental adjuncts. They are a sociocultural product of the Indians they serve (U.S. Senate. 1976).

As part of the focus, leadership including Indian women as well as men significantly define American Indian controlled colleges. For example, today eight of the AIHEC college presidents are women. Carol Davis is proclaimed as the "Founding Mother" of Turtle Mountain Community College. And it should be recalled that two women, Patricia Locke and Helen Schierbeck, (assisted by David Risling and Gerald One Feather) convened the conference which founded AIHEC. It comes as no surprise that American Indian women on some reservations find the institutions so congenial and responsive to their needs that they outnumber the men students at their tribal colleges.

Faculty

Despite their colleges' focus on Indian participation both in the student body and administration, TCCC faculties are generally non-Indian. This is not by choice. Were a sufficient number of American Indian professionals available, most Indian colleges would employ them. Although the number of Indian teachers is growing, the demand at Indian elementary and secondary schools remains high enough to employ most graduating Indian professionals—and these schools offer much more attractive salaries than the financially strapped Indian controlled colleges. A special group of instructors with little formal education are employed by some institutions. These are the Indian culture specialists—Indian elders hired to pass on the native culture traditionally transmitted as an oral rather than written tradition. In addition to lecturing, they authenticate what other younger, and often times non-Indian, instructors provided as content in their courses (Carnegie, 1989). At times this creates tension. The non-Indian faculty holding masters and doctorate degrees sometimes perceive themselves to be less highly valued than the Indian "nonprofessionals"—a status reversal particularly difficult to endure in a setting where salaries already are lower than those of state colleges (Stein, 1985).

Whatever their background, most tribal college faculty members are sensitive to the tribal communities' needs. Some are non-Indian who have resided on or near the reservation for most of their lives. Others arrive from the outside and elect to become permanent residents. More often, faculty turnover is a chronic problem at TCCCs. The reality that TCCC faculty need to assume enormous teaching loads conspires with the unattractiveness of isolated settings to limit the tenure of instructors. It also takes a special sort of faculty member, for example, to accept the challenge to incorporate Indian culture and contemporary concerns into all of their courses—as demanded by at least one tribal college (Carnegie, 1989).

Horse (1982) found that tribal studies programs were being developed and implemented in most of the TCCCs. They varied in terms of their theoretical and normative dimensions, and suffered by comparison to the state of development of the standard academic curricula offered at the same institutions. TCCC tribal studies programs emphasize what he called "Tribal Liberal Arts." The content often included "Indian" as well as "tribal" studies, but accreditation of such

courses was an issue. Nevertheless, he perceived the role of tribal studies curriculum in TCCCs as "singular among all higher education institutions" (p. 153).

Facilities

The physical facilities of TCCCs share a common degree of woefulness, although they vary from college to college. At Navajo, a large residential campus with impressive buildings suffers from insufficient funds for maintenance and upgrading since being built in the early seventies. More commonly the deterioration took place long before the local college took over the facility. Some campuses use donated space—sometimes BIA buildings previously condemned and turned over to the tribe. Other colleges construct buildings as money becomes available. Rarely elegant, often these metal frame buildings are nevertheless (barely) sufficient to provide classroom space for growing student bodies (Carnegie, 1989).

The facilities lack has necessitated some cooperative partnerships with other local organizations. Usually the local college, although sometimes perceived as a competitor for professionals, nevertheless is allowed to use high school classrooms for evening classes. Continued contact thus smoothes over some of the resistance against including the college as part of the local educational "establishment." In addition, cooperative links with businesses sometimes grow as colleges use their facilities as training sites for vocational students. Colleges with a geographically scattered clientele sometimes look to the tribal housing authority as a source of abandoned mobile homes which can be converted to temporary classrooms in isolated areas. And occasionally, the state government will construct a building for a special purpose at the college—for example, to house a particular type of vocational training the state seeks to promote. Tribal college administrators joke about being part of an anthropologically interesting "hunting and gathering" culture—in relation to facilities!

Consequences of Common Attributes

The colleges developed very similarly due to the common attribute of their local environments. All see the source of financial support as necessarily coming from outside the communities in which they are located. Perceiving themselves as one of the truest expressions of the tribal will, the colleges see themselves as inheritors of the quasi-sovereign status of their tribes and of the special relationship with the federal government forged in replacement for tribal lands ceded to the United States. But, unlike federal schools for Indians, the colleges consider direct grants, rather than federally directed services, the appropriate means of federal financial support. In any case, whether through successful pursuit of competitive grants or through funding specifically for Indian community colleges, the federal government remains, overwhelmingly, the primary source of financial support for tribal colleges.

Because the colleges' clientele is similar, they tend to offer curricula closely associated with employment available on the reservation—clerical training, health-related occupations, paraprofessional training, education aide training, and the like. These are positions disproportionately filled by females and others coming from a low-income background. Another consequence of their older female clientele is an orientation toward family, traditionally a role responsibility of women. Tribal colleges often address services to the entire family, encouraging grandparents of students to join the core of elders providing Indian studies authentication, or help to obtain services for students' children by serving as ombudsmen.

Stein (1985) tells a touching story of the parent of a child needing special education services who credited Sinte Gleska College with being the only organization willing to help her obtain appropriate services for her child. The incident could just as easily have taken place at any of several Indian colleges. Although student-centeredness may be characteristic of other small colleges, the actual involvement of students' family members as cultural assets is unique to, but common among, Indian community colleges.

Having an Indian board keeps the colleges closely attuned to the demands of the tribe, rather than to other colleges. Often the board members are not college graduates and their focus is upon the local community's developmental needs. On one hand, TCCCs are less likely to adopt a practice simply because it has become popular among other colleges in the state. On the other hand, they are more likely to participate in local trends. They are likely to be seen as a corporate citizen in times of community celebrations. Indian colleges regularly donate to local causes. Of course, the college is also likely to employ Indian, rather than non-Indian staff. However, the professional staff, whether Indian or non-Indian is less likely to be allowed free reign to define the role of the college. Rather, decision-making at the TCCCs is often communal, suited to the egalitarian norms common among Indian societies. Unlike the faculty at research universities, the TCCC faculty do not dominate the activities of the college. The before-mentioned status reversal regarding Indian elders (often not holding college degrees) and non-Indian college faculty (usually younger) inhibits some faculty solidarity needed to make it formidable at the TCCCs. In addition, the high percentage of part-time faculty that continue to be needed also dilutes the impact of the faculty as a whole, some part-timers simply do not get very involved. But probably the simple overwhelming burden of multiple preparations plus struggling for funding leaves little time for political jockeying, creating a low level of faculty dominance at Indian colleges. This does not mean that colleges do not provide high quality instruction. Rather, it means that such high quality is often viewed as institutionally opportune (as an aid to accreditation credibility, for example) rather than appreciated as an end in itself or as a means to enhance the reputations of individual faculty members.

Summary

The tribally controlled community college movement offers an apparently successful alternative means for educating Indians. Although earlier models—federal postsecondary schools for Indians and federal scholarships for Indians to attend mainstream colleges and universities—persist, the tribal college model currently dominates Indian higher education. In addition, the colleges reflect a social, cultural and political force in their communities that is attuned to tribal and intertribal demands, rather than those of mainstream society. A critical attribute of the colleges is their maintenance of important linkages with the outside world—particularly with the academic professional community and with the federal government which supply critical kinds of legitimacy and funding.

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