

*Section 5 -
Education Issues -*

**Program and System Structure
The North Carolina Community College System**

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PROGRAM AND SYSTEM STRUCTURE

THE NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

ISSUE STATEMENT

The North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS or the System), founded in 1962, is one of North Carolina's three principal education delivery systems and the State's primary resource for delivering instruction in skilled technical occupations, college transfer, high school equivalency, and literacy. Today, the System comprises 58 institutions that vary greatly in enrollments, program offerings, and total budgets.

As important as it has been until now, NCCCS is likely to be even more critical to the State's future, as North Carolina shapes its educational systems to meet increasingly complex workforce preparation demands. Recognizing this, the Government Performance Audit Committee is concerned about the number of community colleges; current distribution and quality of programs; and the adequacy of the program planning process to create, eliminate, or renew curricula in ways that respond not only to immediate and local community needs but also to future and statewide workforce development needs. Therefore, it authorized a review of NCCCS's programs and structure.

The first sections of this paper provide background information and findings organized by topics: system history and mission; the number, distribution, and size of institutions; funding; governance; and program planning and distribution. Recommendations are grouped at the end of the paper, followed by implementation considerations and implications. A few issues that affect both NCCCS and other state education systems are discussed in a separate issue paper, "The Continuum of Education Programs and Intersystem Governance."

HISTORY AND MISSION

System History

In 1957, forward-thinking people in North Carolina envisioned that an integrated and enlarged system of community colleges and industrial education centers would support industrialization of the State's still largely agrarian and rural economy. Planning began in that year. In 1961, there were five community colleges and seven industrial education centers. These were the 12 original institutions that formed the new system when it was founded in 1962. Four years later, in 1966, after a period of rapid expansion, there were 43 institutions. Three years later, 11 more were added. The last addition, Brunswick Community College, was added in 1978.

The Community College Act of 1963 established NCCCS. The community colleges, which were under the control of the State Board of Higher Education, and industrial centers, which were under the control of the State Board of Education, were brought under the control of the latter. Using its authority, the State Board of Education created the Department of

Community Colleges. In 1979, the General Assembly changed control of the System by creating the State Board of Community Colleges (the State Board), which assumed its official duties in 1981. Today, NCCCS's 58 institutions operate programs in 85 campuses and other locations. The System has an annual budget of \$463 million; offers some 280 curricula, plus numerous extension courses; and enrolls more than 754,500 students.

Mission

The statutory mission of NCCCS is stated in Article, Section 115D-1:

"a system of educational institutions throughout the State offering courses of instruction in one or more of the general areas of two-year college parallel, technical, vocational, and adult education programs....The major purpose of each and every institution operating under the provisions of this Chapter shall be and shall continue to be the offering of vocational and technical education and training, and of basic, high school level, academic education needed in order to profit from vocational and technical education, for students who are high school graduates or who are beyond the compulsory age limit of the public school system and who have left the public schools..."

NCCCS' currently stated mission is to:

"Provide adults in North Carolina with quality and convenient learning opportunities consistent with identified student and community needs.... Educational and training programs are designed to enhance the personal, social and economic potential of the individual and to produce measurable benefits to the State."¹

Finding 1: NCCCS's mission has expanded from its early dual focus on technical/vocational and junior college education to include many other programs.

The original 12 institutions that formed NCCCS were of two types--industrial education centers and junior/community colleges. Thus, from its origins, the System had two missions, vocational training and two-year general education programs.

The primary focus always has been vocational and technical education and training, as the statute states, with a secondary focus on college transfer. The current mission of the community colleges has broadened considerably to include a much larger emphasis on college transfer, plus literacy, remediation, and special populations education.

Many interviewees indicate that what is now referred to as college transfer or college parallel programs constitutes a recent change or expansion of mission. While this mission is historical, it is true that a number of institutions that did not have college transfer programs have added them. (College transfer programs are described below, in the section on program planning

¹*A Matter of Facts: The North Carolina Community College System Fact Book, 1992.*

and distribution. The strategic question of whether NCCCS should offer these programs is discussed in the issue paper on "Continuum of Education and Intersystem Governance.")

But NCCCS's mission also has broadened, as this System and its peers elsewhere increasingly have come to serve adult education needs. NCCCS's programs today include a wide variety of offerings aimed at special training populations, including senior citizens, prisoners, law enforcement and correctional officers. There are numerous programs in literacy and basic skills for adults. Colleges also provide general interest courses to meet avocational and leisure needs of residents.

In addition, the System's clients include businesses and industry as well as individual students and its programs include specific industry-oriented economic development services. Finally, in many smaller communities, the local community college is the primary provider of community activities and cultural events.

Thus, like elsewhere nationally, NCCCS institutions have been evolving toward a model of "comprehensive community colleges," with diverse programs serving many categories of clients.

NUMBER, DISTRIBUTION, AND SIZE OF NORTH CAROLINA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES

In this section, peer data are used extensively, to support analysis of whether NCCCS's current system structure—number and distribution of colleges—is appropriate. Peers used for comparison were selected based on comparable state population or land area.

Number of Institutions and Sites. NCCCS has grown to include 58 institutions encompassing 85 main and satellite campuses or instructional sites and hundreds of locations in which courses are taught. In addition to the current main and satellite campuses, the Department of Community Colleges indicates that there are proposals emerging for establishment of several additional satellite campuses and for a new college in Union County.

Finding 2: Today, NCCCS is the second largest community college system in the country.

Only California, with a much larger land area and population, has a larger system, in terms of number of campuses and locations. Ten peer states that have approximately the same land area or population were selected for comparison purposes. As Exhibits 1 and 2 show, North Carolina, at 58, has by far the largest number of community colleges and the largest number of total sites of these states. Two other states with high numbers of colleges are Illinois, which has 47 and Texas with 49. As Exhibit 3 shows, North Carolina has the largest number of colleges per population and per square mile.

Members of the General Assembly indicate that, if a rigorous attempt is not made to arrest institutional proliferation, they foresee eventually having nearly 100 colleges or satellites, moving toward one per county. If nearly each county were to have its own institution, with multiple

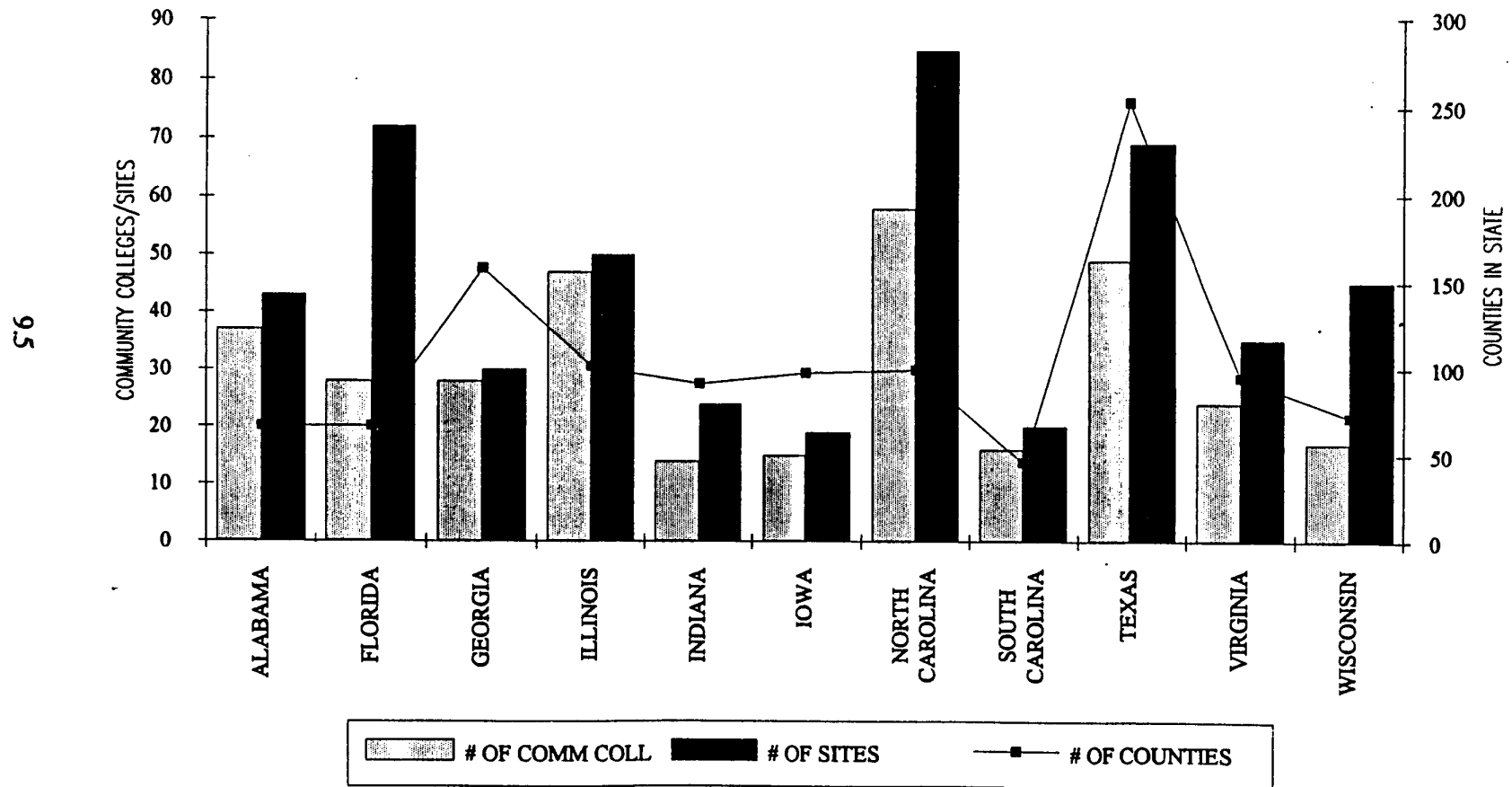
EXHIBIT 1
North Carolina and Selected Other States
Comparison of Number of Community Colleges, Sites, Counties by Land Area, and Population
1989

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<u>STATE</u>	<u>LAND AREA</u>	<u>POP</u>	<u>MEDIAN HSEHLD INCOME</u>	<u>TUITION</u>	<u>NO OF CCs</u>	<u>NO. OF SITES</u>	<u>NO. OF COUNT</u>	<u>POP PER CC</u>	<u>SQ MI/ PER CC</u>	<u>1989 ENROLL</u>	<u>1989 FTE</u>	<u>AA DEGREES</u>
ALABAMA	50,851	4,040,587	\$23,597	\$662	37	43	67	93,967	1,374	66,420	48,841	5,877
FLORIDA	54,136	12,937,926	\$27,483	\$729	28	72	67	179,693	1,933	312,293	171,739	32,244
GEORGIA	58,197	6,478,216	\$29,021	\$852	28	30	159	215,941	2,078	50,537	32,451	7,126
ILLINOIS	55,877	11,430,602	\$33,252	\$871	47	50	102	228,612	1,189	341,730	183,260	23,141
INDIANA	36,189	5,544,159	\$28,797	\$1,374	14	24	92	231,007	2,585	35,147	20,265	8,902
IOWA	56,043	2,776,755	\$26,229	\$1,225	15	19	98	146,145	3,736	48,668	35,714	8,145
NORTH CAROLINA	48,880	6,628,637	\$26,647	\$288	58	85	100	77,984	843	132,649	80,248	9,894
SOUTH CAROLINA	30,280	3,486,703	\$26,256	\$807	16	20	46	174,335	1,893	39,387	26,364	4,949
TEXAS	262,970	16,986,510	\$27,016	\$455	49	69	254	246,181	5,367	372,103	208,486	22,595
VIRGINIA	39,841	6,187,358	\$33,328	\$813	24	35	95	176,782	1,660	129,364	66,180	7,438
WISCONSIN	54,464	4,891,769	\$29,442	\$1,160	17	45	72	108,706	3,204	94,822	57,433	8,658
US		248,709,873	\$30,056	\$758	968					4,820,771	2,717,565	435,210

Note: States were selected based on similarities in land area or population.
Sources: US Census Data, Digest of Education 1991, Almanac

EXHIBIT 2
North Carolina and Selected Other States
Number of Community Colleges, Community College Sites, and Counties

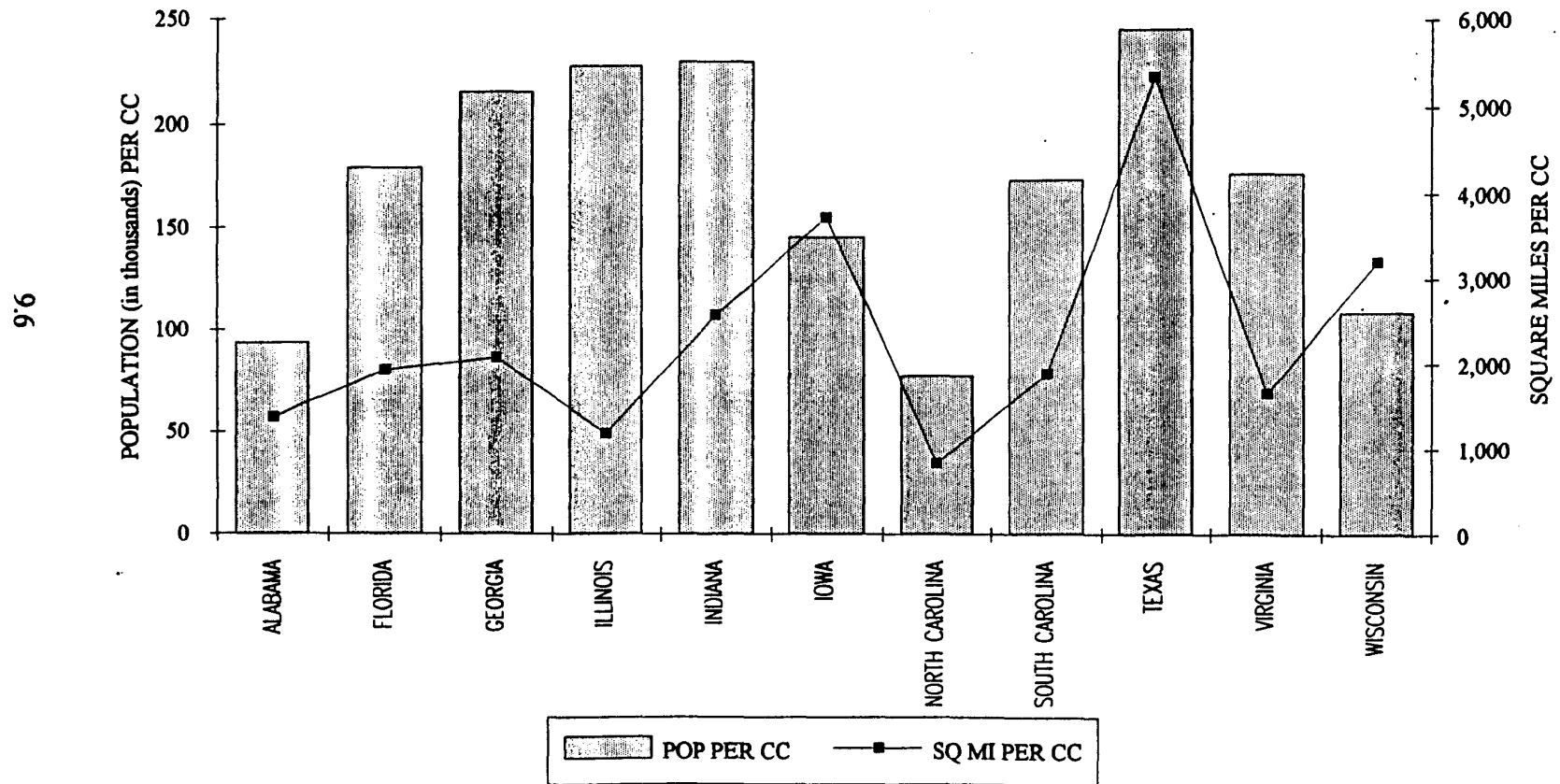


Sources: US Census Data, Digest of Education 1991, Almanac

EXHIBIT 3

North Carolina and Selected Other States

Population and Square Miles Per Community College



Sources: US Census Data, Digest of Education 1991, Almanac

additional sites, the future funding demands to deliver quality instruction would be impossible to meet.

Geographic Distribution. NCCCS indicates that 95 percent of the residents of North Carolina live within a thirty-mile drive of a community college. As Exhibit 4 illustrates, with a 30-mile radius, service areas of the community colleges overlap significantly. Even on the map drawn with a 15-mile radius, (Exhibit 5), service areas still overlap in most areas. Moreover, these exhibits significantly understate the proximity of institutions and their programs to state residents, as they do not show the locations of satellite campuses.

Size of Institutions. Exhibit 6 lists the community colleges; college transfer programs; the 1992 target population (age cohorts 19 to 54) in the college's service area; headcount enrollment; FTE enrollment; and average cost per FTE.

Finding 3: The System includes colleges which are too small to offer a diverse array of expensive technical programs, support administrative costs, and achieve a reasonable average cost per FTE.

Colleges vary enormously in size from Central Piedmont Community College with an enrollment of 59,242 students to Pamlico Community College with an enrollment of 1,677 students. They also vary greatly in average cost per FTE, for example, from \$2,647 to \$6,210 respectively, for these two colleges.

The first 15 colleges listed have the lowest headcount and FTE enrollments and correspondingly high costs per FTE. For the most part, these colleges are located in less densely populated areas of the State. Yet resources required to support a core administration for these smaller institutions is as great as that in their larger sister institutions. In some cases, special funds are provided by the State Board to aid small institutions in covering basic administrative costs.

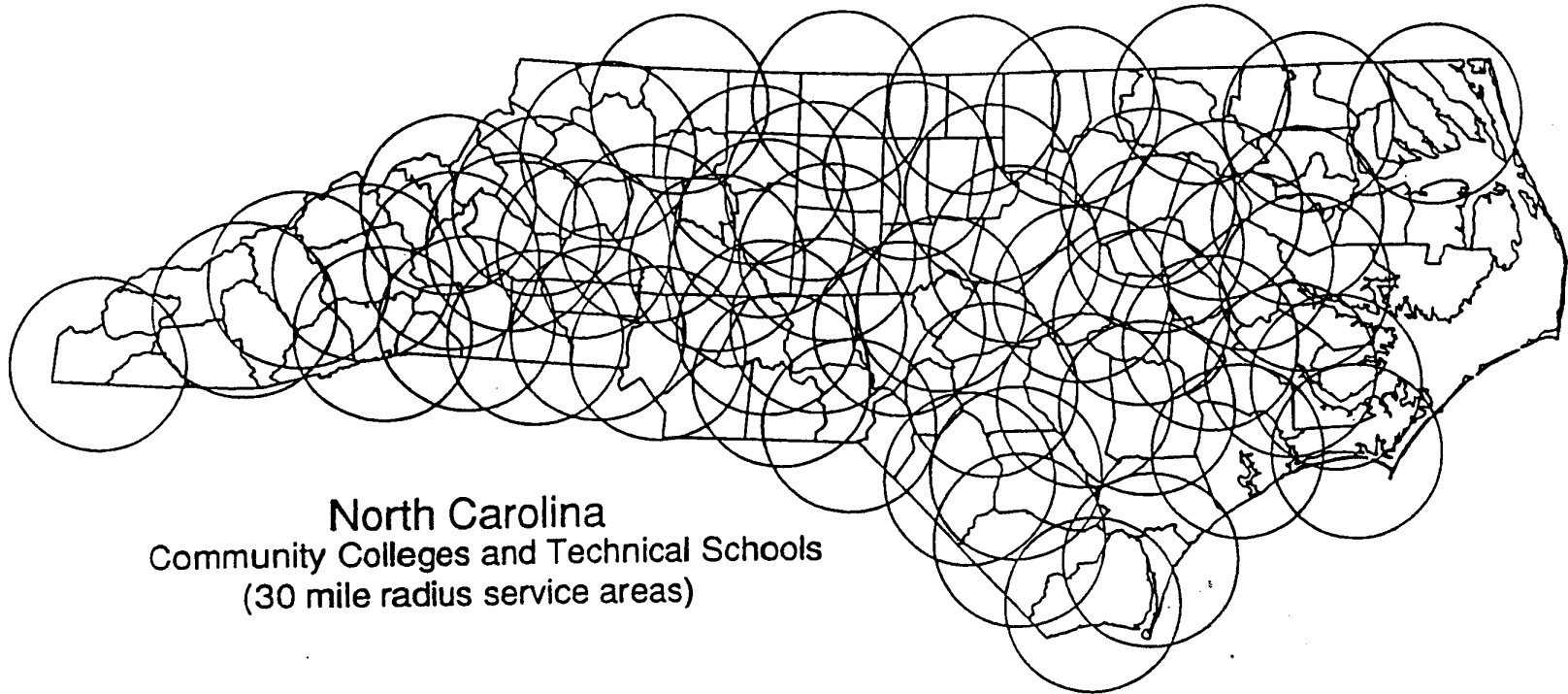
Some currently independent colleges originally began as satellite campuses of neighboring community colleges. Indeed, there has been a pattern of establishing satellite campuses and eventually converting them from satellite to institutional status. James Sprunt Community College, Pamlico Community College, and Isothermal Community College all are examples of colleges which formerly were satellite campuses.

Whether all of these small institutions eventually can grow large enough to not require special administrative subsidies or to achieve an economic scale with average per FTE costs is questionable, given that service areas are small and population numbers in those areas where they serve are low.

Finding 4: The State Board has difficulty in exercising control over the establishment of new colleges and satellite campuses, despite formal statutory authority.

EXHIBIT 4

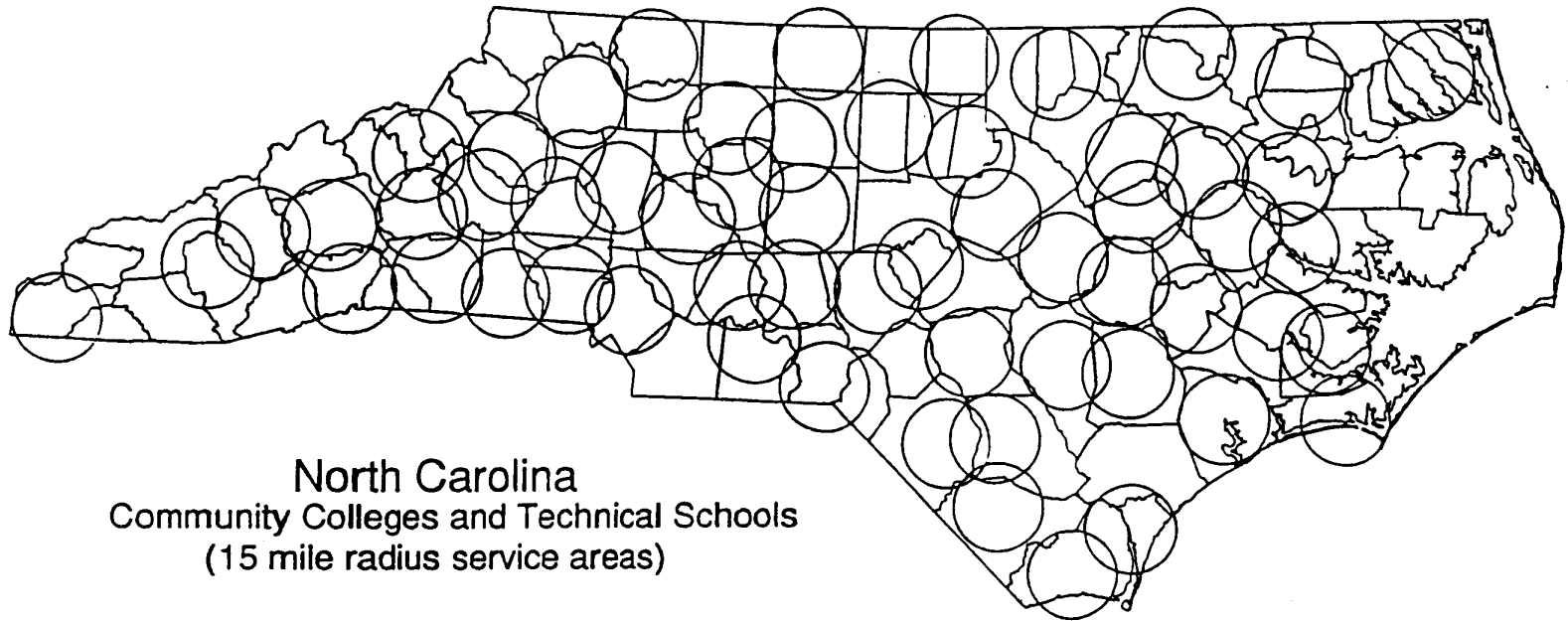
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North Carolina
Community Colleges and Technical Schools
(30 mile radius service areas)

EXHIBIT 5

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North Carolina
Community Colleges and Technical Schools
(15 mile radius service areas)

EXHIBIT 6
North Carolina Community College System
FTE and Headcount Data

INSTITUTIONS	FTE DATA					HEADCOUNT DATA					
	COLL TRAN	CURRIC SUB- TOTAL	EXT. SUB- TOTAL	TOTAL	AVG COST/ FTE	COLL TRAN	CURRIC SUB- TOTAL	EXT. SUB- TOTAL	TOTAL	NO. TARGET POP	HC AS % TGT POP
PAMLICO CC	0	77	111	200	\$6,210	0	230	1,447	1,677	2,428	69
BLADEN CC	0	519	170	707	\$3,662	0	1,060	2,098	3,158	7,777	41
MONTGOMERY CC	0	493	159	661	\$3,528	0	1,047	2,367	3,414	5,961	57
TRI-COUNTY CC	164	527	184	721	\$3,304	646	1,547	2,410	3,957	8,160	48
MARTIN CC	63	531	339	882	\$3,631	203	1,135	3,435	4,570	12,590	36
ROANOKE-CHOWAN CC	0	579	341	935	\$3,583	0	1,338	3,298	4,636	11,498	40
BRUNSWICK CC	0	464	606	1,093	\$2,738	0	1,252	3,781	5,033	8,421	60
MCDOWELL TCCC	0	527	328	876	\$3,367	0	1,382	4,049	5,431	9,156	59
JAMES SPRUNT CC	91	766	282	1,061	\$3,518	249	1,651	3,954	5,605	10,485	53
HAYWOOD CC	0	1,022	516	1,558	\$3,536	0	2,009	3,661	5,670	10,563	54
SAMPSON CC	0	691	603	1,309	\$2,942	0	1,557	4,390	5,947	12,101	49
MAYLAND C	0	656	516	1,196	\$3,128	0	1,450	4,629	6,079	11,125	55
ANSON CC	0	408	321	743	\$3,589	0	1,677	4,571	6,248	13,663	46
SOUTHWESTERN CC	0	949	390	1,355	\$3,244	0	2,151	4,283	6,434	12,261	52
SOUTHEASTERN CC	462	1,150	319	1,497	\$3,510	1,273	2,613	3,984	6,597	13,040	51
PIEDMONT CC	0	760	387	1,294	\$3,078	0	1,793	5,598	7,391	13,273	56
COLLEGE OF ALBEMARLE	336	1,014	421	1,435	\$3,632	933	2,450	4,968	7,418	20,120	37
RICHLAND CC	95	751	823	1,615	\$2,723	215	1,558	5,964	7,522	18,805	40
CARTERET CC	0	931	362	1,304	\$3,208	0	2,363	5,407	7,770	8,565	91
BEAUFORT COUNTY CC	165	851	689	1,543	\$2,944	490	2,024	5,749	7,773	11,437	68
HALIFAX CC	144	835	391	1,263	\$3,227	402	1,799	6,031	7,830	19,474	40
NASH CC	162	816	532	1,361	\$3,208	444	2,485	6,725	9,210	16,003	58
EDGECOMBE CC	102	1,045	634	1,860	\$2,868	308	2,849	6,556	9,405	14,249	66
ROCKINGHAM CC	396	1,186	580	1,790	\$2,934	980	2,782	6,721	9,503	22,203	43
RANDOLPH CC	0	963	689	1,662	\$3,118	0	1,945	7,696	9,641	24,759	39
BLUE RIDGE CC	176	985	588	1,597	\$3,030	466	2,320	7,366	9,686	14,671	66
WILSON TCC	0	872	496	1,381	\$3,565	0	2,360	7,429	9,789	15,762	62
MITCHELL CC	405	935	528	1,510	\$3,395	1,060	2,274	7,718	9,992	19,759	51
STANLY CC	0	934	626	1,588	\$2,975	0	2,258	8,150	10,408	20,157	52
VANCE-GRANVILLE CC	261	1,518	504	2,133	\$3,205	635	3,602	7,150	10,752	28,707	37
WILKES CC	499	1,280	1,151	2,463	\$3,016	1,203	2,993	7,839	10,832	25,240	43
CLEVELAND CC	165	940	527	1,509	\$2,944	701	2,835	8,010	10,845	20,742	52
GRAVEN CC	474	1,441	473	1,934	\$3,125	1,453	3,889	6,999	10,888	13,756	79
SURRY CC	536	1,873	551	2,473	\$2,734	1,754	4,976	6,503	11,479	24,636	47
ISOTHERMAL CC	390	1,126	847	2,046	\$2,888	1,061	2,577	9,065	11,642	15,981	73
LENOIR	517	1,520	927	2,503	\$3,202	1,278	3,348	8,582	11,930	20,343	59
ROBESON CC	0	1,021	849	1,963	\$2,926	0	2,242	9,787	12,029	25,306	48
WAYNE CC	474	1,713	690	2,441	\$2,976	1,273	3,669	8,526	12,195	19,926	61
JOHNSTON CC	0	1,844	777	2,682	\$2,718	0	3,929	9,435	13,364	17,597	76
CALDWELL CC & TI	564	1,432	647	2,119	\$3,147	1,939	4,208	9,316	13,524	24,907	54
SANDHILLS CC	687	1,991	860	2,875	\$2,944	1,462	3,565	10,864	14,429	14,459	100
PITT CC	481	2,369	489	2,921	\$3,059	1,880	6,271	8,240	14,511	17,707	82
WESTERN Piedmont CC	429	1,471	898	2,500	\$2,966	1,147	4,188	10,579	14,767	19,896	74
DAVIDSON COUNTY CC	482	1,620	534	2,255	\$3,126	1,066	3,579	11,488	15,067	35,683	42
ALAMANCE CC	0	1,876	1,354	3,316	\$2,663	0	6,078	10,700	16,778	21,852	77
ROWAN-CABARRUS CC	78	1,573	1,045	2,669	\$2,919	281	5,017	12,720	17,737	44,227	40
CAPE FEAR CC	0	1,829	943	2,822	\$2,867	0	4,559	13,847	18,406	23,156	79
ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE	191	2,134	843	3,082	\$2,824	373	5,564	12,928	18,492	35,883	52
COASTAL CAROLINA CC	958	2,293	898	3,253	\$2,916	3,072	5,855	12,783	18,638	20,057	93
CENTRAL CAROLINA CC	0	1,980	1,454	3,553	\$2,647	0	4,858	13,920	18,778	30,350	62
GASTON COLLEGE	827	2,359	595	3,011	\$3,117	2,327	5,880	15,332	21,212	54,943	39
CATAWBA VALLEY CC	339	2,085	865	3,005	\$2,770	766	5,550	16,625	22,175	32,402	68
FORSYTH TCC	182	2,779	1,367	4,187	\$2,815	344	7,925	15,752	23,677	53,542	44
DURHAM COUNTY TCC	525	2,323	1,097	3,457	\$2,937	1,480	8,279	15,591	23,870	35,954	66
GUILFORD TCC	323	4,100	1,582	6,122	\$2,883	896	10,806	25,098	35,904	57,544	62
WAKE TCC	0	3,335	1,717	5,348	\$2,661	0	10,983	25,413	36,396	43,849	83
FAYETTEVILLE TCC	0	3,749	3,065	6,910	\$2,980	0	9,670	27,477	37,147	40,333	92
CENTRAL Piedmont CC	2,527	8,239	1,546	10,048	\$2,986	7,385	29,964	29,278	59,242	65,191	91
TOTAL 1990-91	14,660	86,050	42,026	131,597	\$3,144	41,409	230,218	524,282	754,500	1,272,635	59
TOTAL 1989-90	13,613	81,629	41,025	126,929		39,138	224,535	516,852	741,387		
TOTAL 1988-89	11,736	77,936	38,608	120,435		355,540	217,634	444,621	662,255		

Source: NCCC System Fact Book: 1992

Section 115D-4 of the community college laws states:

The establishment of community colleges shall be subject to the approval of the General Assembly upon recommendation of the State Board of Community Colleges. In no case, however, shall favorable recommendation be made by the State Board for the establishment of an institution until it has been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the State Board that a genuine educational need exists within a proposed administrative area, that existing public and private post-high school institutions in the area will not meet the need, that adequate local financial support for the institution will be provided, that public schools in the area will not be affected adversely by the local financial support required for the institution, and that funds sufficient to provide State financial support of the institution are available.

In addition, the State Board has specific powers, cited below in the section on governance, relating to approving sites and facilities.

There is a degree of ambiguity in interpretation of this finding. The statute clearly assigns responsibility for affirmative recommendation for creating colleges only if certain conditions are met. On the other hand, there is nothing in the statute that would preclude the General Assembly from determining to create a college in the absence of such a recommendation.

Most of the colleges were created during the 1960s and it was not possible to analyze the history of these decisions. Interview data suggests that the General Assembly played a role in establishment of many of the colleges during that period. (Very few have been created since.) A number of satellite campuses have been created more recently. Interviewees familiar with the history indicate that while the State Board officially has authority to recommend or not, in practice it is difficult to not authorize sites, given the strong role played by local counties and communities, combined with the final authority of the General Assembly.

FUNDING

Operating Budgets

Sources of funds for NCCCS include state, federal, and local funds, as well as tuition and fee revenues.

Finding 5: The State provides the largest share of community college funding but local communities exert more control over institutions.

Approximately 70 percent of total operating funds are from state appropriations; 14 percent from local sources; 12 percent from tuition revenues; and 4 percent from the federal government.²

²*Ibid.*, p. 18.

Funds are deposited in the State Treasury and allocated by the State Board to local boards of trustees which are responsible for expending these funds in accordance with State Board policies and state and federal laws and regulations.

North Carolina's community colleges are viewed as "county" or local institutions. The System's tradition and culture have placed great emphasis on local flexibility and autonomy. Counties are primarily responsible for land acquisition, buildings, and for operational expenses of utilities and physical plant maintenance. The remainder of operating funds are supplied by state appropriations under "formula" or "categorical" funding.

State formula funds cover operating expenses such as instructional salaries, supplies, travel, administration and clerical support, counselors, librarians, financial aid, placement and other personnel performing services for students. An average of 95 percent of state-appropriated monies allocated to the campuses are derived from formula-based funding and an average of 92 percent of these funds are used for salaries. Formula funding is derived from the student FTEs generated in "curriculum" programs from the preceding academic year (fall, winter, and spring quarters). It provides a given rate of funding per FTE, representing an "instructional unit." Institutions have great flexibility in how they apply formula funding dollars.

Categorical funds support continuing education programs, including literacy, occupational extension, and community service and may be expended only for the programs designated. Continuing education funds are derived from FTEs enrolled in preceding spring, summer, fall and winter quarters. Other state funds are distributed on the basis of project proposals or modified FTE formulas.³

Fund amounts allocated to each community college by the formula funding model may vary from year to year, based upon the amount appropriated and funded by the General Assembly. For example, in 1990, tuition was raised 16.7 percent so that enrollment growth could be funded through state appropriations. Additional funds appropriated by the General Assembly have been offset in recent years by mandated reversions.⁴

Finding 6: NCCCS is not richly funded, compared with national averages.

The funding level for NCCCS students is 25 percent below the national average.⁵ NCCCS's funding per student averages \$3,300 per student versus the national average of \$4,400. In terms of average faculty salaries on a national basis, North Carolina ranks 48th. As funding was not a focus of this study and peer data difficult to use, this funding observation is presented as a general justification for system restructuring recommendations below.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*The North Carolina Community College System 1991-93 Business Plan*, p. 11.

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 11.

Finding 7: The current formula funding model for curriculum programs encourages colleges to "chase FTEs," as this is the means to increase their funding.

The funding model provides more disincentives than incentives for colleges to eliminate or combine programs. It makes them more responsive to **current** patterns of student demand than to **future** workforce needs and changing market conditions or technologies. There are no incentives to eliminate FTE-producing programs in favor of starting new programs that may initially have lower enrollments but which represent higher future priorities. There are no incentives for eliminating programs of poor quality, provided that they continue to draw student enrollments. Incentives tilt in favor of lower-cost programs as FTE funding does not distinguish well between expensive and inexpensive programs. FTE funding promotes competition for student enrollments and does not reward colleges for collaborative arrangements, if those collaborative arrangements cost them FTEs.

The Department of Community Colleges reviewed various funding models in 1990 and issued a report that supported continuation of the formula funding approach, as the "fairest" method for distributing resources. In the current System culture, it is feared that another model would end up favoring colleges with stronger political positions.

Capital Funding for Facilities Construction, Operations, and Maintenance

Finding 8: Capital facilities development uneven because some counties are more likely than others to approve bond referenda.

Both the State and counties are responsible for funding community college capital facilities, much of which has been done through state and local bond issues. Since July 1987, 16 counties have issued a total of \$ 78 million in bonds to pay for additional buildings or satellite campuses. In addition, there may be another \$ 70 million dollars in bonds approved but not yet issued. Currently, Wake County has a bond issue before the voters to build a satellite campus. In addition, the State Board of Community Colleges is proposing a \$ 300 million state bond issue for college facilities.

Counties are not all equally inclined to support community colleges. As an example, Craven county defeated a \$12 million bond issue in September 1992.

GOVERNANCE

Structure and Powers of the State Board

The State Board includes ten members appointed by the Governor, of which four are at-large and six represent the six Trustee Association Regions. Eight members are appointed by the General Assembly.

Under Article 1, Section 115D-5(a) of the Community College statute, the State Board:

"may adopt and execute such policies, regulations and standards concerning the establishment, administration and operation of institutions as the State Board may deem necessary to insure the quality of educational programs, to promote the systematic meeting of educational needs of the State, and to provide for the equitable distribution of State and federal funds to the several institutions....

The State Board of Community Colleges shall have authority with respect to individual institutions to approve sites, buildings, building plans, budgets; to approve the selection of the chief administrative officer; to establish and administer standards for professional personnel, curricula, admissions, and graduation; to regulate the awarding of degrees, diplomas and certificates; to establish and regulate student tuition and fees and financial accounting procedures."

Section 115D-5(c) also states that:

"No course of instruction shall be offered by any community college at state expense or partial state expense....without prior approval of the State Board of Community Colleges."⁶

Section 115D-3 establishes the Department of Community Colleges, to act as the administrative arm of the State Board, responsible for carrying out its decisions.

Structure and Powers of Local Boards of Trustees

Community college boards of trustees include four members elected by the local Board of Education; four members elected by the Board of County Commissioners; and four members appointed by the Governor.

Powers and duties of the local boards of trustees, as defined by statute, are to:⁷

- Elect a president or chief administrative officer subject to the approval of the State Board of Community Colleges
- Elect or employ all other personnel, including by delegation
- Purchase land, easement, or rights-of-way, subject to approval of the State Board of Community Colleges
- Apply standards and requirements for admission and graduation of students and other standards established by the State Board of Community Colleges

⁶*Community College Laws of North Carolina*, 1991 Edition, p. 16.

⁷*Ibid.*, pp. 24-25.

- Receive and accept donations
- Provide all or part of the instructional services for the institution by contracting with other public or private organizations or institutions in accordance with regulations and standards adopted by the State Board of Community Colleges
- Encourage establishment of private, nonprofit corporations to support the institution

Local boards of trustees are responsible for setting/approving curriculum; choosing the college president; and providing overall supervision of college operations.

Finding 9: Coordination between the State Board and local boards, college presidents, deans and faculty was limited until recent years.

The State Board and the Department of Community Colleges have worked to improve dialogue and, according to interviewees, it has been improving.

Finding 10: The balance of governance authority rests more with local boards and presidents, while the State Board has been more "reactive" than "proactive" in campus, site, and program decisions, despite its statutory powers.

Review of statutory powers assigned to the State Board and to the local boards would lead to a conclusion that there is sufficient statutory authority at the System level for mandating and implementing change in programs and structure of the system. In practice, the powers do not seem to be exercised. The single most significant cause of the apparent discrepancy may be in the appointments process for college presidents. Governing boards are volunteers and non-professionals; they typically rely therefore on the chief executive officer for policy formulation. In this system, it is possible that central authority is weakened by the fact that the President of the System does not control campus-level appointments.

PROGRAM PLANNING AND DISTRIBUTION

Current Program Distribution

A "program" is defined as a course of study leading to a degree, certificate or diploma with defined courses (requirements and electives), competencies, and occupational and curriculum standards. In addition to the college transfer programs, there are 230 curricula listed in the 1991 NCCCS educational chart. These are reported in 13 categories or areas of study and, as Exhibit 7 shows, the distribution of programs offered by colleges varies from a low of 13 programs at Bladen Community College to a high of 73 programs at Central Piedmont. The average number

EXHIBIT 7
North Carolina Community College System
Vocational and Technical Programs
Numbers of Programs by Program Category

INSTITUTION	VOC-TECH CURRICULUM CATEGORY											
	Agri &	Art &	Elect-				Mech-		Publ		Trans	Total
	Nat Res	Design	Bus	Constr	Educ	Elect	Health	Mfg	Serv	Serv		
ALMANAC	1	0	10	1	0	3	4	8	4	2	2	35
ANSON	0	1	9	0	2	2	2	4	0	1	2	23
ASHEVILLE-BUNCOMBE	0	0	10	3	0	1	7	7	3	2	2	35
BEAUFORT COUNTY	0	0	6	0	1	3	4	4	2	1	1	22
BLADEN	0	0	3	1	0	3	2	2	0	1	1	13
BLUE RIDGE	1	0	7	3	2	3	4	7	0	2	3	32
BRUNSWICK	0	0	5	0	0	1	2	3	1	1	1	14
CALDWELL	0	0	6	2	0	3	5	8	0	3	3	30
CAPE FEAR	1	0	5	2	1	3	2	6	2	1	2	25
CARTERET	0	2	6	0	0	1	6	2	2	2	2	23
CATAWBA VALLEY	2	1	11	1	1	6	4	10	1	0	2	39
CENTRAL CAROLINA	0	0	11	2	1	4	4	4	5	2	2	35
CENTRAL PIEDMONT	2	2	22	3	3	4	9	10	7	6	5	73
CLEVELAND	0	0	8	2	0	2	3	4	2	2	3	26
COASTAL CAROLINA	0	0	10	2	1	3	7	3	3	2	2	33
COLLEGE OF ALBEMARLE	0	0	9	1	0	3	3	4	2	2	1	25
CRAVEN	0	0	11	0	3	4	3	8	2	1	2	34
DAVIDSON COUNTY	0	0	6	0	3	4	3	5	2	2	2	27
DURHAM COUNTY	0	0	10	2	1	4	8	1	4	1	1	32
EDGEcombe	1	0	9	0	2	1	8	2	1	1	2	27
FAYETTEVILLE	1	1	12	6	2	2	11	6	3	7	4	55
FORSYTH	1	0	8	4	1	5	7	6	1	2	3	38
GASTON COLLEGE	0	0	13	2	2	3	4	7	5	0	2	38
GUILFORD	0	1	11	4	3	3	6	8	6	3	8	53
HALIFAX	0	2	7	0	4	2	5	2	3	1	2	28
HAYWOOD	7	4	5	1	0	2	2	3	1	1	3	29
ISOTHERMAL	0	1	8	0	3	3	4	4	3	1	3	30
JAMES SPRUNT	3	1	7	2	0	1	3	1	2	2	1	23
JOHNSTON	2	1	8	2	0	2	2	4	2	4	4	31
LENOIR	3	1	14	0	3	1	5	11	3	2	3	46
MARTIN	1	0	6	1	0	1	2	5	0	1	1	18
MAYLAND	0	0	8	4	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	24
MCDOWELL	0	2	9	2	2	2	3	3	0	1	2	26
MITCHELL	0	0	6	0	0	3	1	4	2	1	1	18
MONTGOMERY	2	1	5	0	1	0	1	3	2	0	2	17
NASH	0	0	8	1	3	2	3	3	1	1	0	22
PAMLICO	0	0	5	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	8
PIEDMONT	0	0	9	1	1	1	2	5	0	2	0	21
PITT	1	1	10	2	2	3	11	6	3	2	3	44
RANDOLPH	0	4	7	0	0	2	1	3	2	0	2	21
RICHMOND	0	0	4	1	1	3	3	4	1	0	0	17
ROANOKE-CHOWAN	0	0	4	2	2	0	4	3	1	1	2	19
ROBESON	0	0	6	1	1	2	5	3	3	1	2	24
ROCKINGHAM	0	1	10	1	2	3	2	4	1	3	1	28
ROWAN-CABARRUS	0	0	8	1	2	2	4	6	2	1	1	27
SAMPSON	2	0	7	1	0	1	3	3	2	1	2	22
SANDHILLS	1	0	6	3	1	4	7	1	0	2	3	28
SOUTHEASTERN	2	0	6	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	0	21
SOUTHWESTERN	0	1	5	1	1	3	9	2	3	3	1	29
STANLY	2	0	10	0	1	3	6	5	2	1	2	32
SURRY	4	0	9	1	0	3	2	5	1	2	3	30
TRI-COUNTY	1	0	6	0	0	1	2	2	0	1	2	15
VANCE-GRANVILLE	0	0	10	1	4	2	5	3	3	2	1	31
WAKE	0	0	10	5	3	5	8	11	3	3	2	50
WAYNE	6	0	9	0	1	1	9	5	3	1	5	40
WESTERN PIEDMONT	3	1	13	2	0	2	8	6	2	2	2	41
WILKES	0	0	6	2	2	3	3	1	3	3	3	26
WILSON	0	0	9	1	1	3	3	8	3	1	3	32
TOTAL	50	29	478	81	72	142	252	263	119	96	123	1705

Source: NCCCS System Fact Book: 1992

of programs offered is 29. NCCCS institutions together offer more than 1,800 technical and vocational curriculum programs leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees under 263 titles.⁸

Overview of Program/Curriculum Categories

Vocational and Technical Programs. "Technical" degree programs account for 1,194 of total programs, in 170 titles and lead to the Associate in Applied Science degree. In addition to technical major course work, these programs require a minimum of 18 quarter credit hours in English, social science and humanities; and approximately 24 to 36 quarter credit hours in mathematics, science, and other related courses.

"Vocational" programs account for 630 of the total programs, in 93 titles. These programs lead to a certificate or diploma and can be completed by a full-time student in one to four quarters. Vocational programs typically require up to 12 quarter credit hours in general education and 12 to 18 quarter hours credit in related courses. Certificate programs may consist of major courses from either a technical or vocational program and are usually 18 or more quarter credit hours credit in length.

Finding 11: The curriculum model distinguishes between "technical" and "vocational" programs, while changing workforce needs may render this traditional distinction obsolete.

Technical programs are primarily two-year programs leading to an associate degree and vocational programs are primarily one-year or shorter programs leading to a certificate or diploma. It would be useful to determine, with business and industry involvement, whether this distinction is as meaningful today as it was decades ago. Elimination of some of these distinctions would simplify and clarify the curriculum structure of the System.

College Transfer Programs. "College transfer" and "college parallel" are terms applied to two-year associate degree programs that used to be called "junior colleges." They are essentially the same as the first two years of a baccalaureate program in a four-year institution. Most community college systems in the U.S. offer college transfer programs, both in arts and sciences and in first-professional programs. California, as an extreme, uses its community college system to accommodate large portions of its college-bound high school graduates, in order to control enrollments in the State's "senior" institutions.

Finding 12: College transfer programs were part of NCCCS's mission original mission but have been expanding rapidly.

As the mission discussion above indicates, some of the System's colleges, which originated as college extension programs of the University of North Carolina, always have offered college transfer programs. There are divergent opinions about the extent to which college transfer programs have been and should be part of NCCCS's mission. By statute and common opinion, NCCCS's primary mission is still vocational and technical education. In reality, based

⁸*A Matter of Facts: The North Carolina Community College System Fact Book, 1992.*